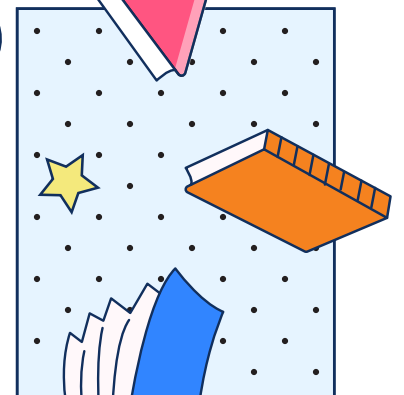
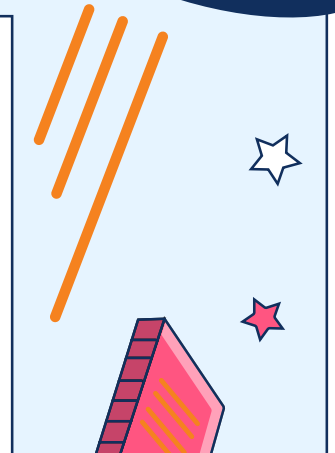
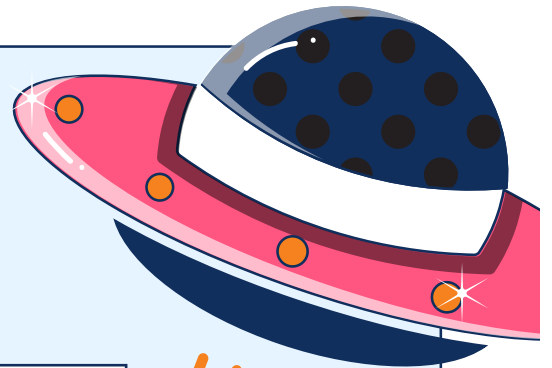


3RD GRADERS

2025-26 TEACHER GUIDE

READ TOGETHER



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2026 OTTER Award Nominees



Orris and Timble: The Beginning

by Kate DiCamillo,
illus. by Carmen Mok

**OTHER BOOKS IN THE
ORRIS AND TIMBLE SERIES:**

Book 2: [*Lost and Found*](#)

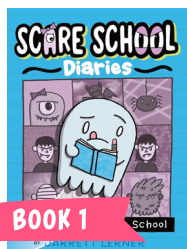


Shermy & Shake, the Not-so-nice Neighbor

by Kirby Larson,
illus. by Shinji Fujioka

**OTHER BOOKS IN THE
SHERMY & SHAKE SERIES:**

Book 2: [*Shermy & Shake,
The Not-so-new Kid*](#)



Welcome to Scare School

Written and illus.
by Jarett Lerner

**OTHER BOOKS IN THE
SCARE SCHOOL DIARIES SERIES:**

Book 2: [*Forest Frights*](#)



First Day, Worst Day

by Andy Nonamus,
illus. by Amy Jindra

**OTHER BOOKS IN THE
VERY WORST EVER SERIES:**

Book 2: [*Pop Goes the Carnival*](#)
Book 3: [*Catch Zoo Later*](#)
Book 4: [*Happy Gift Day to You*](#)
Book 5: [*Pizza Party Pooper*](#)
Book 6: [*Go for the Gold*](#)
Book 7: [*Backstage Fight*](#)
Book 8: [*Flushed Away Water Park*](#)



Wildfire Rescue

by Rekha S. Rajan,
illus. by Courtney Lovett

**OTHER BOOKS IN THE
DISASTER SQUAD SERIES:**

Book 2: [*Hurricane Rescue*](#)
Book 3: [*Blizzard Rescue*](#)
Book 4: [*Tornado Rescue*](#)



Bibsy Cross and the Bad Apple

by Liz Garton Scanlon,
illus. by Dung Ho

**OTHER BOOKS IN THE
BIBSY CROSS SERIES:**

Book 2: [*Bike-A-Thon*](#)
Book 3: [*Bibsy Cross and the
Creepy- crawlies*](#)



Thank you for participating in Third Graders Read Together!



The books in this program are 2026 OTTER Award Nominees. As with the [Washington Children's Choice Picture Book Award](#) and the [Towner Award](#), the OTTER Award is given by the Washington Library Association. This award is designed to spotlight titles that are both engaging and developmentally appropriate for readers transitioning into chapter books.



In this guide, you will find discussion questions, author/illustrator fun facts, and read-alike suggestions for each book. This year, we are excited to include printable activity sheets from 2023 OTTER Award winner Jarrett Lerner, which were created exclusively for your third graders! Additional activities and promotional resources for the OTTER Award can be found at wla.org/otter-promotion.

