



Library Corner

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School libraries make the difference!

By Ellen Myrick

As Common Core State Standards and other state standards have become a primary focus for schools, the curriculum is being modified. We realize that you as librarians are not solely responsible for purchasing classroom materials but are often asked to help identify reliable vendors. Your experience in book purchasing is a valuable resource to those who are looking to purchase classroom sets. Schools invest in quality bindings because they are looking for long term cost savings.

At a time when school libraries and the people who manage them seem underfunded at best and under attack at worst, it's important to know that resources are available to help communicate the message of the importance and value of robust libraries in schools that are staffed by knowledgeable professionals.

Terry Grief, the current president of the American Association of School Librarians, remarks that "school libraries have always been important to ALA." Terry points to the comments of past ALA president Jim Rettig, who noted that school, public, academic and other types of libraries are part of an integrated library ecosystem. If one part of the system is threatened or suffers, the entire system is threatened or suffers. (http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity/additup/about/abt_2)

"Places that don't have school libraries often have trouble funding public libraries because they don't understand the value," Terry explains. "ALA President Barbara Stripling focused energy on the issues and developed a task force. Her approach has included communicating to parents what kids are missing when they don't have access to a school library."

So where do we start? First, Terry encourages librarians and their advocates to visit <http://www.ilovelibraries.org/school-libraries-make-difference> and make use of the great resources there. We live in a visual culture and the infographic provided at that site can be a useful tool when shared with the school principal, with parents, and even with the school board.

She cautions against sending along the whole supplement that originally appeared in American Libraries. Too much information can overwhelm and turn off the audience. Start with the facts and build your public awareness campaign around those. Incorporate success stories from other places. Add in your victories as they occur. This is the recipe to continued support.

One recent triumph happened in Michigan with the Board of Education supporting the need to have a school librarian in every school. At a time when many school librarians are not rehired, this kind of good news can provide fresh energy to continue the campaign.

What can you say to a new librarian whose position is being threatened? Point them to the "School Libraries Make a Difference" site and there they will find:

- The frequently asked questions regarding the need for a school librarian and responses that help you make your case

- The Infographic with facts and figures on school libraries, the skills they teach, and the ways they support teachers

- A broad picture of the school library landscape--they are not alone in being threatened!

- Compelling stories from authors on the impact of school libraries

- much more!

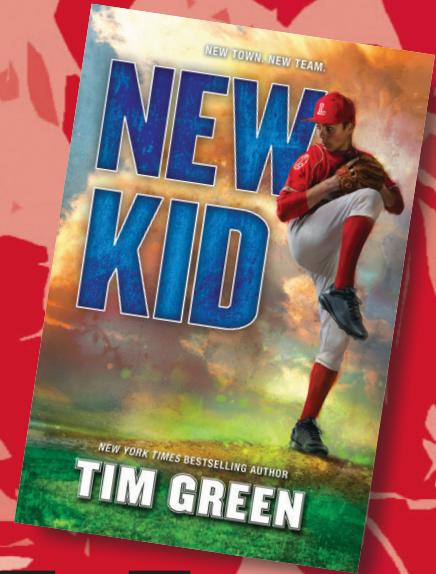
"School librarians help kids develop a love of reading beyond the assigned reading," notes Terry. "Kids need choices and they need a librarian to help them. Librarians can give a child the freedom to say they don't like something and help them make a different choice."

Terry adds that school librarians should "know that ALA and AASL are here for them. And don't shy away from being brave — John Green says don't forget to be awesome. We need to remember that."

For more articles of interest on children's books and libraries go to the Library Corner section of our website at www.btsb.com and select The More You Know.



The Crowd Goes Wild



Tim Green dreamed of hitting The New York Times bestseller list. "I did not know that my journey as a writer would lead me to middle grade fiction." Green has always read to his kids — Maniac Magee is a favorite — and as he read, he often thought he might do a children's book one day.

The book that made Tim Green a reader is not what you might expect from a best-selling author, a professional football player, or the child of a teacher who read to him every night. She came home one day with a book she had bought at a garage sale for a quarter. "It was The Lighthouse Mystery and it was the first chapter book I ever owned," Tim recalls. It was a Hardy Boys mystery.

He quickly devoured as many as he could find. He also remembers the way "the librarian looked down her nose and told me 'These are not good books.' I thought that was a terrible thing to say because I loved those books."

Tim Green has done hundreds of school visits and his message is that "if you are not a reader — someone who loves books — you are just one book away." He adds that "For every person there is that one book that wraps you up and takes you away."

