**(BoB): The Best of the Best (thus far…)**

TASL Road Trips – West and East

June 4th and 7th, 2019

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***Picturebooks***

***All of a Kind Family Hanukkah: Based on the Classic Books by Sydney Taylor***, written by Emily Jenkins and illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky. Schwartz & Wade Books, 2018.

Based on Taylor’s “All-of-a-Kind” family stories, a young girl in a big family tries to find her purpose and make a contribution as they prepare to celebrate the Jewish Festival of Lights. Backmatter includes a brief glossary, an author’s and illustrator’s notes, a list of Taylor titles, and a web site with additional bonus materials including a latke recipe.

***Another***, written and illustrated by Christian Robinson. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2019.

Following her cat through a mysterious door, the young girl in this wordless picturebook sees other children having their own adventures before coming face-to-face with someone very like herself.

***(A ) Big Mooncake for Little Star***, written and illustrated by Grace Lin. Little, Brown & Co., 2018.

Little Star helps her mother make a very large mooncake but can’t resist nibbling at it every night. An author’s note on the back flap connects the story to the Asian holiday known as the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival.

***Bloom, Boom!***, written and photographed by April Pulley Sayre. Beach Lane Books, 2019.

An extended poem celebrating the growing cycle and emergence of spring flowers. Backmatter includes more about featured plants and recommended websites. (NF)

***(The) Bell Rang***, written and illustrated by James E. Ransome. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2019.

We have seen the story of what happens to former slaves as they run for freedom, but what happens to those left behind? A young girl shares the week her brother goes on the run.

*(The) Elephant*, written and illustrated by Jenny Desmond. Enchanted Lion Books, 2018.

A young boy explores elephants, everything from differences between African and Asian species, to their habits and eccentricities. (NF)

***Good Boy***, written and illustrated by Sergio Ruzzier. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2019.

A boy and his dog – or maybe a dog and his boy – spend the day together.

***Imagine!***, written and illustrated by Raúl Colón. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2018.

A wordless story of how a young urban boy’s trip to an art museum leads to an adventure with new (imaginary) inspirational friends and creative self-expression.

***Let ‘er Buck: George Fletcher, the People’s Champion***, written by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson and illustrated by Gordon C. James. Carolrhoda Books, 2019.

In 1911 at the Pendleton Oregon Round-up, Black cowboy George Fletcher won the day although he never got the prize. Biography includes author’s notes about other contestants, her research, and includes a selected bibliography. (NF, Biography)

***Memphis, Martin, and the Mountaintop: The Sanitation Strike of 1968***, written by Alice Faye Duncan and illustrated by R. Gregory Christie. Calkins Creek, 2018.

One-page chapters illuminate the Memphis Sanitation Strike led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and its aftermath. Backmatter includes a timeline, a suggested museum, and sources used.

***Nine Months: Before a Baby is Born***, written by Miranda Paul and illustrated by Jason Chin. Holiday House, 2019.

This poem tracks the progress of a fetus as it develops into a new baby, and how the family experiences the pregnancy. Backmatter includes brief notes about fetal development, a few animal gestation facts, and a bit about unusual circumstances like twins, premature babies, and miscarriages. (NF, Poetry)

***(The) Roots of Rap: 16 Bars on the 4 Pillars of Hip-Hop***, written by Carole Boston Weatherford and illustrated by Frank Morrison. Bonnier Publishing, 2019.

An extended poem celebrates the start and rise of hip-hop and the names that made it big. An author’s and illustrator’s notes follow the poem, as well as short glossary and a “who’s who” list of performers. (NF, Poetry)

*(The) Undefeated!*, written by Kwame Alexander and illustrated by Kadir Nelson. Versify, 2019.

A celebration of African Americans, athletes to immigrants, who made their mark despite enormous odds. Backmatter includes an afterword by the author as well as brief notes on the historical figures referenced in the poem. (Poetry)

***You are Your Strong***, written by Danielle Dufayet and illustrated by Jennifer Zivoin. Magination Press/American Psychological Association, 2019.

Family in children’s lives demonstrate different kinds of strength and when strong feelings come along, that child can draw on those gifts to find their own strength. The extended poem is followed by a note to parents and caregivers from an APA psychologist. There are also short bios for the author and illustrator.

**Grades 3-6, Ages 8-11**

***Beastly Puzzles: A Brain-Boggling Animal Guessing Game***, written by Rachel Poliquin and illustrated by Byron Eggenschwiler. Kids Can Press 2019.

A fun way of looking at familiar animals, using other objects to describe them. Can you guess what these objects can make when put together? (NF)

***Because of the Rabbit***, by Cynthia Lord. Scholastic, 2019.

Transitioning from home school to public school is tough for 5th grader Emma, as is living with the possibility that the pet rabbit she has might belong to someone else.

***Eventown***, by Corey Ann Haydu. HarperCollins, 2019.

Twins Elodee and Naomi and their parents want to leave a tragic past behind them and start fresh in a place where everything is always okay. They discover that you can’t have the good without the bad, the joy without the pain.

***Focused***, by Alyson Gerber. Scholastic Press, 2019.

Clea’s inattention, time management problems and irritability are getting the better of her and a doctor’s diagnosis of ADHD only makes this worse – at first. There is an author’s note about ADHD and resources.