Schools use the OTTER books in a variety of ways. Do what works best for you!

Ideas from educators participating in the program:

- Create a book club using all or some of the titles.
- Read the books aloud to your class.
- Make books available in your classroom or library.
- Craft a display inspired by the selected titles.
- Have students write book reviews.
- Have students read the books together with a buddy.
- Have students keep an OTTER journal.
- Do class research projects based on the OTTER books.
- After the author/illustrator events, invite students to create their own book.
- After the author/illustrator events, invite students to write a letter or create a drawing to send to the author/illustrator.
- Encourage students to vote for their favorite book in May!
- Have a classroom party when the winning book is announced.

Save the dates for our online author/illustrator events:

- Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 9:30 a.m. with Jarrett Lerner
- Thursday, Feb. 26 at 9:30 a.m. with Liz Garton Scanlon

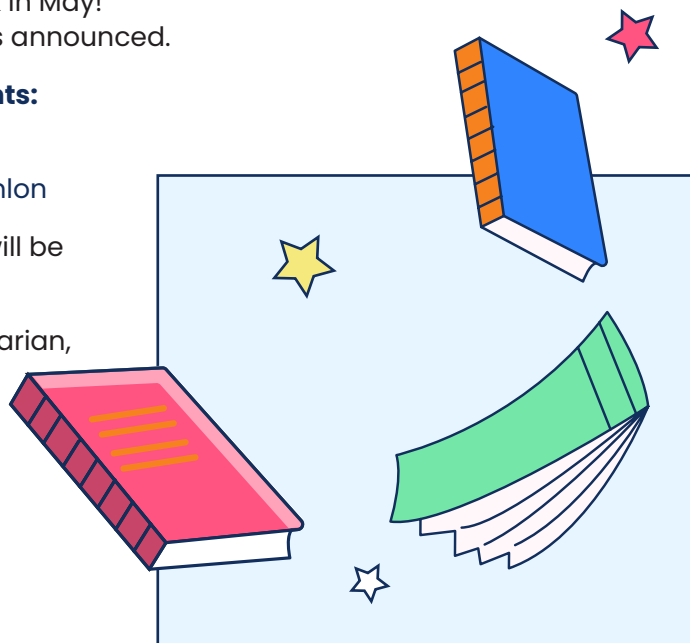
Additional details will be sent via email. Recordings will be available for at least three months.

If you have any questions, reach out to your local librarian, or contact us using sno-isle.org/school-support.



Happy reading!

Download this guide as a PDF!



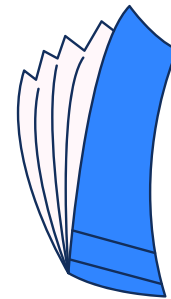
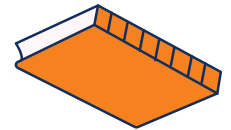
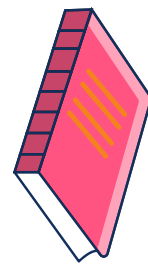
Orris and Timble: The Beginning

by Kate DiCamillo, illus. by Carmen Mok



Discussion Questions

1. In the beginning of chapter 1, Orris is alone in his nest and hears a loud screech. Something is trapped outside of his nest. What would you do next and why? **p. 6-7**
2. Orris keeps looking at the sardine can in his nest that says, "Make the good and noble choice." What does that saying mean to you? **p. 16-17**
3. If you were Orris, what would you choose to do when the owl was begging for his help to get out of the trap? **p. 21-26**
4. Where does Orris go to feel safe after he rescues Timble? Where do you go to feel safe when you are feeling nervous or scared, and how does this place help you feel better? **p. 40-41**
5. Why do you think Orris tells Timble about the story of the lion and the mouse? **p. 46-49**
6. How did you feel about Timble's thank you gift to Orris, the butterscotch candy that is top notch and the sweetest? How did you feel when you were reading those pages and why? **p. 56-59**
7. At the end of the story, Orris and Timble become friends. What are some qualities that make a good friend? **p. 74-75**
8. What do you predict will be Orris and Timble's next adventure?



Author Fun Facts

- ★ Kate DiCamillo has a dog named Ramona. She named her dog after the book character, [Ramona Quimby](#).
- ★ Kate DiCamillo loves pizza, but she hates pickles.
- ★ Kate DiCamillo received 473 rejection letters before getting her first book, [Because of Winn-Dixie](#), published.
- ★ One of Kate DiCamillo's jobs before becoming an author was working at Walt Disney World.

