About the List and Criteria for Selection
The books that appear in this annotated list were evaluated and selected by a Book Review Committee appointed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) and assembled in cooperation with the Children’s Book Council (CBC). NCSS and CBC have cooperated on this annual bibliography since 1972. Books selected for this bibliography were published in 2015 and were written for children in grades K-12. The Book Review Committee looks for books that emphasize human relations, represent a diversity of groups and are sensitive to a broad range of cultural experiences, present an original theme or a fresh slant on a traditional topic, are easily readable and of high literary quality, have a pleasing format, and, where appropriate, include illustrations that enrich the text. Each book is read by several reviewers, and books are included on the list by committee assent; the annotations do not necessarily reflect the judgment of the entire committee.

Publishers’ addresses are available in standard reference works such as Children’s Books in Print (R.R. Bowker) and Literary Market Place (R.R. Bowker), and from CBC. CBC’s Members List may be downloaded at www.cbcbooks.org/membership/member-list. Credits for permission to reproduce the cover art included in this supplement are printed on page 16.

Titles are arranged by broad subject categories. Although many are appropriate for more than one category, they have been placed where their usefulness in social studies education appears greatest. Annotators have also indicated the thematic strands (shown below) from National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, to which the book relates.

Thematic Strands of the NCSS Curriculum Standards for Social Studies
1. CULTURE
2. TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE
3. PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS
4. INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY
5. INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS
6. POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE
7. PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND CONSUMPTION
8. SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY
9. GLOBAL CONNECTIONS
10. CIVIC IDEALS AND PRACTICES

Key to a Notable Listing
1. The titles marked with an asterisk are Selectors’ Choices—books that individual committee members responded to with particular enthusiasm. 2. Title: Subtitle 3. Author(s) 4. Illustrator 5. Publisher. 6. Number of pages 7. International Standard Book Numbers (ISBNs) are included for all available editions (trade, library, and paperback). The symbol “F” indicates that a paperback edition is forthcoming. A publisher’s name in parentheses indicates that a different publisher will issue the paperback edition. 8. Price as of January 2014 9. Reading levels: P: Primary (K-2), I: Intermediate (3-5), M: Middle (6-8), H: High (9-12). They are intended as guidelines and are not meant to limit the potential use of titles. 10. Brief descriptive annotation, plus notations of the presence of additional textual materials, if any. 11. Initials indicating the reviewer responsible for the annotation (see list at right). 12. Thematic strands of the curriculum standards for social studies in order of relevancy (see list above).

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BIOGRAPHY


The Amazing Age of John Roy Lynch. Chris Barton. Illustrated by Don Tate. Eerdmans Books for Young Readers. 50pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-802-85379-0, $17.00. (I, M). John Roy Lynch was born a slave but after emancipation was able to educate himself, find work, and become a U.S. congressman in 10 years. This beautifully illustrated biography tells his amazing story. Historical Note, Author’s Note, Illustrator’s Note, Timeline, Further Reading. (AMW). /booti

Beatrix Potter and Her Paint Box. David McPhail. Henry Holt, an imprint of Macmillan Children’s Publishing Group. 40pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-805-09170-0, $17.99. (P) This book chronicles Beatrix’s early life and her love of nature, animals, and art, and shows how these intersect in the creation of her endearing characters—still popular to this day. (ML) /booti

Becoming Maria: Love and Chaos in the South Bronx. Sonia Manzano. Scholastic Inc. 272pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-545-62184-7, $17.99. (H) Before she was Sesame Street’s “Maria,” Sonia Manzano was navigating the poverty and abuse of 1950s New York City. With creativity, culture, and humor, she finds a way to survive and even thrive. (QPR) /booti


www.socialstudies.org/notable 3
Funny Bones: Posada and His Day of the Dead Calaveras. Duncan Tonatiuh. Abrams. 40pp. Trade ISBN 978-1-419-71647-8, $18.95. (I) The life of Mexican artist Jose Guadalupe Posada is explored through whimsical illustrations that blend Posada’s original works with Tonatiuh’s. Posada is best known for his calaveras (skeletons), which have become synonymous with the Day of the Dead festival. Author’s Note, Glossary, Bibliography, Art Credits, Where You Can See Posada’s Work in the U.S.A. (LEM)  


