

Anderson, Janet S. *The Last Treasure*: The Smith family has a 150 year old mystery, and thirteen-year-old Ellsworth and his cousin Jess have to solve it in order to keep their family together.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: family secrets, treasure, and mystery:

Babbitt, Natalie. *Tuck Everlasting*: Family secrets and intrigue abound as Winnie Foster becomes involved with the Tuck family.

Banks, Kate. *Walk softly, Rachel*: Rachel uncovers a host of family secrets when she reads the journal of her dead brother.

Berger, Melvin. *Mummies of the Pharaohs*: Starting with the discovery of King Tutankhamun's tomb and its glorious treasures, the authors explore Egypt's entire Valley of the Kings and tell some little-known stories about the various tombs and their occupants.

Buckey, Sarah. *The Smuggler's Treasure*: The first of the American Girl History Mystery series, this story revolves around eleven-year-old Elisabet who determines to find a smuggler's treasure in order to ransom her imprisoned father.

Koningsburg, E. L. *The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place*: Despite the eccentricities of her uncles, Margaret Rose mounts an impressive campaign to save the unique towers that they have been building for over forty years.

Lisle, Janet Taylor. *The Art of Keeping Cool*: Robert and his cousin Elliot uncover long-hidden family secrets while staying with their grandparents, and also become involved with a German artist who is suspected of being a spy.

Murphy, Pat. *The Brain Explorer*: Various puzzles, riddles, illusions and assorted mental adventures allow readers to do the same kind of 'figuring out' that Ellsworth and Jess have to do in order to solve the mystery of the last family treasure.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *The Treasure of Bessledorf Hill*: Bernie Magruder and company are back with a vengeance as the whole town of Middlesburg becomes involved in the search for buried treasure.

Sachar, Louis. *Holes*: Despite being wrongly accused of a crime and sent to a correctional camp, Stanley Yelnats discovers his first real friend, treasure, and a sense of self.

Winthrop, Elizabeth. *The Castle in the Attic*: William embarks on an adventure involving magic and a personal quest after receiving the gift of a toy castle and a silver knight.

Balliett, Blue. *Chasing Vermeer*: Petra and Calder, two intelligent twelve-year-old classmates, team up to piece together clues from pentominoes, mysterious books, secret codes, and riddles to solve the mystery of a missing painting and develop a friendship.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: mystery, puzzles, riddles, secret codes, and art.

Alexander, Lloyd. *The Drackenberg Adventure*: On a social visit to Drackenberg, Vesper Holly embarks on a rollicking adventure involving gypsies, kidnappers, political intrigue, and the theft of a Da Vinci masterpiece.

Cressy, Judith. *Can You Find It?: Search and Discover More Than 150 Details in 19 Works of Art* and *Can You Find It Too?: Search and Discover More Than 150 Details in 20 Works of Art*: An introduction to world art using the familiar 'I Spy' format.

Greenberg, Jan and Sandra Jordan. *Action Jackson*: Unlike Vermeer, Jackson Pollock painted abstract art. This glimpse into Pollock's process while creating *Number 1, 1950* (Lavender Mist) provides insight into the passions of this unique artist.

Janeczko, Paul. *Top Secret: A Handbook of Codes, Ciphers, and Secret Writing*: This guide provides some historical background on secret writing, as well as exercises in code-breaking.

Koningsburg, E. L. *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*: Claudia and Jamie run away to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and find more mystery and adventure than they bargained for.

Mason, Jane B. and Sarah Hines Stephens. *The Dead, the Doomed, and the Buried*: Proving that fact can be as mysterious as fiction, this account (from the History Channel Presents series) covers unusual happenings from the cliff mummies of Peru to the *Titanic*.

McMillan, Frank. *Cezanne is Missing*: This story includes a missing painting, a kidnapping, and chases across Central Park as two teenagers try to evade the Russian Mafia.

Micklethwait, Lucy. *I Spy Shapes in Art*: Although written for younger readers, this examination of a number of paintings does provide a starting point for children to look at art and find something more than first meets the eye.

Nilsen, Anna. *The Great Art Scandal: Solve the Crime, Save the Show!* and *Art Fraud Detective: Spot the Difference, Solve the Crime!*: A mixture of mystery and art appreciation are presented in comic book format. Readers help a fictitious curator reassemble an art collection by carefully studying an assortment of works. Notes and biographical information on the various artists involved are also included.

Raskin, Ellen. *The Westing Game*: An unlikely assortment of characters and potential heirs must solve the mystery of an eccentric millionaire's death before claiming their inheritance.