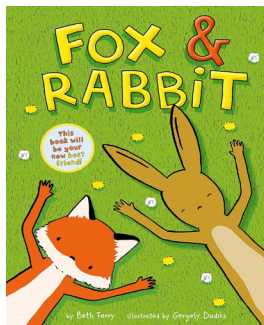


If You Liked... *The Beginning*

CHECK OUT

sno-isle.org for more books.

Fiction



[*Fox and Rabbit, Book 1*](#)

by Beth Ferry

[*Cornbread and Poppy, Book 1*](#)

by Matthew Cordell

[*Will a the Wisp, Book 1*](#)

by Jonathan Auxier

[*The Story of Us, Book 1*](#)

by Lauren Castillo

[*Lion and Mouse*](#)

by Jairo Buitrago

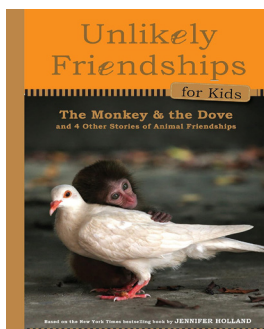
[*Mother Bruce*](#)

by Ryan T. Higgins

[*Frog and Toad Are Friends, Book 1*](#)

by Arnold Lobel

Nonfiction



[*The Monkey and the Dove*](#)

by Jennifer S. Holland

[*The True Story of
an Unlikely Friendship*](#)

by Bhagavan Antle

[*Owls*](#)

by Jenna Lee Gleisner

[*Owls*](#)

by Sue L. Hamilton

[*Rats*](#)

by Josh Gregory

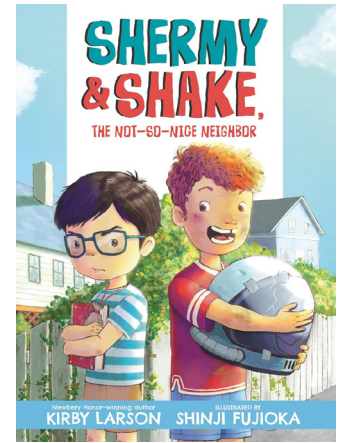
[*Rat*](#)

by Stephen Savage



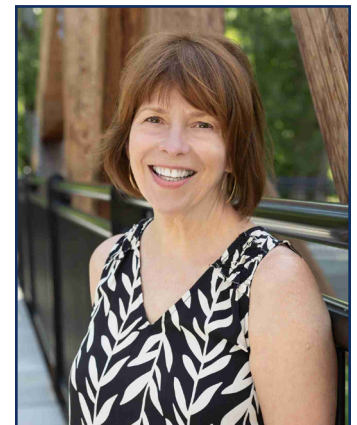
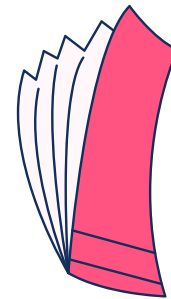
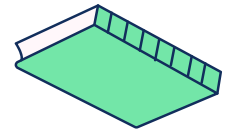
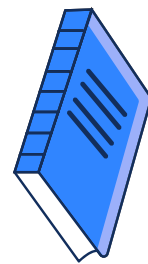
Shermy & Shake, the Not-so-nice Neighbor

by Kirby Larson, illus. by Shinji Fujioka



Discussion Questions

1. Shake pretends to be the alien, Falzar, from Jupiter. Shermy does not act scared at all but asks the alien questions. What would you do if you could talk with an alien from outer space? **p. 4-6**
2. Shake has money to treat Shermy to ice pops from the ice cream truck. Unfortunately, Shake and the other neighborhood kids buy up all the rocket ice pops. Shermy has to settle for a banana ice pop. How do you think Shermy feels about this? Have you ever had to settle for something you really did not want? **p. 14-18**
3. In chapter 3 we really see Shermy and Shake's personalities. Shermy wants to sit quietly and read and Shake wants to play one thing after another all by his own rules. Have you ever had a friend over and you each wanted to do something different? How did you handle it? **p. 19-32**
4. On the Fourth of July beach trip Shermy and Shake finally agree on something, nothing is quite as good as fireworks! What do you like or dislike about fireworks? **p. 35-48**
5. Why do you think Shake tries so hard to get Shermy's attention? Going so far as to knock over his lemonade and steal his library book. **p. 50-52**
6. Shermy and Shake work together to pick enough blackberries for muffins. Have you worked together with a friend to accomplish something? What was it? **p. 56-64**
7. Shake's folks have been gone most of the summer. How do you think that makes Shake feel? How would you feel if you were away from your family for most of the summer? **p. 71-73**
8. Shermy and Shake work together to find an unusual animal for the animal fair. If you could bring any animal in the world to your neighborhood animal fair, what animal would it be? Why did you pick that animal? **p. 76-80**
9. Shermy and Shake sure had a fun summer getting to know each other and going on adventures. It's sad that Shake is finally headed home. On the last page we learn that Shake is moving soon! Where do you think he's moving? **p. 81-86**