For many kids — and especially boys — that one book that turned them into readers was a Tim Green book. Whether it's the Football Genius of Troy or how Josh became a Baseball Great, the author's inside knowledge of the world of sports, his respect and understanding of middle grade readers make Tim the go-to author for both kids and the adults who want them to read.

The first books by Tim Green were for an older audience.



Barbara Lalicki, an editor at HarperCollins, read Green's Exact Revenge and was struck by his mastery of suspense and crisp cliffhangers. She loved the book and when she saw that Green had kids, came up with the idea of his writing for children. "I said yes on the spot, and, as we were talking, I came up with the idea for Football Genius." He adds, "She didn't know that I was an NFL player."

That ignorance of the world of sports was an asset. "I learned to describe sports so that it is understandable to everyone, but at the same time exciting and provocative for fans." If Barbara could follow the game, all was good.

With Baseball Great Tim took on steroids and other supplements, an issue that is unfortunately infiltrating even middle school sports. Tim points to a revealing scene between athletic prodigy Josh and his father. "Josh reminds his dad that he said to be great you have to do anything to win, and the dad is taken aback — yeah, he did say that but he didn't mean that," Green paraphrases. "Lots of parents give kids that message and kids take that as unspoken acquiescence."

Who knows how many kids have rethought the urge to take a little booster because of Baseball Great? And how many kids who said they didn't like books found Tim Green stories that made them readers?

And the crowd goes wild.

For more interviews with children's authors go to the Library Corner section of our website at www.btsb.com and select Featured Authors, or select Author Showcase for detailed information on over 1000 children's authors and illustrators.



Book Reviews

by Andy Martin

The Smartest Kids in the World: and How They Got That Way, by Amanda Ripley, Simon & Schuster 2013, 320 pages.

Journalist Amanda Ripley admits she avoided writing about education because she deemed most education related writing to be soft and lacking in hard evidence. During an assignment to write about then Washington D. C. public school chancellor, Michelle Rhee, Amanda became intrigued with the mysteries of education. More specifically she became curious as to why some students learned more than others. More and more articles and research followed for Amanda. She combed through data, visited schools, interviewed students, parents, teachers and administrators. Although she could find an occasional diamond in the rough, Amanda was coming to the conclusion that outside of being lucky student performance seemed to be linked to money and privilege. But then she had an aha moment!

During her research Amanda had discovered that test scores for students in different countries would rise and fall over time and in some cases quite dramatically. Realizing that typical indicators such as national child poverty level were not necessarily an indicator of poor student performance she set out to find out what separates the highest achieving nations from others and more specifically the United States.

the smartest kids in the world



and how they got that way

amanda ripley

author of *The Unthinkable*

It may seem as if the author is mesmerized by data but Amanda uses "field agents" to help tell the story of differing educational cultures from around the world. The primary field agents are three American exchange students. She follows one agent to Finland, one to Poland, and one to Korea each having a different background and purpose for studying abroad. Amanda's ability to weave the stories of these field agents with the massive amounts of data available on student performance makes this book compelling and difficult to put down.

Amanda concludes that quality of education is not about technology, class size, or dollars per pupil but instead is basically about rigor. Not just rigor related to making

students work harder or longer as in the Korean system which has its own set of flaws. Instead there must be rigor at every level of an educational system. The countries that are consistently high performers have a culture where education is important for everyone not just the privileged or the lucky. From only accepting the best applicants into colleges to emphasizing academics over athletics to expecting more from students this book provides the foundations on which to build a system that educates the smartest kids in the world.

For more reviews of adult books visit the Library Corner section of our Web site, www.btsb.com and select Professional Shelf.

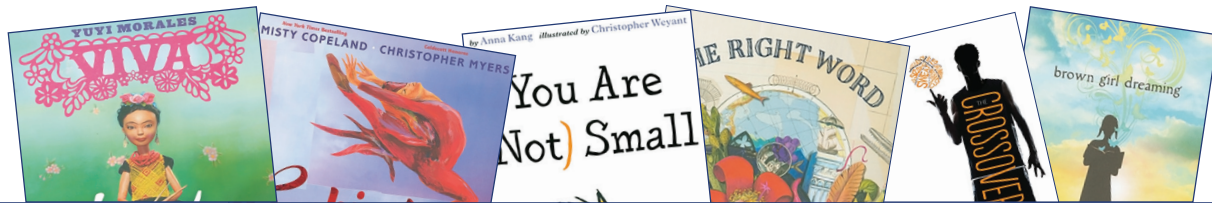
Author Trivia — Spring 2015

This children's book author/illustrator had a relative who produced the classic movie, *Gone With the Wind*, and also gave Alfred Hitchcock his start in American movies. Our Author's Showcase, a database of information about over 1000 children's authors and illustrators, has the answer. Visit the BTSB Bookstore at www.btsb.com and do a keyword search using BTSB number 799215 to find the answer to the above question.





