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Children's Picture Books - English

Sukaq and the Raven, by Roy Goose, Kerry McCluskey, Soyeon Kim

36 Pages

Sukaq loves to drift off to sleep listening to his mother tell him stories. His favourite story is the tale of how a raven created the world. But this time, as his mother begins to tell the story and his eyelids become heavy, he is suddenly whisked away on the wings of the raven to ride along as the entire world is formed! This traditional legend from Inuit storyteller Roy Goose is brought to life through co-author Kerry Mc Cluskey's jubilant retelling.

One Winter Night - by Jennifer Lloyd, Lynn Ray

32 Pages

One winter night, out of their nest, ten little grey mice climb onto the ice. One by one they run back to the house scared off by a new animal that comes by until the last one find itself far down the ice and has to hurry back, past each of the ten animals. Hurry, hurry! Scurry scurry! Safe in the house, sneaked the small mouse, one winter night, under the moonlight.

Sick Simon by Dan Krall

48 Pages

Are germs gross, or great? Sick Simon learns how to be health-conscious during cold and flu season in this clever picture book from the author-illustrator of The Great Lollipop Caper. Simon is going to have the best week ever. Who cares if he has a cold? He goes to school anyway, and sneezes everywhere, and coughs on everyone, and touches everything. Germs call him a hero! Everyone else calls him... Sick Simon. When will it end? How far will he go? Will the germs take over, or can Sick Simon learn to change his ways

The Old Woman Who Named Things by Cynthia Rylant, Kathryn Brown

32 Pages

How does an old woman who has outlived all her friends keep from being lonely? By naming the things in her life she knows she will never outlive - like her house, Franklin, and her bed, Roxanne. When a shy brown puppy appears at her front gate, the old woman won't name it, because it might not outlive her. Tender watercolors capture the charm of this heartwarming story of an old woman

who doesn't know she's lonely until she meets a plucky puppy who needs a name - and someone to love.

Dirty Cowboy by Amy Timberlake

32 Pages

After he finds a tumbleweed in his chaps and the numerous bugs buzzing around him affect his hearing, the cowboy decides it's time to head to the river. Once there, he peels off all his clothes and tells his trusty old dog to guard them against strangers. He takes a refreshing bath and emerges clean as corn - but so fresh-smelling that his dog doesn't recognize him! Negotiations over the return of the clothes prove fruitless. A wrestling match ensues in a tale that grows taller by the sentence, climaxing in a fabric-speckled dust devil.

The Three Questions, by Jon J Muth

32 Pages

Nikolai is a boy who believes that if he can find the answers to his three questions, he will always know how to be a good person. His friends—a heron, a monkey, and a dog—try to help, but to no avail, so he asks Leo, the wise old turtle. "When is the best time to do things? Who is the most important one? What is the right thing to do?" Leo doesn't answer directly, but by the end of Nikolai's visit, the boy has discovered the answers himself.

The prairie fire by Marilyn Reynolds

32 Pages

A historical picture book set during the Westward expansion. Young Percy is impatient to help with the farm chores, but his father tells him he must wait till he is older. When a prairie fire threatens their homestead, the boy bravely joins in the efforts to save it. When the danger has passed, his father asks him to help bring the livestock back to the barn: "It's a job for two men. Why don't you come with me, Son?" The text explains the very real threat that prairie fires posed to pioneers and the methods they used to protect their homes and lives while engaging readers with Percy's story. Children will appreciate the homesteaders' hardships as well as the closeness and love between the boy and his father. The illustrations are realistic and endearing; the prairie landscape is beautifully portrayed throughout, culminating with a striking sunset. This dramatic title gives readers several themes to discuss and think about, such as survival on the prairie, family, responsibility, and cooperation. - School Library Journal.

Which Way Should I Go? by Sylvia Olsen, Ron Martin, Kasia

Charko

40 Pages

Joey is a happy Nuu-chah-nulth boy, eager to help and quick to see the bright side of things. But when he loses his beloved grandmother, the sun goes out in his world. Fortunately, she has left something of herself behind—a song, which keeps knocking on Joey's heart, and a dance, which urges him to get up on his feet and choose again.

The Kindhearted Crocodile by Lucia Panzieri, AntonGionata Ferrari

32 Pages

Once upon a time, there was a crocodile—not just any old crocodile with big sharp teeth and powerful jaws, but a crocodile with the kindest of hearts that was gentle and sensitive, and dreamed of one day being a beloved pet in a happy family. Through the magic of a picture book and with an irrepressible desire to please, this ferocious-looking crocodile that tidies toys, washes dishes, and fights monsters in bad dreams makes his own dream come true.