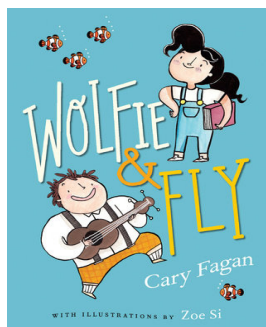


If You Liked... *Shermy & Shake, the Not-so-nice Neighbor*

CHECK OUT

sno-isle.org for more books.

Fiction



[*Wolfie and Fly, Book 1*](#)

by Cary Fagan

[*Three's a Crowd!, Book 5*](#)

by Ray O'Ryan

[*Crash!, Book 1*](#)

by Nancy Krulik

[*EllRay Jakes the Recess King!, Book 8*](#)

by Sally Warner

[*The Friend Dilemma, Book 1*](#)

by Laura Wiltse Prior

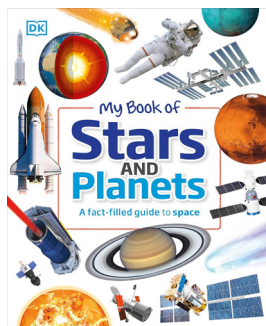
[*The Bad Idea and Other Stories, Book 1*](#)

by Greg Pizzoli

[*Best Friend!, Book 1*](#)

by Vicky Fang

Nonfiction



[*My Book of Stars and Planets*](#)

by Parshati Patel

[*The Ultimate Kids' Baking Book*](#)

by Tiffany Dahle

[*Pet Selector*](#)

by Russell Kane

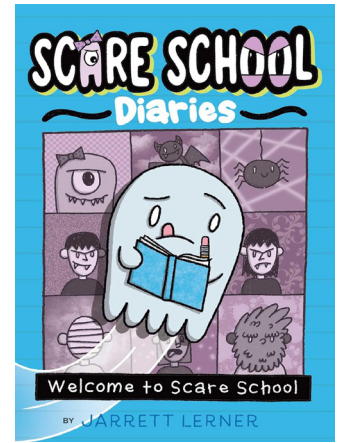
Author Fun Facts



- ★ Kirby Larson lives in Kenmore, Washington, that's near Seattle!
- ★ Kirby Larson loves to roam the beach hunting for sea glass.
- ★ Kirby Larson loves to eat red licorice.

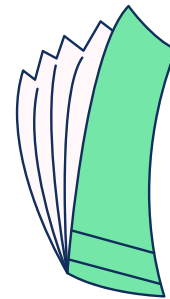
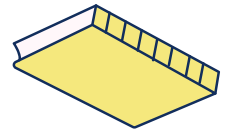
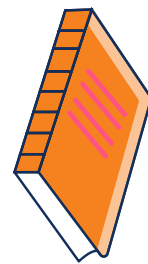
Welcome to Scare School

Written and illus. by Jarrett Lerner



Discussion Questions

1. Bash was very scared of starting school. How did you feel before your first day of school? [p. 1](#)
2. Bash has never slept away from home before. Have you gone to a sleepover before? Did you enjoy it or was it scary? [p. 18](#)
3. Bash has to take a test to keep attending Scare School. Bash is very nervous about the test, how do you feel before taking a test? [p. 52](#)
4. Itsy offers to help Bash study for his test. When has a friend offered to help you with something you were anxious about? How did that make you feel? [p. 62](#)
5. Batslee gets an upset stomach from eating too much of a food he enjoys. Have you ever eaten too much? What is your favorite food? Would you try the bean surprise? [p. 74](#)
6. Bash is scared when he decides to try and help Itsy with Vicki and Vlad but went to help anyway. Has there ever been a time you've helped someone even though you felt scared? Did you ever get help from someone else when you were scared? [p. 93](#)
7. Itsy and Bash create a comic together with Bash drawing the pictures and Itsy writing the story. Have you ever worked together with a friend to create something? What did you make? [p. 110](#)
8. Did you think Bash was going to pass his test? [p. 132](#)



Author Fun Facts

- ★ One of Jarrett Lerner's toes is part titanium!
- ★ Jarrett Lerner's favorite vacation is spending time with his family at the beach.
- ★ Jarrett Lerner loves to skateboard.



| Teacher Guide



If You Liked... *Welcome to Scare School*

CHECK OUT

sno-isle.org for more books.