Queen of the Diamond: The Lizzie Murphy Story. Emily Arnold McCully. Margaret Ferguson Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, an imprint of Macmillan Children’s Publishing Group. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-374-30007-4, $17.99. (P, I) In the early 1900s, Lizzie Murphy played baseball at a time when most girls didn’t. She eventually landed a spot on a professional team and fought to earn the same wage as the male players. Author’s Note, Sources. (ATC)


Terrible Typhoid Mary: A True Story of the Deadliest Cook in America. Susan Bartoletti. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Books for Young Readers. 240pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-544-31367-5, $17.99. (I, M) This biography tells the true story of identifying and containing a carrier of one of the most contagious diseases in history. Mary Mallon was a shy cook and didn’t believe she was spreading typhoid fever. Afterword, Photo Album, Timeline, Bibliography, Index. (ATC)


CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS

Alex as Well. Alyssa Brugman. Henry Holt, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group. 224pp. Trade ISBN 978-1-627-79014-7, $16.99. Square Fish. Paperback ISBN 978-1-250-07363-1, $9.99. (H) Alex is an independent adolescent. This novel follows Alex’s uphill battle to convince the world around her that she is not a boy, but that she’s a girl. (ATC) 3 14


George. Alex Gino. Scholastic Press. 240pp. Trade ISBN 978-0545812542, $16.99. (I) George has a secret, but her desire to be Charlotte in the class play, Charlotte's Web, pushes her to be open about who she really is. (ATC) 3 14

I am a Bear. Jean-François Dumont. Eerdmans Books for Young Readers. 34pp. Trade ISBN 978-0802854476, $16.00. (P) The bear lives on the street, hungry and homeless and with no compassion from the people who walk past him each day. He loses hope, until one day, a small girl notices him as she walks with her father. Her kindness changes his world. (SD) 3 14

I’m New Here. Anne Sibley O’Brien. Charlesbridge. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-1-58089-612-2 $16.95. (I) Maria, Jin, and Fatimah are new to the U.S. and to their schools. They make new friends while navigating a new culture and language. Author's Note. (SD) 5 16

Into The Dangerous World. Julie Chibbaro. Illustrated by JM Superville Sovak. Viking Books for Young Readers. 352pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-803-73910-9, $17.99. (M, H) This is the riveting story of a young artist pulled in different directions by her talents and those who would shape it. This lyrically written book explores the world of street art and classical art and the chasm between them, with illustrations that communicate as vividly as the text. (JAW) 3 14


The Last Leaves Falling. Sarah Benwell. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 368pp. Trade ISBN 978-1481430654, $17.99. (H) In this beautifully written novel, 17-year-old Sora shares his thoughts as he grapples with the fact that he is going to die, having been diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease), and then realizing that he wants to die with dignity. Glossary (LL)

Last Stop on Market Street. Matt De La Peña. Illustrated by Christian Robinson. G.P. Putnam’s Sons Books for Young Readers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-399-25774-2, $16.99. (P) CJ rides the bus across town with his grandmother, asking many questions that highlight their economic circumstances (“Why don’t we have a car?”), as they head to a soup kitchen to help others who have even less. (LFS)


ENVIRONMENT/ENERGY/ECOLOGY


This book was inadvertently left out of the printed booklet.

FOLKTALES


GEOGRAPHY/PEOPLE/PLACES


HISTORY/LIFE & CULTURE IN THE AMERICAS


Symphony for the City of the Dead: Dmitri Shostakovich and the Siege of Leningrad. M.T. Anderson. Candlewick Press. 464pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-763-66818-1, $25.99. (H) This masterpiece of a biography is more than the story of an amazing musician and his greatest work; it also captures the Russian people in a stark moment of history and shows how music can inspire and console. Primary sources are beautifully integrated throughout. Author’s Note, Source Notes, Bibliography, Index. (JAW)


highlights an extraordinary event for each day of February. Laws, people, victories, and injustices are explicated through verse, quotes, and text. Bibliography. (JG)


Freedom’s School. Lesa Cline-Ransome. Illustrated by James E. Ransome. Disney - Jump At The Sun. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-1-4231-6103-5, $17.99. (I, M) A school is built for newly freed slaves near Lizzie’s community. This seems too good to be true for Lizzie and her brother, until tragedy strikes. Will they ever be able to attend school again? (ATC)


