

. Franceschelli, Christopher. Illus. by Peskimo. Appleseed/Abrams. Each spread of this playful abecediary presents a die-cut letter revealing a few clues about the hidden object -- some expected, some unusual. A visually appealing and engaging guessing game for tots and parents alike.

. Sullivan, Mary. Illus. by the author. Houghton. A ball-obsessed pup desperately waits for his owner to return to continue their play. (A 2014 Geisel Honor Book)

. Durand, Hallie. Illus. by Tony Fucile. Candlewick. Mitchell likes knocking things down! Dad wisely decides to take him bowling. Animated digital art depicts the ups and downs of this father-son outing -- with the highs celebrated with a steamin'-hot-potato dance!

LaRochelle, David. Illus. by Mike Wohnoutka. Walker. Using j!!M

. Henkes, Kevin. Illus. by the author. Greenwillow. After Penny finds a beautiful marble in her neighbor's yard, she is faced with a moral dilemma, explored with emotional truth in four brief chapters. (A 2014 Geisel Honor Book)

Rau, Dana Meachen. Illus. by Wook Jin Jung. Random. A girl bosses around her homemade robot using words that contain the long O sound and all its myriad spellings in this easy comic book-format reader

. Meshon, Aaron. Illus. by the author. Atheneum. This colorful picture book playfully explores the similarities and differences between baseball games played in the U.S. and Japan as seen through the eyes of a young boy.

. Savage, Stephen. Illus. by the author. Dial. A little bit scary and a whole lot of fun, ten orange pumpkins disappear one by one in this Halloween-themed picture book.

. Brown, Monica. Illus. by Rafael López. Rayo. This vibrant, bilingual portrayal of Tito Puente, the King of Mambo, conveys the rhythm and movement of the musical legend through the use of bold colors, swirly lines, and carefully placed word art. (A 2014 Belpré Illustrator Honor Book)

. Pinkney, Jerry. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown. The familiar Aesop's fable, here set in the American southwest, features a nearly wordless text and sunny, earthy, and luminous watercolors.

Lehrhaupt, Adam. Illus. by Matthew Forsythe. Simon & Schuster. This inventive presentation shows the importance of heeding warnings as mischievous monkeys, toucans, and alligators have fun breaking the rules.

. Pizzoli, Greg. Illus. by the author. Disney/Hyperion. A watermelon-loving crocodile becomes distraught after swallowing a seed, believing it will grow inside of him. An innovative look at a childhood fear with color illustrations fresh as a cool slice of watermelon. (The 2014 Geisel Medal Book)

. Park, Linda Sue. Illus. by Matt Phelan. Clarion. Party planning has never been so fun. The jaunty rhymes and lively illustrations capture Xander's zeal to create the perfect guest list in this playful picture book.

. Henkes, Kevin. Illus. by the author. Greenwillow. Seven-year-old Billy starts second grade with a bump on his head and a lot of worries, but as the school year unfolds, he grows and shines. (A 2014 Newbery Honor Book)

. Jenkins, Steve. Illus. by the author. Houghton. Readers will lose themselves in this compendium of animals living and extinct, chock full of interesting facts and beautiful illustrations.

. Moss, Marissa. Illus. by Yuko Shimizu. Abrams. Set in the internment camps of WWII, beautiful Japanese-style ink-and-calligraphy illustrations bring to life the story of Kenichi Zenimura, the father of Japanese-American baseball.

. Scieszka, Jon and Barnett, Mac. Illus. by Matthew Myers. Simon & Schuster. Not at all interested in his tame birthday gift, Alex remakes Birthday Bunny explode with chainsaws, megaton bombs, and pro-wrestling moves. An irreverent tale.

. Pope, Paul. Illus. by the author. First Second. In this explosive homage to superhero stories of yesteryear, the children of godlike beings are Acropolis's best hope for defeating supervillain Sinestro. The start of a trilogy.

. Federle, Tim. Simon & Schuster. Having run away from home, exuberant Nate experiences a variety of catastrophes and revelations on his way to becoming a Broadway star. Fresh, funny, and hopeful.

. Phelan, Matt. Illus. by the author. Candlewick. In this

. Greenberg, Jan and Jordan, Sandra. Roaring
Brook/Neal Porter. This fascinating account of the life and work of eccentric and inventive ceramic

. Napoli, Donna Jo. Illus. by Christina Balit. National Geographic. In this exemplary book of folklore, Napoli introduces young readers to Egyptian mythology with vivid language and illustration and anchors the tales in intriguing and research-supported interpretation.