Fiction



[*Rise of Pegasus, Book 1*](#)

by Joan Holub

[*The School is Alive!, Book 1*](#)

by Jack Chabert

[*The Monster Squad, Book 1*](#)

by Joe McGee

[*The Ghost Tree, Book 1*](#)

by Natasha Deen

[*Day of the Living Liv, Book 1*](#)

by Liv Livingston

[*Thea Stilton and the Ghost of the Woods*](#)

by Thea Stilton

[*Perfect Villains, Book 1*](#)

by Jennifer Torres

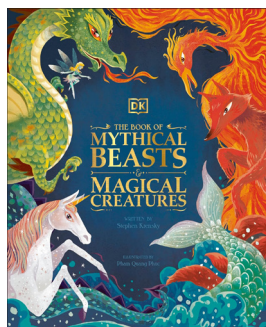
[*The Ghost Squad*](#)

by Claribel A. Ortega

[*Diary of a Worm*](#)

by Doreen Cronin

Nonfiction



[*The Book of Mythical Beasts & Magical Creatures*](#)

by Stephen Krensky

[*Draw a Comic!*](#)

by J.P. Coover

[*Ghosts*](#)

by Adam Allsuch Boardman

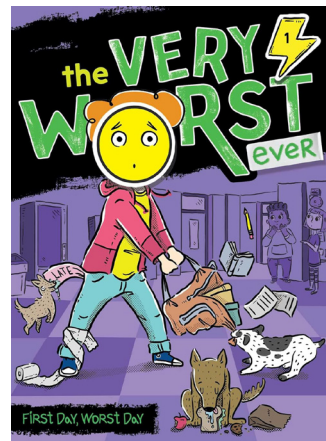
[*Spiders*](#)

by Tait Howard



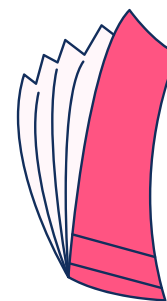
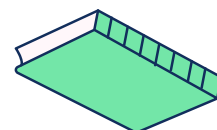
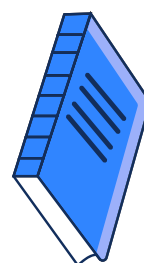
First Day, Worst Day

by Andy Nonamus, illus. by Amy Jindra



Discussion Questions

1. ■■■■■'s day starts off very badly, Have you ever had a really bad day? Does anything help you feel better after a bad day? [p. 4](#)
2. After arriving late ■■■■■ thinks, the office is haunted but it turns out to just be someone he couldn't see. Have you ever had a spooky experience? Did you find out what caused it or did it remain a mystery? [p. 24](#)
3. ■■■■■ stereotypes the characters in chapter 4 by assuming the muscular man is the coach and the old woman is the librarian. What other stereotypes do you know? Do you think stereotypes are helpful or harmful? [p. 41](#)
4. Why do you think Nurse Doc put gunk in his hair after checking for a head injury? Do you know if gunk is the usual way to treat a concussion? [p. 56](#)
5. Regina's family makes video games and the group connects over playing games together. What hobby do you have that you want to share with your friends? [p. 65](#)
6. Which room from the secret tunnel would you want to stop and investigate? [p. 82](#)
7. Glinda insists that ■■■■■ must have read the morning note wrong and she couldn't have made a mistake. How would you feel if a friend wouldn't admit to making a mistake? What would you do if they blamed you for something you thought they had done? [p. 93](#)
8. Have you ever been really embarrassed? What did you do and what happened after? [p. 106](#)
9. What fun foods or tech would you want in your limo? [p. 93](#)
10. Who do you think Andy Nonamus is? If you figure it out, email ThirdGradersReadTogether@sno-isle.org. You may win a prize for your school library!