The Hired Girl. Laura Amy Schlitz. Candlewick Press. 400pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-763-67818-0, $17.99. (M, H) In 1911, fourteen-year-old Joan leaves behind the farm and her family in search of a better life. Hired as a cleaning girl in the household of a wealthy family, Joan’s adventures are told with charm, humor, honesty, and a guarded sense of optimism. Her story, written in the form of diary entries, is beautifully told and well researched. (LL)


REFERENCE

The 50 States. Gabrielle Balkin. Illustrated by Sol Linero. Wide Eye Editions/Quarto Press. 111pp. Trade ISBN 978-1847807113 $30.00. (I, M, H) There’s never been an atlas like this! Each state has a page of colorful illustrations, notable residents (both past and present), and a timeline of important moments. New discoveries with each reading. Index. (AMW)  


This book was inadvertently left out of the printed booklet.
A Primary Source History of Slavery in the United States. Alison Crotzer Kimmel. Capstone Press. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-1-4914-1839-0, $7.95. (I) Through informational text features and primary sources, the author portrays a concise and accurate account of slavery in the United States. The table of contents, bibliography, glossary and index help students navigate and understand this text. (CLC)


RELIGION

Just For Today. Saint John XXIII. Illustrated by Bimba Landmann. Eerdmans Books for Young Readers. 34pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-823-85461-2, $16.00. (P, I) This beautifully illustrated essay details a man's simple wishes for making daily life better for himself and those who surround him. The young man went on to become the Pope and was eventually canonized for his many humanitarian efforts. Introduction, Author’s Note. (SD)

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS/RELATIONSHIPS


I Used To Be Afraid. Laura Vaccaro Seeger. A Neal Porter Book / Roaring Brook Press, an imprint of Macmillan Children’s Publishing Group. 40pp. Trade ISBN 978-1-596-43631-2, $17.99. (P) Young children often have fears that are hard to deal with. Fear of the dark, of change, of making mistakes. This girl learns that those fears can be coped with in unexpected ways. (QPR)
The Lemonade Hurricane: A Story of Mindfulness and Meditation. Licia Morelli. Illustrated by Jennifer E. Morris. Tilbury House Publishers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-884-48396-0, $16.95. (P) This is a wonderful story about a boy who learns how to become more mindful of his actions through meditation. It includes a section of mindfulness and meditation techniques for children. Author's Note. How to Practice Mindfulness and Meditation. (RH)

Mango, Abuela, and Me. Meg Medina. Illustrated by Angela Dominguez. Candlewick Press. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-763-66900-3, $15.99. (P) When Mia’s grandmother moves in with her family, the two have a rocky and awkward start. Over time they grow closer by sharing each other’s languages and lives. (SD)


Miracle on 133rd Street. Sonia Manzano. Illustrated by Marjorie Priceman. Atheneum Books for Young Readers. 48pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-689-87887-9, $17.99. (P) José and his family must take their Christmas roast to the local pizzeria when they realize the oven is too small to cook it. As they make their way home, the delicious smell attracts many neighbors, drawing them away from their worries and together for a community feast. (SD)


Red. Jan De Kinder. Eerdmans Books for Young Readers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-802-85446-9, $16.00. (P) A harmless playground incident turns into a bullying situation for a young boy. One of his classmates goes from being a bystander to an ally, standing with him against the bully. (QPR)


The Yes. Sarah Bee. Illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura. Eerdmans Books for Young Readers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-802-85449-0, $16.00. (I, M) The Yes is a cleverly written story that can be read on many levels. The literal text follows a fantastical creature on a journey. Deeper understandings reveal studies in mindset, determination, and achievement. (ATC) 5 6

**WORLD HISTORY & CULTURE**


Mary Cassatt: Extraordinary Impressionist Painter. Barbara Herkert. Illustrated by Gabi Swiatkowska. Christy Ottaviano Books / Henry Holt, an imprint of Macmillan Children’s Publishing Group. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-1-627-79016-1, $17.99. (P) Mary Cassatt challenged the expectations of women of her generation and became one of the most talented painters of her time. Inspired by the works of Edgar Degas, she went on to develop her style—including scenes of family life in much of her work. This book details how her style and influence made impressionism a respected and valued form of painting. Author’s Note, Sources. (SD)  

Mystery of the Giant Masks of Sanxingdui. Icy Smith. Illustrated by Gayle Garner Roski. East West Discovery Press. 32pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-991-34548-9, $19.95. (I) This fictionalized account helps readers understand an important archaeological discovery that is changing historical understandings of ancient China. Illustrations, photos, and maps bring the culture to life. Author’s Note, Chinese Name Glossary. (SD)  