2015 ALA Award Winners



CALDECOTT MEDAL AWARD

776910 **Adventures Of Beekle.** Santat. (3-6) Little [AR] 19.30

CALDECOTT HONOR BOOKS

198864 **Nana In The City.** Castillo. (3-8) Clarion 19.29

765108 **Noisy Paint Box.** Rosenstock. il. GrandPre. (4-8) Knopf [AR/RC] .. 19.99

091652 **Sam & Dave Dig A Hole.**

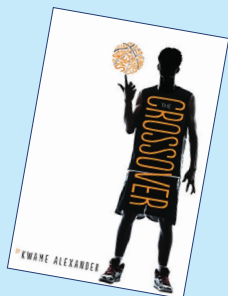
Barnett. il. Klassen. (5-8) Candlewick [AR] 19.65

658020 **Viva Frida.** Morales. (4-8) Roaring Brook 19.99

164413 **Right Word.** Bryant. il. Sweet. (7-11) Eerdmans [AR] 19.65

871684 **This One Summer.**

Tamaki. il. J. Tamaki. (12-18) First Second [AR/RC] 19.99



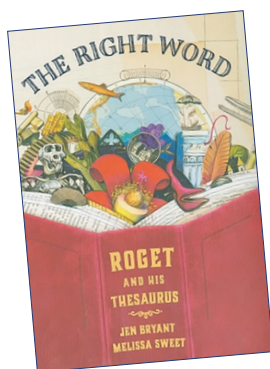
NEWBERY MEDAL AWARD

050290 **Crossover.** Alexander. (9-12) Houghton [AR/RC] 19.29

NEWBERY HONOR BOOKS

964784 **Brown Girl Dreaming.** Woodson. (10-14) Penguin [AR/RC] 19.29

105681 **El Deafo.** Bell. (8-12) Amulet [AR/RC] 22.77



ROBERT F. SIBERT INFORMATIONAL BOOK AWARD

164413 **Right Word.** Bryant. il. Sweet. (7-11) Eerdmans [AR] 19.65

SIBERT HONOR BOOKS

964784 **Brown Girl Dreaming.** Woodson. (10-14) Penguin [AR/RC] 19.29

341169 **Family Romanov.** Fleming. (12-16) Schwartz & Wade [AR/RC] 20.69

729810 **Josephine.** Powell. (7-10) Chronicle [AR/RC] 19.99

769325 **Neighborhood Sharks.** Roy. (7-11) Roaring Brook [AR] 19.99

884833 **Separate Is Never Equal.** Tonatiuh. (6-9) Abrams [AR/RC] 20.67





CORETTA SCOTT KING AUTHOR AWARD

964784 **Brown Girl Dreaming.** Woodson. (10-14) Penguin [AR/RC] 19.29

KING AUTHOR HONOR BOOKS

050290 **Crossover.** Alexander. (9-12) Houghton [AR/RC] 19.29

670489 **How I Discovered Poetry.** Nelson. (10-14) Penguin [AR/RC] 19.99

596656 **How It Went Down.** Magoon. (12-16) Holt [AR] 19.99



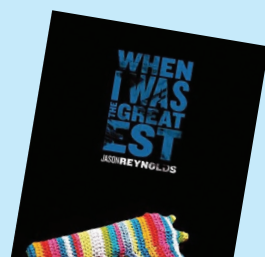
CORETTA SCOTT KING ILLUSTRATOR AWARD

242214 **Firebird.** Copeland. il. Myers. (5-8) Putnam 19.99

KING ILLUSTRATOR HONOR BOOKS

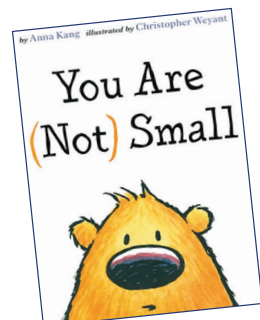
729810 **Josephine.** Powell. il. Robinson. (7-10) Chronicle [AR/RC] 19.99

773182 **Little Melba And Her Big Trombone.**
Russell-Brown. il. Morrison. (6-10) Lee & Low 20.67