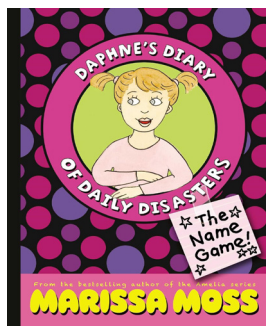


If You Liked... *First Day, Worst Day*

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Fiction



[*Daphne's Diary of Daily Disasters.*](#)

[*The Name Game!*](#)

by Marissa Moss

[*Ready for School!, Book 1*](#)

by Bob McMahon

[*The Bad Luck Day, Book 1!*](#)

by Holly Anna

[*Mia Mayhem Is a Superhero!, Book 1*](#)

by Kara West

[*Roll for Initiative*](#)

by Jaime Formato

[*Grounded*](#)

by Aisha Saeed

[*Sideways Stories From Wayside School, Book 1*](#)

by Lois Sachar

Nonfiction



[*Game On!*](#)

by Dustin Hansen

[*Basketball*](#)

by Derrick Barnes

[*A School Like Mine*](#)

by Penny Smith

[*Wild Dogs and Canines!*](#)

by Martin Kratt

[*The Good Luck Book*](#)

by Heather Alexander

Author Fun Facts



★ Andy Nonamus has enjoyed _____ ever since they were _____.

★ The best trip Andy Nonamus ever took was to _____.

★ _____ was Andy Nonamus' favorite _____ song in kindergarten.

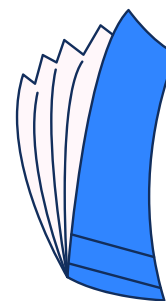
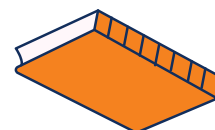
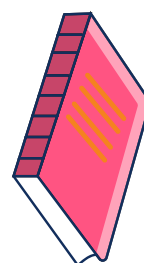
Wildfire Rescue

by Rekha S. Rajan, illus. by Courtney Lovett



Discussion Questions

1. Everyone has an important role in the Jackson family when disaster strikes! What is an important role you play in your family to be helpful? **p. 3**
2. The Disaster Squad always arrives at a disaster with their Disaster Squad Kits. What four items in the kits do you think are the most important to have and why? **p. 19-20**
3. Jaden and Leela are learning all about wildfires as they get ready to help with the disaster. What is the most interesting thing you've learned about wildfires in the book so far? **p. 31-34**
4. The wildfires are spreading very quickly, and families must evacuate. How would you feel if you had to evacuate during a wildfire, and what special items would you take with you? **p. 39**
5. Jaden was very worried about the trapped bear cub in the tree and knew it probably felt scared. He tried to help save it. What could they have done differently? **p. 51-55**
6. Jaden and Leela worked with other people in a team to put together safety kits. Have you ever worked in a team to help someone? What did you do? **p. 62-67**
7. After reading the first adventure in the Disaster Squad series, would you be interested in becoming a member of the Disaster Squad? Why or why not?



Author Fun Facts

- ★ Rekha S. Rajan is a classically trained opera singer and plays over 10 instruments!
- ★ Rekha S. Rajan loves to eat french fries from McDonalds.
- ★ Rekha S. Rajan has a bird, hamster, bunny, and two dogs, but her favorite animal is an Orca whale.

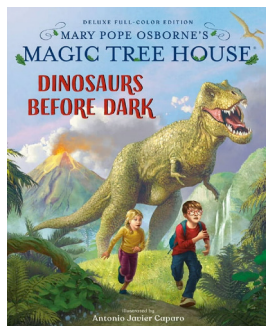


If You Liked... *Wildfire Rescue*

CHECK OUT

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Fiction



[*Dinosaurs Before Dark, Book 1*](#)

by Mary Pope Osborne

[*Dragons and Marshmallows, Book 1*](#)

by Asia Citro

[*Bear in the Family*](#)

by Eric Walters

[*An Accidental Hero*](#)

by Laura Roettiger

[*Wildfire!*](#)

by Ashley Wolff

[*The Unwanted Puppy, Book 1*](#)

by Tina Nolan

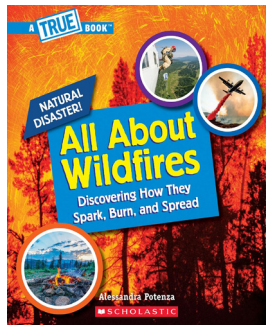
[*Once Upon a Forest*](#)

by Pam Fong

[*What to Bring*](#)

by Lorna Schultz Nicholson

Nonfiction



[*All About Wildfires*](#)

by Alessandra Potenza

[*Fire Escape*](#)

by Jessica Stremer

[*Fire Shapes the World*](#)

by Joanna Cooke



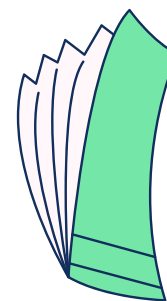
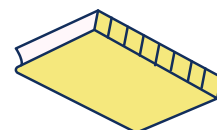
Bibsy Cross and the Bad Apple