***Knights vs. Dinosaurs***, written and illustrated by Matt Phelan. Greenwillow Books, 2018.

A bout of boasting causes Merlin to transport some of the Round Table knights back to dino days, and hilarious battles ensue – or are attempted anyway. A note from Merlin, transcribed by his owl, of course, provides more (factual) information about the dinosaurs engaged with the knights.

***Louisiana’s Way Home***, by Kate DiCamillo. Candlewick Press, 2018.

Louisiana Elefante’s life is about to change dramatically when her granny starts a midnight journey and then abandons her in Richford Georgia. As Louisiana comes to terms with that loss and an even bigger one, she discovers that her life may have actually changed for the better.

***(The) Mighty Heart of Sunny St. James***, by Ashley Herring Blake. Little, Brown & Co., 2019.

Twelve-year-old Sunny has just survived a heart transplant and is now ready to start her new life. Little does she realize just how big that heart will need to be, and how much love it can hold.

**Grades 6-8, Ages 11-13**

***(The) Bridge Home***, by Padma Venkatraman. Penguin Random House, 2019.

Two young Indian girls leave home to escape an abusive father and scrabble together friends and a sort of life on the streets of a city in India.

***Countdown: 2979 Days to the Moon***, written by Suzanne Slade and illustrated by Thomas Gonzalez. Peachtree Press, 2018.

Each chapter is an extended poem that captures the drama and challenges of putting a man on the moon. Backmatter includes more about the Apollo missions, an author’s and illustrator’s notes, as well as a selected bibliography and list of websites.

***(A) Good Kind of Trouble***, by Lisa Moore Ramée. HarperCollins, 2019.

Seventh grade is starting out tough for Shayla; trouble with friends, weird boys with crushes, and when she starts tuning in to the Black Lives Matter movement, things really get tense.

***Harbor Me***, by Jacqueline Woodson. Penguin Random House, 2018.

Six “different” kids in sixth grade are offered the opportunity to talk to each other, without adults, and the conversations that emerge create a safe harbor for them all.

***Illegal: One Boy’s Epic Journey of Hope and Survival***, written by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin, and illustrated by Giovanni Rigano. Sourcebooks Young Readers, 2018.

Thirteen-year-old Ebo leaves his home and makes a dangerous journey to join his sister in Europe, losing his older brother in the process, in this graphic novel based on real refugee experiences. Backmatter includes a short comic from actual refugee Helen, as well as an authors and illustrator statement, sketches from the illustrator, and brief bios on the authors and illustrator.

***(The) Line Tender***, by Kate Allen. Dutton’s Children’s Books, 2019.

Lucy is coping with the death of her scientist mother when a freak accident claims the life of her best friend. Learning to let go and move on takes time, community, and sharks.

***Nowhere Boy***, by Katherine Marsh. Roaring Brook Press, 2018.

Max thought his family trip to Europe was just that, but he’s enrolled in a Belgian school, and has to repeat 6th grade even though he’s thirteen! Then, one night he discovers that there is someone hiding in the basement who is worse off than he is, and Max resolves to make a difference in Ahmed’s life.

***Sal & Gabi Break the Universe***, by Carlos Alberto Pablo Hernandez. Disney Hyperion, 2019.

Sal’s first days at Culeco Academy aren’t promising except for meeting Gabi, the 7th grade student council president, who becomes his sidekick and partner in magic as they use Sal’s ability to reach across dimensions to help make everyone’s lives more interesting.

***Sea Prayer***, written by Khaled Hosseini and illustrated by Dan Williams. Riverhead Books, 2018.

A father holds his sleeping son as they wait to board a boat, hopefully heading toward a safer life in a different land, and he offers up this poetic prayer for a better future ahead. A brief author’s note connects the story to the anniversary of a three-year-old Syrian refugee’s death by drowning. Based on a video published by *The Guardian* on August 31, 2017, online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKBNEEY-c3s>. (Poetry)

***(The) Storm Keeper’s Island***, by Catherine Doyle. Bloomsbury Children’s Books, 2019.

Fionn and sister Tara are sent to spend the summer with their grandad on the Irish island of Arranmore. The island holds great magic and the connection between Fionn and all that is there is no accident.

***Sweep: The Story of a Girl and Her Monster***, by Jonathan Auxier. Amulet Books, 2018.

Nan Sparrow’s protector has always been the Sweep, but when he fails to return for her one morning, she discovers he has left something in his place, a golem, to protect her and keep her warm.

***This Promise of Change: One Girl’s Story in the Fight for School Equality***, written by Jo Ann Allen Boyce and Debbie Levy. Bloomsbury Children’s Books, 2019.

In 1956 Clinton High School was country-wide news when twelve young Black teens helped integrate the school. Backmatter includes more about the author, Clinton (at the time), a scrapbook, selected bibliography, and timeline of desegregation and civil rights important dates. (NF)

***We Rise, We Resist, We Raise our Voices***, edited by Wade Hudson and Cheryl Willis Hudson. Crown Books for Young Readers, 2018.

Thirty children’s authors and illustrators offer words of hope for the next generation, as they see the hate and discrimination around them. Backmatter includes brief bios of the contributors and an index. (NF, mixed media)