Proud as a Peacock, Brave as a Lion by Jane Barclay, Renne Benoit

24 Pages

Much has been written about war and remembrance, but very little of it has been for young children. As questions come from a young grandchild, his grandpa talks about how, as a very young man, he was as proud as a peacock in uniform, busy as a beaver on his Atlantic crossing, and brave as a lion charging into battle. Soon, the old man's room is filled with an imaginary menagerie as the child thinks about different aspects of wartime. But as he pins medals on his grandpa's blazer and receives his own red poppy in return, the mood becomes more somber.

Best Friend Trouble by Frances Itani, Geneviève Després

32 Pages

Hanna is fed up with her best friend, Lizzy, who is always trying to be better than her. When Lizzy tells Hanna she can throw her ball farther and succeeds, it's the last straw. Hanna is tired of feeling second best, but what she doesn't realize is that sometimes she makes Lizzy feel that way too. Maybe there's a way they can still be best friends after all. A funny and relatable story about best friends, competition and learning to see things from another's point of view.

Some Things Are Scary by Florence Parry Heide, Jules Feiffer

40 Pages

You're skating downhill, but you don't know how to stop. You're having your hair cut, and you suddenly realize . . . they're cutting it too short. There's no question about it: some things are scary. And never have common bugaboos been exposed with more comic urgency than in this masterful mix of things horrible and humiliating, monstrous or merely unsettling. Perfectly pitched to a kid's perspective, Florence Parry Heide's witty text and Jules Feiffer's over-the-top illustrations will get even the most anxious recipients laughing, while reassuring them (no matter how old they are) that they're not alone in their fears.

Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!: A Sonic Adventure by Wynton Marsalis, Paul Rogers

40 Pages

What's that sound? The back door squeeeeaks open, sounding like a noisy mouse nearby — eeek, eeeek, eeeek! Big trucks on the highway rrrrrrrumble, just as hunger makes a tummy grrrrumble. Ringing with exuberance and auditory delights, this second collaboration by world-renowned jazz musician and composer Wynton Marsalis and acclaimed illustrator Paul Rogers takes readers (and listeners) on a rollicking, clanging, clapping tour through the many sounds that fill a neighborhood.

Mama, I'll Give You the World by Roni Schotter, S. Saelig Gallagher

40 Pages

Every day after school Luisa goes to Walter's World of Beauty to watch her mama work— cutting, coloring, and curling customer's hair, transforming them into the images of their dreams. Mama works hard and hardly ever smiles, but when she does, she is the prettiest flower in all the World. At the end of each day, she puts her tip money in a special envelopes for Luisa— the envelope marked "college." She wants to give her daughter the world— but Luisa has plans of her own. It's Mama's birthday and, for one night, she wants to make Mama smile... the way she smiles in an old photograph of her dancing at a place called Roseland. So Luisa transforms Walter's World of Beauty into Roseland, by decorating it with roses and collages of Mama's customers, who are also in on Luisa's secret. And it isn't long before everyone is happily dancing, especially Mama, who is the happiest of all.

The Polar Bear's gift, by Jeanne Bushey

32 Pages

Inspired by a traditional Inuit legend, *The Polar Bear's Gift* is about the compassion and resourcefulness of a young girl with ambitious dreams. It is Pani's trial and her triumph to discover that what makes a great hunter is not necessarily a straight aim. It is the lure of the heart on the cold arctic ice.

Stolen Words, by Melanie Florence

24 Pages

The story of the beautiful relationship between a little girl and her grandfather. When she asks her grandfather how to say something in his language – Cree – he admits that his language was stolen from him when he was a boy. The little girl then sets out to help her grandfather find his language again. This picture book explores the intergenerational impact of the residential school system that separated young Indigenous children from their families. The story recognizes the pain of those whose culture and language were taken from them, how that pain is passed down, and how healing can also be shared.

Song for the Summer Night: a Lullaby, by Robert Heidbreder

32 pages

As night falls on a soft summer evening, neighborhood children are drawn out of their houses by the sights and sounds of the world after dark. First the fireflies come sparkling past, followed by a host of domestic and wild animals, from cats and dogs to owls and skunks. Accomplished children's poet Robert Heidbreder creates a world of enchantment, while Qin Leng's illustrations conjure the harmonious interplay between our everyday domestic world and one that is just a little bit wilder. All the characters, both human and otherwise, have their moment on the nighttime stage, but eventually, the curtain falls, and sleepiness beckons.