JOHN F. STEPTOE NEW TALENT AUTHOR AWARD

749252 **When I Was The Greatest.**
Reynolds. (12-18) Atheneum [AR/RC] 19.99



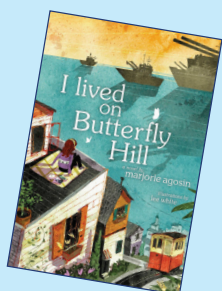
THEODOR SEUSS GEISEL AWARD

506636 **You Are (Not) Small.** Kang. (2-5) Two Lions 19.29

GEISEL HONOR BOOKS

774223 **Mr. Putter And Tabby Turn The Page.**
Rylant. (6-7) Houghton 17.89

949616 **Waiting Is Not Easy!** Willems. (4-8) Hyperion [AR] 19.99



PURA BELPRE AUTHOR AWARD

046085 **I Lived On Butterfly Hill.** Agosin. (10-14) Atheneum 19.99

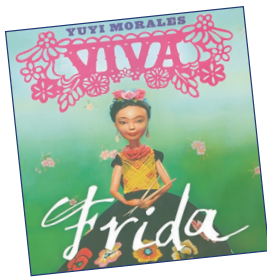
BELPRE AUTHOR HONOR BOOK

440732 **Portraits Of Hispanic American Heroes.**
Herrera. (8-12) Dial [AR] 21.39



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PURA BELPRE ILLUSTRATOR AWARD

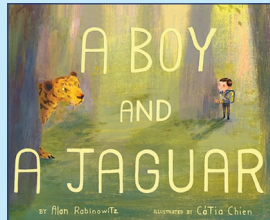
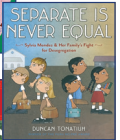
658020 **Viva Frida.** Morales. (4-8) Roaring Brook 19.99

BELPRE ILLUSTRATOR HONOR BOOKS

881512 **Green Is A Chile Pepper.** Thong. il. Parra. (4-6) Chronicle 19.29

308444 **Little Roja Riding Hood.** Elya. il. Guevara. (5-8) Putnam [AR] 19.29

884833 **Separate Is Never Equal.** Tonatiuh. (6-9) Abrams [AR/RC] 20.67



SCHNEIDER FAMILY BOOK AWARDS

CHILDREN'S AWARD

736843 **Boy And A Jaguar.** Rabinowitz. (4-8) Houghton [AR] 19.29

MIDDLE SCHOOL AWARD

606776 **Rain Reign.** Martin. (9-12) Feiwel and Friends [AR/RC] 19.29

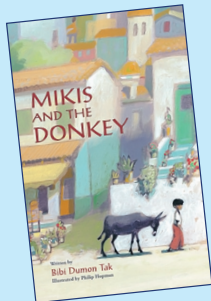
TEEN AWARD

379219 **Girls Like Us.** Giles. (12-16) Candlewick [AR/RC] 19.29



STONEWALL BOOK AWARD HONOR BOOK

670488 **I'll Give You The Sun.** Nelson. (12-16) Penguin 19.99



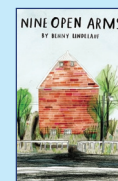
MILDRED L. BATCHELDER AWARD

870998 **Mikis And The Donkey.** Dumon Tak. (8-12) Eerdmans [AR] 16.50

BATCHELDER HONOR BOOKS

260514 **Hidden.** Dauvillier. (6-10) First Second [AR/RC] 19.29

574408 **Nine Open Arms.** Lindelauf. (9-13) Enchanted Lion 19.27



MICHAEL L. PRINTZ AWARD

670488 **I'll Give You The Sun.** Nelson. (12-16) Penguin 19.99

PRINTZ HONOR BOOK

871684 **This One Summer.**

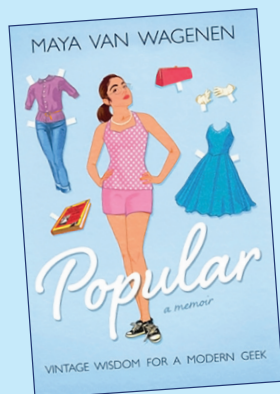
Tamaki. il. J. Tamaki. (12-18) First Second [AR/RC] 19.99





WILLIAM C. MORRIS BOOK AWARD

736598 **Gabi, A Girl In Pieces.** Quintero. (12-16) Cinco Puntos [AR/RC] 15.77



YALSA AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN NONFICTION FOR YOUNG ADULTS

913105 **Popular, A Memoir.** Wagenen. (12-16) Dutton [AR/RC] 20.69

YALSA AWARD FINALISTS

341169 **Family Romanov.** Fleming. (12-16) Schwartz & Wade [AR/RC] 20.69

622427 **Ida M. Tarbell.** McCully. (12-16) Clarion [AR/RC] 20.69

171980 **Laughing At My Nightmare.** Burcaw. (14-18) Roaring Brook ... 19.99

809559 **Port Chicago 50.** Sheinkin. (12-16) Roaring Brook [AR/RC] 21.39



AR — Accelerated Reader® Quiz Available. RC — Reading Counts® Quiz Available. Prices subject to change.



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