. Appelt, Kathi. Atheneum. In this comical tall tale, the swamp is threatened by developers and an unlikely crew of characters including the Swamp Man, the raccoon brothers, and 12-year-old Chap set out to save it.

. Sax, Aline. Illus. by Caryl Strzelecki. Trans. by Laura Watkinson. Eerdmans. With powerful text and stark illustrations, this novella provides a harrowing account of Jewish suffering in the Warsaw ghetto during World War II. (A 2014 Batchelder Honor Book)

. Stringer, Lauren. Illus. by the author. Harcourt. Illustrations dance across the page as Russian composer Stravinsky and choreographer Nijinsky collaborate on "The Rite of Spring," creating a modern ballet that polarized their artistic world.

. Hill, Laban Carrick. Illus. by Theodore Taylor III. Roaring Brook. Vibrant illustrations and brief text introduce DJ Clive Campbell, who took popular dance music, stretched the breaks in the songs, and turned basic rhythms into hip-hop.

. Grimes, Nikki. Boyds Mills/WordSong. Gabriella journeys from daydreamer to writer thanks to the intervention of an empathetic teacher. An engaging novel told in verse.

. Freedman, Russell. illus. Holiday. Beginning with an independent young man arriving in Philadelphia, this informative and well-paced book shines a light on one of America's most interesting Founding Fathers.

. Sloan, Holly Goldberg. Dial. After the death of her parents, genius outsider Willow begins to bloom again and becomes an agent for change for the diverse group of people she meets. A surprising and inspiring story about family and friendship.

. Stone, Tanya Lee. illus. Candlewick. Bolden introduces the unsung story of the U.S. Army's first African-American paratroopers unit, moving gracefully among portraits of individual paratroopers, the history of the unit, and the complex social issues of the time.

. Myers, Walter Dean. Amistad. Two best friends make a pact to succeed as they struggle to escape their inner-city lives. Strong writing realizes vivid characters in this gritty novel.

with the threat on her own, Piddy explores her identity, her culture, and the role of others in her life. A powerful story about bullying and resilience. (The 2014 Belpré Author Medal Book)

. Becker, Aaron. Illus. by the author. Candlewick. Finding a magical red crayon, a bored and lonely girl draws a door on her bedroom wall that leads her to a wondrous but perilous new world. (A 2014 Caldecott Honor Book)

. Kennedy, Caroline. Illus. by Jon J Muth. Disney/Hyperion. Warm and humorous water color paintings accompany this collection of more than 100 familiar and imaginative poems, suitable for families to read aloud and recite from memory.

Berry, Julie. Penguin/Viking Juvenile. Judith can't speak. But when her close-knit community of Roswell Station is attacked by enemies, Judith is forced to choose: continue to live in silence, or recover her voice.

Clark, Kristin Elizabeth. Macmillan/Farrar, Straus, and Giroux. Told from three viewpoints, seventeen-year-old Brendan, a wrestler, struggles to come to terms with his place on the transgender spectrum while Vanessa, the girl he loves, and Angel, a transgender acquaintance, try to help.

Rowell, Rainbow. Macmillan/St. Martin's Griffin. Set over the course of one school year in 1986, this is the story of two star-crossed misfits--smart enough to know that first love almost never lasts, but brave and desperate enough to try.

Sedgwick, Marcus. Macmillan/Roaring Brook Press. Seven linked vignettes unfold on a Scandinavian island inhabited--throughout various time periods--by Vikings, vampires, ghosts, and a curiously powerful plant.

Sepetys, Ruta. Penguin/Philomel. Josie, the seventeen-year-old daughter of a French Quarter prostitute, is striving to escape 1950 New Orleans and enroll at prestigious Smith College when she becomes entangled in a murder investigation.

Smith, Andrew. Illustrated by Sam Bosma. Simon & Schuster/Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. Two years younger than his classmates at a prestigious boarding school, fourteen-year-old Ryan Dean West grapples with living in the dorm for troublemakers, falling for his female best friend who thinks of him as just a kid, and playing wing on the Varsity rugby team with some of his frightening new dorm-mates.

Sullivan, Tara. Penguin/Putnam Juvenile. A Tanzanian albino boy finds himself the