The Prisoners of Breendonk: Personal Histories from a World War II Concentration Camp. James M. Deem. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Books for Young Readers. 352pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-544-09664-6, $18.99. (H) Breendonk is often overlooked as a concentration camp, but life there was no less brutal than better-known camps. This informational text includes incredible primary sources, including photos, letters, and artwork. Maps, Bibliography, Source Notes, Index, Appendix. (QPR)
The Safest Lie. Angela Cerrito. Holiday House. 192pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-823433100, $16.99. (M) This historical fiction book centers on a 9-year-old Jewish girl who is smuggled out of the Warsaw Ghetto and assumes a Catholic identity for her safety. It is a fast-paced and well-researched read. Author’s Note. (SD) (2)

Tucky Jo and Little Heart. Patricia Polacco. Paula Wiseman Books/Simon & Schuster. 48pp. Trade ISBN 978-1-481-41584-2, $17.99. (P I) Based on a true story, this World War II tale of friendship comes full circle when kindnesses are repaid after a soldier is cared for by a nurse, the Filipino girl he helped years ago. (LFS) (1) (3) (4) (5)


The Runaway’s Gold. Emilie Christie Burack. Amulet Books. 272pp. Trade ISBN 978-1-419-71369-9, $16.95. (H) Both fictitious and thrilling, this adventure story provides some historical context to the culture, history, and working class struggles of the Shetland Islands. Once the Shetland dialect is mastered, the pages beckon readers faster! (JG) (2) (3) (4) (5)


Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students
Reprinted in the June issues of Science and Children, Science Scope, and The Science Teacher, a joint project of the National Science Teachers Association and the CBC. Single copies are available for $5. Send orders to the Children’s Book Council, attn: Outstanding Science, 54 West 39th Street, 14th floor, New York, NY 10018. This list can also be found online at cbcbooks.org/cbc-book-lists/outstanding-science.

Children’s Choices
Reprinted in the June issue of The Reading Teacher, a joint project of the International Literacy Association (ILA) and the CBC. Annotated lists are available online at cbcbooks.org/childrens-choices.

National Council for the Social Studies
National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) is a professional, non-profit association for social studies teachers and educators at all levels from early childhood through college. It engages and supports teachers in strengthening and advocating social studies. NCSS publishes two major journals, Social Education addresses all levels of the profession, offering articles whose subjects range from the latest research to practical classroom ideas. Social Studies and the Young Learner is devoted to K-6 social studies education, meeting teachers’ needs for new information and effective teaching activities. Middle Level Learning, which provides ideas and activities for the middle grades, is an online supplement to NCSS periodicals published three times a year. As part of their membership benefits, NCSS members receive a subscription to Social Education or Social Studies and the Young Learner. All members can access the online NCSS newsletter, The Social Studies Professional, with professional news, opportunities, resources for teachers, workshops, travel and study programs and NCSS activities.

NCSS developed and published the social studies standards developed, which are used nationally as a basis for curriculum planning and student performance assessment. The annotations of books in this list include references to the thematic strands of the social studies standards to which the book relates (see page 2).

This list of Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People is an NCSS member benefit, published in the May/June issue of Social Education, which is sent to all members who subscribe to Social Studies and the Young Learner, as well as to the regular subscribers of Social Education. The list is also available online to NCSS members at ncss.org; prior year lists are available free at www.socialstudies.org/notable.

For information on membership and services, e-mail membership@ncco.org. call 301 588-1800, or visit www.socialstudies.org/membership. NCSS is located at 8555 Sixteenth Street, Suite 500, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910. Visit NCSS online at www.socialstudies.org. This list is a joint project of NCSS and the Children’s Book Council. Single copies are available from CBC for $5.00. Send orders to the Children’s Book Council, attn.: Social Studies, 54 West 39th Street, 14th floor, New York, NY 10018. 2015 by Meg Medina. Illustrations copyright © 2015 by Angela Dominguez. Reproduced by permission of the publisher, Candlewick Press, Somerville, MA. (3) (4) (5)

The Crow’s Tale. Selina Alko, illustrated by Sean Qualls, Arthur A. Levine Books. This historical story, this World War II tale of friendship, the culture, history, and working class struggles of the Shetland Islands. Once the Shetland dialect is mastered, the pages beckon readers faster! (JG) (2) (3) (4) (5)