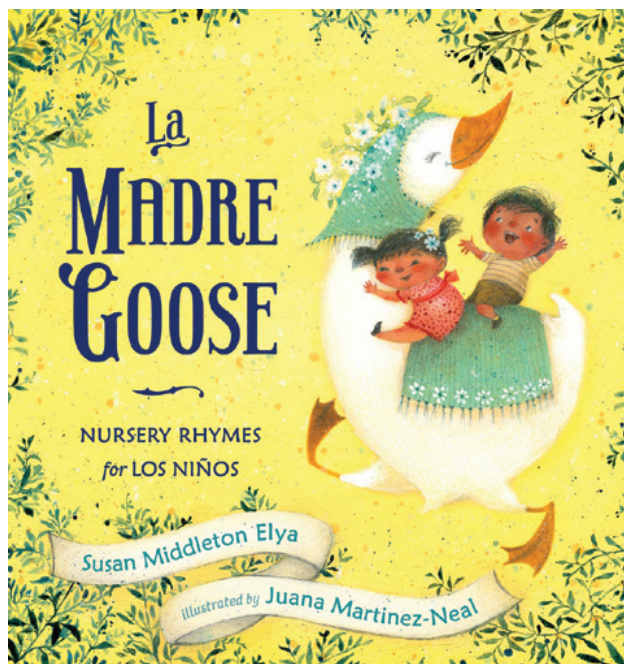


The Reading Chair

New children's books too good to miss and one forever favorite



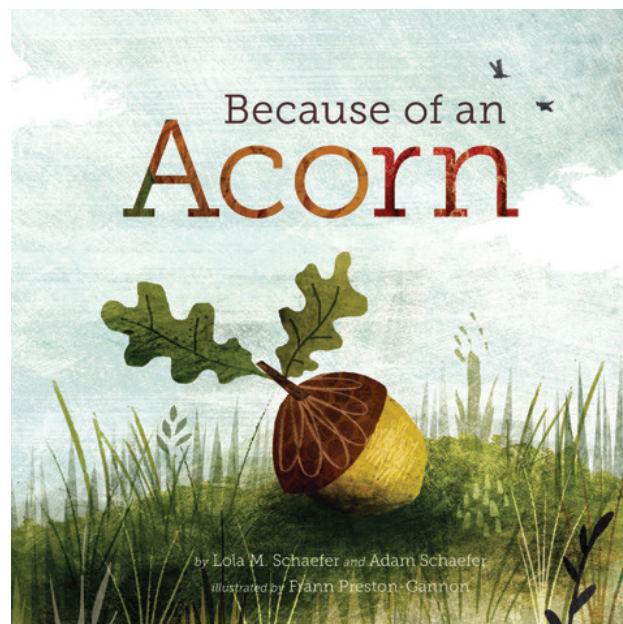
La Madre Goose: Nursery Rhymes for Los Niños

by Susan Middleton Elya. Illus. by Juana Martinez-Neal. 2016. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons. 40 pp. Ages birth to 6.

This collection of common nursery rhymes is updated with a Spanish twist. Each rhyme is adapted to include Spanish words, which are integrated naturally, as if they'd been there all along. It's fun to see a new take on old favorites, like Young Juan Ramón (little Jack Horner) who sits *en el rincón*. One rhyme per page, accompanied by rich, playful illustrations, helps pace the book. The Spanish words enhance the rhymes, making this a top pick.

About the authors

Isabel Baker, MAT, MLS, is president of The Book Vine for Children, a national company dedicated to getting good books into the hands of preschool children and their teachers. Isabel has worked as a children's librarian and is currently a presenter on early literacy and book selection.