Earth to Audrey, by Susan Hughes

32 pages

Audrey comes into Ray's life like an earthbound star. Everything about her is a bit far-out. And she's always in her own little world. So Ray decides that this unusual girl who has dropped into his neighborhood for the summer must be an alien. As they become friends, Audrey takes Ray on a journey of discovery — one that enables him to see his own planet in a new light. Soon, Ray can't imagine life on Earth without her.

Have you Filled your Bucket Today? by Carol McCloud

31 pages

This heartwarming book encourages positive behavior by using the concept of an invisible bucket to

show children how easy and rewarding it is to express kindness, appreciation and love by "filling buckets."

Enzo Races in the Rain, by Garth Stein

36 pages

Life on the farm is pretty quiet—except when he races the cars that come down the barn road. Because Enzo is fast. He knows he's different from other dogs. But people never understand Enzo when he barks, and it drives him crazy! Then one day Enzo meets a little girl named Zoë and her father, Denny, and everything changes.

Stella, Fairy of the Forest, by Marie-Louise Gay

32 pages

Stella's little brother, Sam, wonders whether fairies are invisible. Stella assures him that she has seen hundreds of them and says that if she and Sam venture across the meadow and into the forest, they are likely to find some. So begins another adventure of Stella, the irrepressible redhead, and her slightly apprehensive little brother. But Sam surprises Stella and himself by having a few ideas of his own — ideas that ensure a wonderful end to a perfect day in the woods.

Children's Chapter Books

Some of the Kinder Planets: Stories by Tim Wynne-Jones

136 Pages

Meet someone new... Harriet, who sees Mars and tastes pomengranates – all in one day; Cluny, a girl who wants to publish a magazine for people with weird names; Ky, who lives in a geodesic dome deep in the country; Fletcher, the survivor of an almost fatal illness, who decides to paste the names of exotic places he would like to visit on his chest and stomach; Edward George, who made a discovery and became famous – famous and forgotten – on a hot day in 1867.

Johnny Kellock Died Today by Hadley Dyer

208 Pages

Rosalie Norman is facing the summer of 1959 as if she was being sentenced to boredom. Her best

friend is away and she is stuck socializing with the boy next door, a strange young man called "the Gravedigger" by the local children due to his job at the local cemetery. Her carelessness with her drawing pencils causes Rosalie's mother to fall and fracture her ankle and as a result, the Gravedigger is recruited to help the family out with chores. This forced connection is not one that Rosalie wants, fearing the backlash from fellow students when returning to school in the fall. Johnny Kellock Died Today is centred around Rosalie's hunt for the titular character, her favourite cousin Johnny, whose disappearance her family is hiding.

Last Chance Bay Paperback by Anne Laurel Carter

188 Pages

Set in Cape Breton in the early stages of the Second World War, Last Chance Bay tells the story of Meg, a young girl who dreams of flying. Inspired by her heroines Amelia Earhart and Beryl Markham, Meg's dream is a lofty one and unlikely to ever come true. Meg's father, like most of the men in town, is employed in the coal mine, and life for all is a daily struggle for survival. When the bare essentials are all that's expected, how can anyone nourish hope?

Boy O'Boy by Brian Doyle

176 Pages

Martin O'Boy's life is not easy. His beloved Granny has just died, his pregnant mother and father fight all the time and his twin, Phil, is completely incapacitated. Martin is the one his mother counts on. But life in Ottawa's Lowertown is not all bad. He has his best friend, Billy Batson (a.k.a. Captain Marvel), the movies, his cat Cheap and there's the glamorous Buz from next door, who is off at the war. As the war comes to an end with the bombing of Hiroshima – on Martin's birthday – Ottawa is in a state of turmoil. Returning soldiers, parties, fights and drunks fill the streets. It would all be very exciting, except for one thing. In their endless pursuit of more funds Martin and Billy have joined the church choir – as summer boys. And the organist, Mr. T.D.S. George, is awfully fond of Martin. But Martin, despite his hardships, has a pure soul and his Granny's love, Billy's friendship, Buz's imminent return, and even his mother's reliance on him, which help him to deliver a kind of justice to Mr. George, and to heal himself and others.

Dear Canada: Orphan at My Door: The Home Child Diary of Victoria Cope, Guelph, Ontario, 1897 by Jean Little

224 Pages

Through the diary of 10-year-old Victoria Cope, we learn about the arrival of ragged Mary Anna, one of the thousands of impoverished British children who were sent to Canada at the beginning of the century. Mary Anna joins the Cope family as a servant and is treated well, but she has to cope with the initial apprehension of the family members and the loss of her brother, Jasper, who was placed with another family. Victoria vows to help Mary Anna find her brother, so they can be a family once again.