by Liz Garton Scanlon, illus. by Dung Ho



Discussion Questions

1. Bibsy is a whiz at counting backwards, watching TV and finger knitting at the same time (without looking down), and can make a mean scrambled eggs. What are you a whiz at doing? **p. 2**
2. What Bibsy loves most of all is school. She loves the ringing bell, eating lunch from a tray, and walking down the hallways in a big snaky line. What do you love most about school? **p. 5**
3. Bibsy gets in trouble for talking out of turn and Mrs. Stumper moves her apple from the apple tree to the ground. This makes Bibsy feel like Mrs. Stumper does not like her. How would you feel if your apple got moved to the ground? **p. 13**
4. Bibsy gets to participate in a science fair with her best friend Natia. If you got to participate in a science fair with your best friend what would your science experiment be? **p. 35**
5. At dinner time Bibsy and her parents always share a sweet-and-sour that happened that day. What is your sweet-and-sour so far this week? **p. 46**
6. Bibsy goes a "stone too far" and Mrs. Stumper punches a hole in her apple. Instead of telling her parents about the apple, Bibsy says she doesn't feel well. Why do you think Bibsy feels sick? **p. 72-78**
7. Why do you think Bibsy can't tell Natia about the bad apple? **p. 79-81**
8. When science fair project gets ruined in the rain, Bibsy tells Natia that she got a hole punched in her apple. And then Bibsy says, "I have to pick myself up and brush myself off. I have to defy gravity." What do you think she means by that? **p. 85-88**
9. When Friday arrives and Bibsy brings her rotten apple home to her parents she feels awful and cries. Her parents reassure her that she isn't rotten. What would you say to Bibsy to comfort her? **p. 94-99**
10. It was really brave of Bibsy to tell Mrs. Stumper how she feels about the hole in her apple. Have you ever been brave and confronted someone? **p. 105-108**

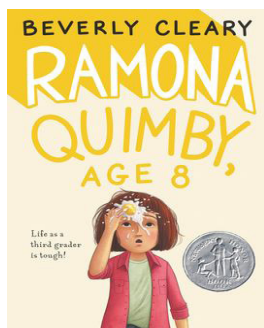


If You Liked... *Bibsy Cross and the Bad Apple*

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sno-isle.org for more books.

Fiction



[*Ramona Quimby, Age 8, Book 6*](#)

by Beverly Cleary

[*Charlie Bumpers VS. The Teacher of the Year, Book 1*](#)

by Bill Harley

[*Sleepover Scientist, Book 3*](#)

by Kelly Starling Lyons

[*Third Grade Angels*](#)

by Jerry Spinelli

[*The Year of Billy Miller*](#)

by Kevin Henkes

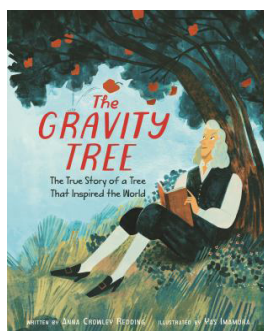
[*No Girls Allowed \(dogs Okay\), Book 1*](#)

by Trudi Strain Trueit

[*A Squirmy, Wormy Surprise, Book 6*](#)

by Jenny Meyerhoff

Nonfiction



[*The Gravity Tree*](#)

by Anna Crowley Redding

[*STEM Activity Lab*](#)

by Jack Challoner

[*Who Was Isaac Newton*](#)