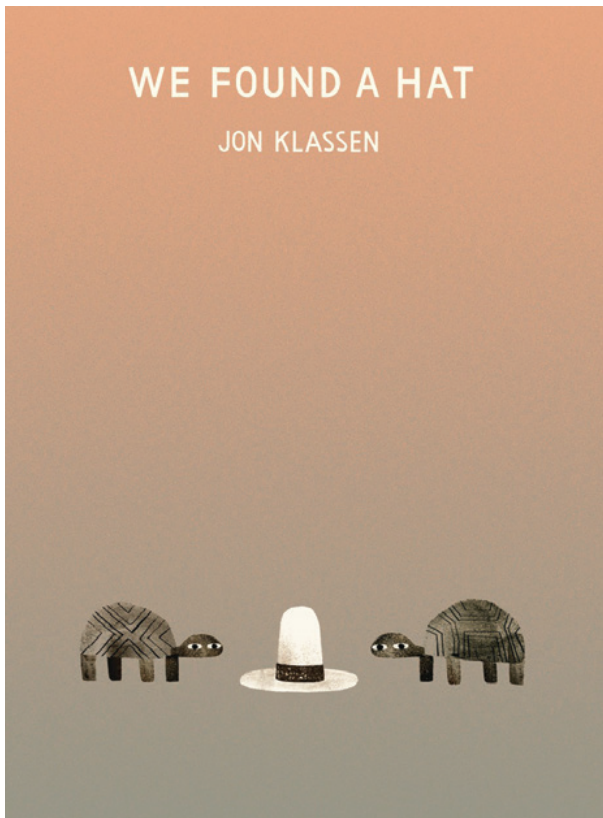


Because of an Acorn

by Lola M. Schaefer and Adam Schaefer. Illus. by Frann Preston-Gannon. 2016. San Francisco: Chronicle Books. 32 pp. Ages 3 to 6.

This book is a celebration of the interconnectedness of ecosystems, inspired by the white oak tree, a foundation species in the forests west of the Appalachian Mountains. Told with sparse, poetic language, readers see how one species supports the next, forming a circle of life. An acorn leads to a tree, which houses a bird, which scatters seeds, which grow into fruit that nourishes animals who scatter the acorns. Close-up and die cut illustrations help the reader become part of the action, anticipating what is to come. Simple but powerful.

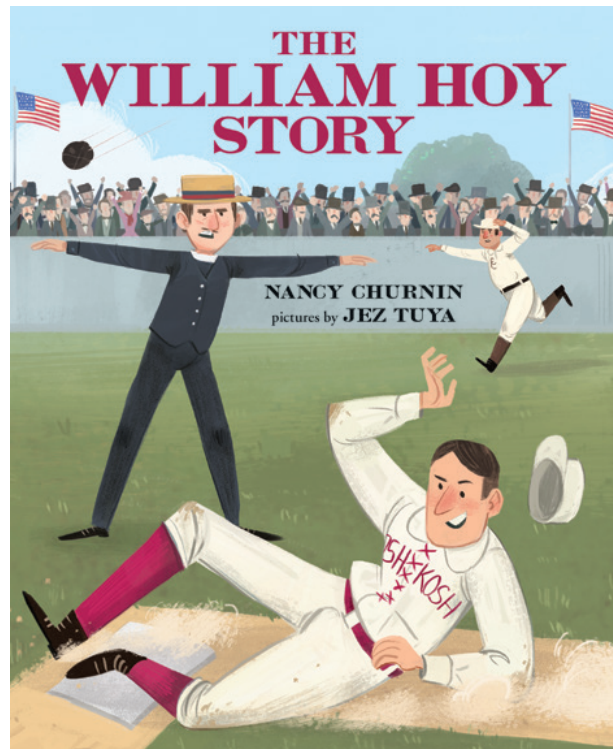
Miriam Baker Schiffer, MFA, is a writer in Brooklyn, New York. She consults on book selections for The Book Vine, in McHenry, Illinois. Miriam's children's book, *Stella Brings the Family*, was published by Chronicle Books in 2015.



We Found a Hat

by Jon Klassen. 2016. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press. 56 pp. Ages 3 to 7.