Stephen Fair by Tim Wynne-Jones

192 Pages

Stephen's dreams are filled with unending ladders and crying babies, and they take place in a house that, like his own, has a real tree growing through it. He senses that his mother knows what is causing his nightmares and that she is holding back information about his past. With help from his new best friend, Virginia Elizabeth Dulcima Skye, who is having family problems of her own, Stephen decides he must begin to deal with his situation. After discovering hidden letters and pictures that reveal a complex family history, their secret turns out to be far more disturbing than his nightmares. In the end, however, Stephen decides he is better off knowing the truth.

Summer Of The Mad Monk by Cora Taylor

145 Pages

There was no doubt he was strong. And he looked to Pip like a man who couldn't be killed – somebody you could poison and shoot and stab and drown and he'd still come back. He called himself Rapinsky, but Pip knew who he was. He was the man whose eyes they said had hypnotized the tsar's wife. Pip had found Rasputin, and nobody knew.

The Crazy Man Paperback by Pamela Porter

176 Pages

It is 1965, and twelve-year-old Emaline lives on a wheat farm in southern Saskatchewan. Her family has fallen apart. When her beloved dog, Prince, chased a hare into the path of the tractor, she chased after him, and her dad accidentally ran over her leg with the discer, leaving her with a long convalescence and a permanent disability. But perhaps the worst thing from Emaline's point of view is that in his grief and guilt, her father shot Prince and then left Emaline and her mother on their own.

Uncle Ronald by Brian Doyle

168 Pages

Old Mickey is one hundred and twelve years old. He can't remember what he ate for lunch today, but he can remember every detail of what happened one hundred years ago, when he and his mother ran away from his violent father to take refuge in the hills north of Ottawa. Brilliantly combining humor and tragedy, the award-winning Uncle Ronald is one of Brian Doyle's most emotionally powerful novels.

Watching Jimmy Paperback by Nancy Hartry

160 Pages

Watching Jimmy is impossible-to-put-down; full of danger, warmth, and dark humor. With shocking candor, Carolyn relates what really happened to her best friend, Jimmy, when his uncle chose the perfect time to teach him a lesson he would never forget. The truth is Jimmy didn't fall from a swing like Uncle Ted claims. Carolyn knows - she saw everything. With the dreadful secret locked away, Carolyn walks an emotional tightrope. No matter what else is happening in this post-war era, she must keep an eye on her now poor, brain damaged Jimmy. But when Uncle Ted threatens his beleaguered family with even more abuse and the loss of their home, Carolyn must find the courage to match wits with him and to speak out, using the truth as her only weapon. Set in 1958, Watching Jimmy is a brilliant portrait of the post-war era, a family of strong women, and a resourceful heroine who exudes character, resilience, and most of all, love.

Dear Earthling: Cosmic Correspondent, by Per Avey

183 pages

Dethbert Jones is your average ten-year-old – only he lives on the planet Crank with his pet chicken-snail and his robot best friend Andi Social. When he and Andi join the Space Cadets, a Scouts-like organization, they are totally smooched at the prospect of going to Space Camp where they'll learn to pilot a real shuttlecraft and disintegrate weapons of mass destruction. Blamtastic!

To earn his cosmic correspondent badge, Dethbert begins writing to an earthling – and boy, does he have a lot to write about! Between questions about Earth food, culture, and activities, Dethbert recounts his experiences attempting to avoid his horrible little sister, impress his animal-obsessed crush, and fly a space shuttle. Misadventures – from hairy ankles to crash landings – abound, but Dethbert's curiosity and enthusiasm can't be crushed, not by anything in this galaxy, anyway!

Very Rich, by Polly Horvath

304 pages

Rupert lives with his parents and many siblings in a small house in the poorest section of Steelville, Ohio. When he spends Christmas with his classmate Turgid Rivers, he is offered all the food he can eat, and the opportunity to win wonderful prizes in the family games—prizes he hopes to take home so he can share his Christmas bounty with his family. But after he loses everything in the last game, Rupert resigns himself to going home empty handed.

Feeling secretly guilty, all of the adults in Rivers family try to make it up to him by taking Rupert on one unlikely adventure after another, embroiling him in everything from time travel to bank robberies. But can anything he experiences make up for what he has lost?

Deftly blending magical realism with heartbreak, hope, and a wide cast of eccentric characters, Polly Horvath weaves a tale that is darkly funny and deeply poignant. Very Rich is a bittersweet and quirky story that celebrates the unique nature of human experience.

Black Chuck, by Regan McDonell

304 pages

Psycho. Sick. Dangerous. Réal Dufresne's reputation precedes him. When the mangled body of his best friend, Shaun, turns up in a field just east of town, tough-as-hell Réal blames himself. But except for the nightmares, all Ré remembers is beating the living crap out of Shaun the night of his death.