by Janet B. Pascal

Author Fun Facts



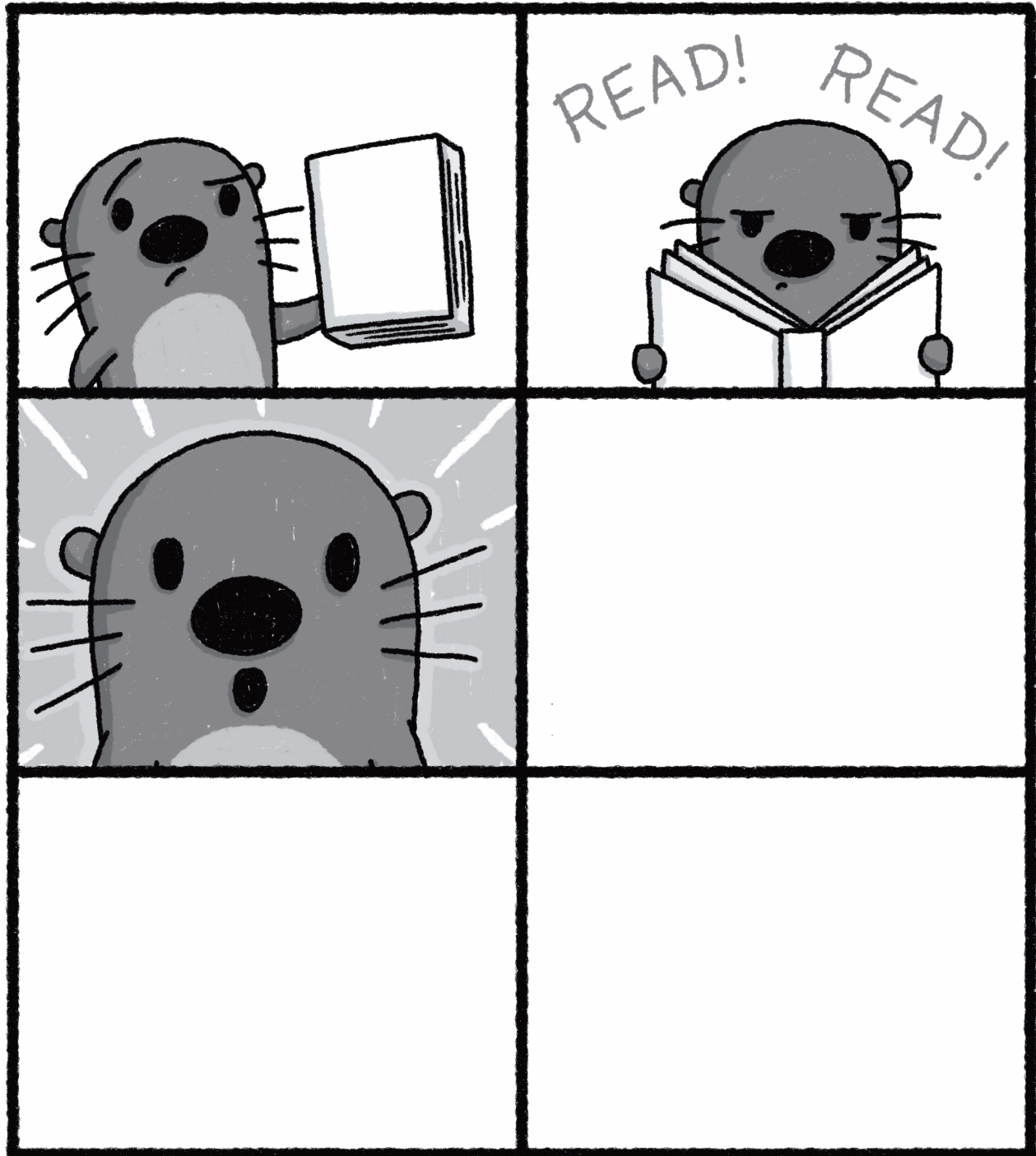
- ★ Liz Garton Scanlon's friend gave her the nickname Liz Garden Salad!
- ★ Liz Garton Scanlon loves to play games, her favorite is a card game called hearts.
- ★ Liz Garton Scanlon once had a racoon and two of her kits come into her house through her doggie door!

Get your students excited about meeting Jarrett Lerner, 2023 OTTER Award winner and author/illustrator of the 2026 OTTER Award nominee, [Welcome to Scare School](https://www.jarrettlerner.com/welcome-to-scare-school).

Print the activity sheets created by Jarrett just for our students participating in Third Graders Read Together! Can they finish the comic about an otter? What do you think this otter is reading?

Find more activities for your classroom or library at [jarrettlerner.com/activities](https://www.jarrettlerner.com/activities)

FINISH this COMIC!



www.jarrettlerner.com

JARRETT

SEARCH and FIND!



taco



worm



pencil



smiley
face



popsicle



snail



heart



ruler



ball



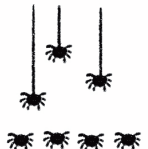
banana



diamond



lollipop



spiders

3RD GRADERS READ TOGETHER

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Sno-Isle Libraries is here for you!

- Get a Teacher Card to check out items for your classroom without impacting personal checkouts by using your school email, mailing address, and phone number. Contact your local library to get started.
- Schedule the library for your next Staff In-Service Day or PD session. Select a ready-to-go workshop or we can design something to fit your specific needs.
- Subscribe to the Educator Newsletter to receive periodic emails with resource spotlights, mini-lessons, and more.
- Request help from your local library all year long with the School Support Form.
- Keep the reading momentum going with NovelList K-8, a resource to match readers with books, available with your library card.



DISCOVER MORE on the Parents & Educators on sno-isle.org, created with you in mind.

sno-isle.org/parents-educators

