
Bugs, Bogs, Bats, and Books: Sharing Nature with Children through Reading. By Kathleen T. Isaacs. Chicago: Huron Street Press, 2014. 260 p. Paper \$19.95 (ISBN: 978-1-937589-58-5).

Teacher and librarian Kathleen Isaacs offers a carefully compiled book on a timely topic. Seeking to help parents and caregivers combat “nature deficit” in their children, the author lists and describes books about nature that are appropriate for children from birth through age ten. Both fiction and nonfiction are included, and most of the titles were published in the last four years.

Each chapter begins with a helpful introduction to the topic. The chapters are further subdivided into more specific areas. For example, the chapter “More Animals” is divided into sections on sea creatures, birds, and mammals. Isaacs also includes a chapter on naturalists who later became children’s authors and illustrators. The sections in this chapter begin with a brief biography of the naturalist followed by a thoughtful description of his or her individual style and focus.

Each annotation is about 150 words in length and provides a thorough sense of the title’s tone and flavor. The beginning of each entry indicates the appropriate audience or suggested use for the book. Although most books are tagged as informational picture books, other suggestions for use include “early reader” and “bedtime story.” The entry also indicates a suggested age range.

Interspersed throughout the book are easy and approachable science activities, such as planting an avocado pit, counting birds in the backyard, or taking a walk. For each of these activities, Isaacs mentions related real-life projects and provides links to relevant web sites.

For the layperson, perhaps the most helpful portion of the book is Chapter 2, “Choosing Good Nature Books.” Indeed, the guidelines presented here are relevant to the selection of books on any topic: Using the child’s interests to guide selection; choosing books written with clarity and enthusiasm as well as accuracy; and selecting books whose illustrations enhance the text and deepen one’s understanding of the topic.

Librarians will find no surprises here: The titles discussed in this book will be familiar to most library staff. *Bugs, Bogs, Bats, and Books* will be most useful to parents hoping to find nature books for their children. As such, it would be helpful in the circulating collection or as an at-home reference.

Kathleen Isaacs is also the author of the well-received *Picturing the World: Informational Picture Books for Children*, published in 2013. — *Gina Petrie, Children’s Librarian, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, Charlotte, North Carolina*

Exploring Digital Libraries: Foundations, Practice, Prospects. By Karen Calhoun. Chicago: ALA Neal-Schuman, 2014. 320 p. Paper \$95 (ISBN: 978-1-55570-985-3).

Librarians today, particularly those of us who have been in the profession for less than a decade, often take for granted the vast resources that are available online. Whether we’re

at the reference desk, teaching a class, or consulting with a faculty member on research, we turn initially, and often exclusively, to our computers. Although many of us are familiar with the rich digital library collections available at our fingertips, we are often less cognizant of how these collections were created and developed over time. In *Exploring Digital Libraries: Foundations, Practice, Prospects*, Karen Calhoun describes the innovations and technologies that have shaped digital libraries and offers a vision for how they might become further engaged with the communities they serve.

This authoritative analysis begins by looking as far back as 1965 to trace the fascinating history of the technologies, innovations, and visions for the future that laid the foundation for the ambitious digital library projects that began in the early 1990s. In-depth accounts of both successes and failures shed light on how digital library efforts around the globe have evolved in relation to advances in areas such as digitization and open-access initiatives as well as changes in scholarly communication. In the second half of the book, she explores the potential for a shift from a focus on collections toward a more community-oriented perspective that leverages the social web.

The author’s knowledge and experience in this field is considerable. However, rather than rely exclusively on her own expertise, she has conducted extensive research and consultation with others in the field to present a work that is authoritative and international in scope. This is evidenced early on with her considered evaluation of the changing ways in which digital libraries have been defined. She charts definitions from the early 1990s to the present and reflects on how these definitions have evolved while also offering her own interpretation of what constitutes a digital library. Additionally, in chapters addressing the social roles of digital libraries, she interviews nine well-known digital library experts to examine key factors that make digital libraries successful.

Exploring Digital Libraries offers insight into the emergence, progress, and future of digital libraries and will meet the needs of any reader with an interest in the topic. Calhoun’s work makes the complexity of digital libraries comprehensible to non-experts while also contributing new research to the field. It will undoubtedly serve as an essential work in the field of digital librarianship. — *Amanda Dinscore, Public Services Librarian, California State University, Fresno, California*

Exploring Environmental Science with Children and Teens. By Eileen D. Harrington. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2014. 264 p. Paper \$50 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1198-3).

Current classroom education focuses primarily on reading and math. This leaves little room for learning material that inspires scientific inquiry. To address the gaps in learning, many educators advocate for school-aged children to have more exposure to the sciences through STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) curricula. In an effort to meet this need, *Exploring Environmental Sciences with Children and Teens* by Eileen G. Harrington creates an avenue for

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public and school libraries, along with museums, to cultivate partnerships, programs, and learning experiences outside of the classroom as a means of addressing deficiencies in science.

