



TOP 10 PICKS TOP 10 PICKS **TOP 10 PICKS** TOP 10 PICKS TOP 10

A Child of Books

By Oliver Jeffers and Sam Winston

“This book is a quiet and powerful homage to the transformative power of children’s literature. Readers follow a young girl as she travels a sea of words to collect a boy in need of an adventure. The imaginations of both the reader and the boy bloom under the guidance of the young girl, and by journey’s end everyone becomes a Child of Books. Jeffers’ colorful illustrations draw new and familiar fans alike into the story, while Winston’s typographic scenery holds many rewards for the careful and observant reader.”

—Amy Brabenec, Brookline Booksmith, Brookline, MA



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The Uncorker of Ocean Bottles

By Michelle Cuevas, Erin E. Stead (Illus.)

“He has no name, no friends, and smells of seaweed and salt, but the Uncorker of Ocean Bottles has an incredibly important job. He makes certain that all messages sent in bottles are delivered to their intended recipients. He takes his job very seriously, but, deep down, he wishes that someday a message would be sent just for him. Readers will fall in love with this character and his story of determination, and, ultimately friendship. With beautiful illustrations and lovely text, this picture book is destined to become a cherished title on any bookshelf.”

—Amanda Snow, Hooray for Books!, Alexandria, VA



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Gertie’s Leap to Greatness

By Kate Beasley, Jillian Tamaki (Illus.)

“Gertie has a plan. She will be the best fifth-grader in the whole world and if she is, maybe her estranged mother won’t leave town. Not that Gertie cares. She has a great dad, good friends, and is awesome all on her own, but she’s still going to try. Of course, things go awry when a new girl arrives in school and stirs up trouble. Gertie is an utterly winning heroine, plucky and stubborn, and hers is a thoroughly charming, funny, and heartfelt story. I loved it.”

—Flannery Fitch, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA



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They All Saw a Cat

By Brendan Wenzel

“Don’t be fooled by the quiet modesty of the cover. Open this picture book and find a surprise with every page turned. Using a variety of artistic styles and techniques, debut author and illustrator Wenzel celebrates the uniqueness of individual perspectives and encourages his readers to see the world in their own distinct way: ‘When you see a cat, what do you see?’”

—Niki Marion, Odyssey Bookshop, South Hadley, MA



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The Poet's Dog

By Patricia MacLachlan

"MacLachlan has written a beautiful story that is sure to touch the hearts of children—and adults—everywhere. It reminds readers of the magic we experience when we have a dog to love, the importance of loyalty, and the joy of finding a place to call home. This book is sure to become a classic."

—Lisa Nehs, Books & Company, Oconomowoc, WI



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The Girl Who Drank the Moon

By Kelly Barnhill

"As in most fairy tales, there is a town on the edge of a fearsome wood, and there is a witch. But there are two sides to every story, and while the witch may take your child, the how and the why and what comes next are where the true tale lies. An 'enmagicked' girl named Luna, a swamp monster who walks on all sixes (sevens if he's using his tail), a dragon who yearns to be Simply Enormous, a Tower of Sisters studying a madwoman's sorrow, an overly curious boy who creates beautiful things—these are just a few of the elements in this powerful, engaging story rich in wisdom, wit, and wry truths. This is beautiful storytelling that readers will drink up greedily."

—Danielle Borsch, Vroman's Bookstore, Pasadena, CA



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Penguin Problems

By Jory John, Lane Smith (Illus.)

"Some problems are serious, some are silly, and some, well, some are just penguin problems. When the water is too salty, when the sea is too dark, when you are a bird that cannot fly, and when every one you know looks exactly the same, well, those are penguin problems. This fun picture book is sure to make even the grumpiest young reader giggle!"

—Angie Tally, The Country Bookshop, Southern Pines, NC



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How This Book Was Made

By Mac Barnett, Adam Rex (Illus.)

"Ever wonder what the book you are reading went through to get into your hands? Did you realize that the author and illustrator had to face tigers, angry mobs, pirates, and worse? This is a wonderful book for reading aloud to curious young ones, and for older students and adults who have a keen sense of humor, it is guaranteed to make them laugh out loud. Most important is the message that 'a book still isn't a book, not really, until it has a reader.' That's you!"

—Karen Briggs, Great Northern Books & Hobbies, Oscoda, MI



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Kids of Appetite

By David Arnold

“Sixteen-year-old Vic Benucci suffers from a condition called Moebius syndrome, a rare neurological disorder that causes facial paralysis, which means he cannot blink, smile, or frown. Bullied by his classmates and often assumed to be stupid by adults, Vic is actually witty and intelligent, a lover of art and opera. What Vic’s face cannot show but what he needs to say is that he still grieves for his father who died two years ago. When his mother takes up with a new boyfriend, Vic runs away on a quest to scatter his father’s ashes. Along the way, Vic bumps into a ragtag group of homeless kids and young adults called the Kids of Appetite who take him in, feed and shelter him, and treat him with kindness just because he asks for help. This is a book about accepting loss, finding family, finding love, and discovering that we are all chapters in each other’s stories.”

—Jill Zimmerman, Literati Bookstore, Ann Arbor, MI



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A Torch Against the Night

By Sabaa Tahir

“*A Torch Against the Night* immediately picks up with Laia and Elias’ escape at the end of *An Ember in the Ashes*. Determined to break Laia’s brother out of prison, Laia and Elias begin a breakneck journey across Serra, closely followed by Elias’ former best friend, Helene, who has orders to kill them. Detailing the perspectives of Elias, Laia, and Helene, Tahir does an incredible job weaving all three stories together. *A Torch Against the Night* is exhilarating, thrilling, and heartbreaking, with plenty of unexpected twists and turns.”

—Sami Thomason, Square Books, Oxford, MS



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