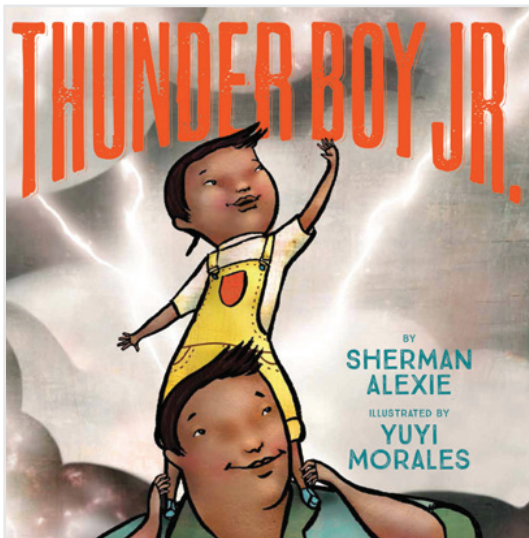
This is the third book in Klassen's *Hat* series. We've loved these books from the start, and this one, the series finale, is our favorite. Klassen captures the complexity of friendship, including the tricky negative emotions that pop up, such as anger or selfishness. In this story, two turtles find one hat and decide to leave it behind because each can't have its own. But one of the turtles has regrets and considers sneaking back to claim the lone hat. Will the turtle get caught? Does the turtle feel conflicted about going behind its friend's back? Using sparse language and expressive gray, black, and white illustrations, the big emotions jump off the page. The story is full of humor, and ultimately, the kindness of being a good friend wins the day. This book is entertaining and will provide plenty of classroom conversation. Children may enjoy acting out the story.



The William Hoy Story: How a Deaf Baseball Player Changed the Game

by Nancy Churnin. Illus. by Jez Tuya. 2016. Park Ridge, IL: Albert Whitman. 32 pp. Ages 5 & Up.

This is the inspiring true story of a young man living in the mid-1800s who was determined to play baseball. William Hoy, who became deaf after a childhood illness, loved the game and practiced whenever he could. Despite a short stature that kept him from making the school team, he kept working to improve his skills. He eventually made his way to the professional level as part of the Cincinnati Reds. But being deaf presented challenges, such as being unable to hear the umpire's calls. Hoy convinced the umpire to use hand signs to make calls, so that he could follow along and play accordingly. The fans benefitted, too—from high up in the stands it was difficult for fans to hear the umpire's calls, but now they could see the hand motions. William Hoy has been inducted into numerous halls of fame, and his legacy remains part of how the game is played today.



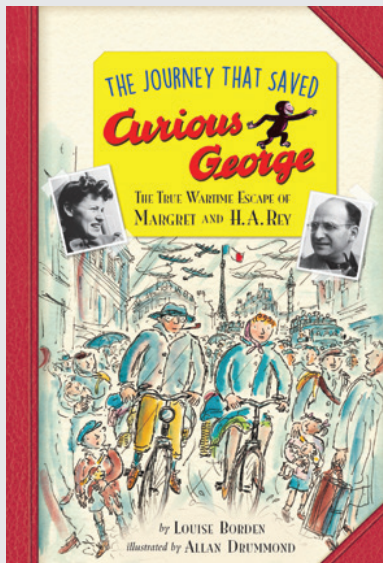
Thunder Boy Jr.

by Sherman Alexie. Illus. by Yuyi Morales. 2016. New York: Hachette. 40 pp. Ages 3 to 8.

Master writer Sherman Alexie (*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*) has published his first picture book. Paired with Yuyi Morales's (*Niño Wrestles the World*) punchy and expressive illustrations, it's a home run. Alexie tells the story of a young Native American boy who is named after his dad. Though he adores his father, Thunder Boy Jr. wants his own name, something to represent his unique accomplishments and ambitions. This book has plenty of extension possibilities. Children could ask their parents about the origins of their names. Or they could name all the members of their families. This rich tale is about needing to be part of the fabric of a family as well as wanting the freedom to become something new.

Forever Favorites

Each month we feature a classic book to (re)introduce teachers to old favorites.



The Journey That Saved Curious George The True Wartime Escape of Margret and H.A. Rey

by Louise Borden. Illus. by Allan Drummond. 2005. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 96 pp. Ages: Adult.

Our featured favorite in this issue is not a classic children's book, but a book about a classic children's book. It's the story of Curious George's escape from wartime Europe—or rather, the escape of his creators Margret and H.A. Rey and their manuscript about a monkey. Teachers have long been fascinated by the story of the young couple, German Jewish artists living in Paris who fled the night before the Nazis invaded. By the time they realized the gravity of their situation, train tickets were oversold. So they cobbled together two bicycles and strapped on some belongings. One item was the manuscript for *The Adventures of Fifi*, a monkey who would eventually be renamed George. This fascinating story is accompanied by historical photos and snapshots of documents and letters from the Reys' files.