Shaun's girlfriend, sixteen-year-old Evie Hawley, keeps her feelings locked up tight. But now she's pregnant, and the father of her baby is dead. And when Réal looks to her to atone for his sins, everything goes sideways. Fast.

The tighter Evie and Réal get, the faster things seem to fall apart. And falling in love might just be the card that knocks the whole house down.

Pulse Point, by Colleen Nelson

284 pages

In Kaia's world, setting foot Outside can be deadly. The safety of the City has kept humans alive as climate change destroys the world. But the City has found a way to survive sustainably: it is run by the energy generated by its Citizens. The energy that citizens create is calculated and displayed on their pulse point, a transmitter embedded in their finger.

Kaia is a Citizen, one of the few deemed genetically perfect enough to live under the protective dome of the City with her grandmother and father. But when Kaia discovers her mother is alive and living Outside, she escapes the safety of the City and learns the truth about the sinister world she left behind.

Don't Tell the Enemy, by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch

160 pages

During the Soviet occupation of Ukraine during World War II, some of Krystia's family are harrassed; others are arrested and killed. When the Nazis liberate the town, they are welcomed with open arms. Krystia's best friend Dolik isn't so sure. His family is Jewish and there are rumours that the Nazis might be even more brutal than the Soviets.

Shortly after the Nazis arrive, they discover a mass grave of Soviet prisoners and blame the slaughter on the Jews. Soon, the Nazis establish ghettos and begin public executions of Jews.

Krystia can't bear to see her friends suffering and begins smuggling food into the ghetto. When rumours circulate that the ghetto will be evacuated and the Jews will be exterminated, Krystia must decide if she's willing to risk her own family's safety to save her friends.

A World Below, by Wesley King

288 pages

A class field trips turns into an underground quest for survival in the latest middle grade novel from the author of Edgar Award winner *OCDaniel*.

Mr. Baker's eighth grade class thought they were in for a normal field trip to Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. But when an earthquake hits, their field trip takes a terrifying turn. The students are plunged into an underground lake...and their teacher goes missing.

They have no choice but to try and make their way back above ground, even though no one can agree on the best course of action. The darkness brings out everyone's true self. Supplies dwindle and tensions mount. Pretty and popular Silvia does everything she can to hide her panic attacks, even as she tries to step up and be a leader. But the longer she's underground, the more frequent and debilitating they become. Meanwhile, Eric has always been a social no one, preferring to sit at the back of the class and spend evenings alone. Now, he finds himself separated from his class, totally by himself underground. That is, until he meets an unexpected stranger.

Told from three different points of view, this fast-paced adventure novel explores how group dynamics change under dire circumstances. Do the students of Mr. Baker's class really know each other at all? Or do they just think they do? It turns out, it's hard to hide in the dark.

Sit, by Deborah Ellis

144 pages

The seated child. With a single powerful image, Deborah Ellis draws our attention to nine children and the situations they find themselves in, often through no fault of their own. In each story, a child makes a decision and takes action, be that a tiny gesture or a life-altering choice.

Jafar is a child laborer in a chair factory and longs to go to school. Sue sits on a swing as she and her brother wait to have a supervised visit with their father at the children's aid society. Gretchen considers the lives of concentration camp victims during a school tour of Auschwitz. Mike survives seventy-two days of solitary as a young offender. Barry squirms on a food court chair as his parents tell him that they are separating. Macie sits on a too-small time-out chair while her mother receives visitors for tea. Noosala crouches in a fetid, crowded apartment in Uzbekistan, waiting for an unscrupulous refugee smuggler to decide her fate.

These children find the courage to face their situations in ways large and small, in this eloquent collection from a master storyteller.

Looking for X, by Deborah Ellis

132 pages

Smart and independent, 11-year-old Khyber lives with her mom, Tammy, a former stripper, and her

autistic twin brothers in a poor Toronto neighborhood. Though she doesn't have a lot in common with her classmates, Khyber does have wonderfully eccentric friends: Valerie, Toronto's meanest waitress, and X, a homeless woman in hiding from "the secret police." Despite having to deal with pompous social workers who make her mother cry and ignorant kids who make remarks about her brothers, Khyber manages to enjoy herself, poring over atlases, planning exotic journeys, and taking peanut butter sandwiches to X. But when Tammy decides to move her sons to a group home for proper care, Khyber's world starts to crumble. She fights with her mom and then gets expelled from school. To make matters worse, X suddenly disappears. Khyber sets out to find her in a wild all-night odyssey of self-discovery.

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