Harrington gives an excellent rationale for the necessity and benefits of encouraging and promoting scientific inquiry, focusing on museums, school libraries, and public libraries as ideal venues for creating informal, fun, and literacy-rich environmental science programming. She aggregates science literature and activities for audiences of preschoolers through high schoolers.

This book reveals knowledgeable, engaging, and active learning experiences to incite curiosity, comfort, and connections with environmental science. Harrington presents preschool and family programming, story times, book clubs, self-guided activities, and teen action clubs, among other activities, to help teachers and librarians accentuate student learning. *Exploring Environmental Science* supports programming by providing detailed structure and strategies while giving an abundance of ideas to ensure success. Also provided are bibliographies, multimedia suggestions, and web resources for further consideration and extensions to learning.

The book also covers science-related topics like Earth Day, plant life, habitats, life cycles, scientists, animals, rocks, and fossils, all of which align with common themes taught in school curricula. This offers public libraries and museums an opportunity to complement learning through entertaining craft activities and to promote reading self-efficacy in the sciences for children and teens.

Although geared towards librarians and museum program coordinators, teachers looking for curriculum ideas are also likely to find this book valuable for lesson planning or enrichment activities, as it inspires programming, collaboration, and appreciation of the sciences within and outside the classroom.—*Tiffeni Fontno, Education Librarian, Lesley University, Cambridge, Massachusetts*

Fundamentals for the Academic Liaison. By Richard Moniz, Jo Henry, and Joe Eshleman. Chicago: Neal-Schuman, 2014. 208 p. Paper \$58 (ISBN: 978-1-55570-967-9).

As the title states, this book is a fundamental overview of the common tasks performed by academic liaison librarians. Aimed at novices, this resource covers the basic concepts involved without getting lost in details that tend to vary among institutions. Thus this book serves as a solid foundation for library science students unfamiliar with the diverse responsibilities involved in being an academic liaison. The authors cover how the liaison role has evolved over time with new technologies, budget adjustments, and the changing nature of research; and yet they reinforce the idea that academic liaison work remains critical to the mission of many college and university libraries.

Each of the eleven chapters is concisely written to be about fifteen pages in length, and each chapter includes a convenient checklist of key concepts and separate bibliography. The fundamental duties discussed include orienting

faculty to the library; developing subject expertise; assisting researchers; communicating with faculty; creating guides and online tutorials; performing collection development duties; teaching information literacy sessions; becoming “embedded”; supporting accreditation and new course development; and evaluating one’s own effectiveness as a liaison. The book is not entirely comprehensive, as the authors do not differentiate among subject disciplines or types of academic institution. And the authors acknowledge that not all academic liaisons perform all of the duties listed, and different institutions will require liaisons to engage in these duties to varying degrees. However, for a brand-new librarian wondering where to begin, this book will provide solid advice.

Although clearly aimed at those just starting their careers, this volume might also benefit librarians returning to the profession after an absence, because it does address how liaison duties have changed. In addition, experienced librarians might find individual chapters useful when new duties are added to their jobs. For example, Chapter Four, on online tutorials, provides sound advice about using scripts and storyboards to plan out the actual tutorial before filming or production. This title could also be valuable in educating those outside the library about the diverse duties performed by academic librarians. This book will be a particularly useful resource for institutions with library science programs. In addition, it would be a great mentoring tool for new librarians.—*Christina M. Kulp, Life Sciences Reference Librarian, University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma*

Global Voices: Picture Books from Around the World. By Susan Stan. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2014. 240 p. Paper \$50 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1183-9).

“What children get from an international picture book that they don’t get from an American picture book,” says Susan Stan, “is something that they can’t see and probably can’t articulate: a shift in perspective that can range from unnoticeable to stimulating to disorienting” (2). All of these reactions, her book goes on to argue, are valuable to the development of a young reader and global citizen.

Divided into two sections, *Global Voices* is both a critical examination and an annotated bibliography. In Part I, Stan presents a general history of picture book publishing around the world, as well as information about translation and acquisition in the American market. She acknowledges the limitations of her project: the book’s bibliographies, divided by continent, in some cases heavily represent English-speaking creators of books *about* those parts of the world, rather than books originally from these areas. The reasons for this vary: sometimes the region itself does not have a robust children’s publishing industry; in other cases, books published in certain countries tend not to be acquired by American editors, because they are thought to be too culturally specific to be relevant or interesting to American readers. This, she argues, is unfortunate, as it keeps many worthy books from reaching more readers, and is a disservice to today’s children, who