Scieszka, Jon and Lane Smith. *Seen Art?: A celebration of the re-opening of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art*, this book takes the reader on a whirlwind tour of contemporary art appreciation.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. *Sammy Keyes and the Art of Deception*: Seventh-grade sleuth Sammy Keyes investigates mysterious happenings at a local art gallery.

Venezia, Mike. *Getting to Know the World's Famous Artists*: This series, which does include Vermeer, takes a light, humorous look at various artists and their most famous works.

Weizman, Jacqueline Preiss and Robin Preiss Glasser. *You Can't Take a Balloon into the Metropolitan Museum*: This exuberant wordless picture book follows a balloon (entrusted to a guard outside New York's Metropolitan Museum) as it floats through the city, and features paintings that coincide with New York City landmarks, reminding readers that art relates to everyday things.

Borden, Louise. *Sea Clocks: The Story of Longitude*: Borden tells the story of John Harrison, an 18th century English carpenter who learned how to make clocks and spent much of his life inventing the tool that determines longitude.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: perseverance, time, maps, and invention:

Barasch, Lynn. *Radio Rescue*: In 1923, after learning Morse Code and setting up his own amateur radio station, a twelve-year-old boy sends a message that leads to the rescue of a family stranded in a hurricane in Florida. Connections can be drawn from inventions and the need for perseverance in difficult tasks.

Fritz, Jean. *Leonardo's Horse*: Leonardo Da Vinci had a dream: to be the creator of a bronze horse honoring the Duke of Milan's father. Unlike John Harrison who lived to see his creation finally complete, Leonardo died before his sculpture could be finished.

Greenstein, Elaine. *Ice-Cream Cones For Sale!*: The many possibilities for who gets credit for inventing the ice cream cone are explored.

Hurst, Carol Otis. *Rocks in His Head*: Like Harrison, the author's father had a passion that stayed with him throughout his life. He collected rocks while operating a gas station and working as a night janitor, and eventually turned this hobby into a curator's position at a museum of natural history.

Johnson, Sylvia A. *Mapping the World*: This history of mapmaking shows how maps both reflect and change people's view of the world.

Koscielniak, Bruce. *About Time: A First Look at Time and Clocks*. Describes the concept of time and how it has been measured throughout history, using water clocks, sundials, calendars, and atomic vibrations.

Lasky, Kathryn. *The Man Who Made Time Travel*: Another look at the life and work of John Harrison.

Lewis, Patrick J. *A Burst of Firsts: Doers, Shakers, and Record Breakers*: Often less lofty than Harrison's quest, the events and individuals in these short verses nevertheless range from the achievements of Susan Montgomery Williams ("The Biggest Bubble Gum Bubble Ever Blown") to Sally K. Ride, first American woman in space.

Martin, Jacqueline Briggs. *Snowflake Bentley*: As Harrison did for clocks, so did Wilson Bentley develop a lifelong passion for studying snowflakes. Bentley developed a method for photographing snowflakes, and he later published them in a book entitled *Snow Crystals*.

Olds, Wendie C. *To Fly*: How the Wright brothers persevered and made the historic Kitty Hawk flight a reality, with beautiful illustrations by Robert Parker.

Thimmesh, Catherine. *The Sky's the Limit*: Short chapters feature girls and women who have invented or made significant discoveries.

Tomecheck, Stephen. *What a Great Idea! Inventions That Changed the World*: Profiles forty-five historic and prehistoric inventions, explaining how they work and describing their origins and impact.

Brown, Don. *Mack Made Movies*: A picture book biography that allows children to know about the man who delighted the world with Fatty Arbuckle, Charlie Chaplin, and the Keystone Kops.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: movies, biography, and comedy:

Abbott, Tony. *Danger Guys: Hollywood Halloween*: Zeek and Noodle tour the Paragon movie set during a thunderstorm and have various adventures straight out of their favorite movies.

Avi. *Silent Movie*: Movie frames to tell the story of immigration. Blends picture book with graphic novel, with silent movie format, giving the reader a great feel for the period.

Chocolate, Debbi. *The Piano Man*: A fictional memoir drawn from the author's own family history, recounting the times when her grandfather "played piano for the silent movies."

Cross, Robin. *Movie Magic: A Behind-the Scenes Look at Film-Making*: Together with *Lights, Camera, Action! Making Movies and TV From the Inside Out* by Lisa O'Brien, these books explore a range of aspects of film-making, from history to special effects, from cameras to animation techniques, from costume to sound effects, etc.

Delano, Marfe. *Inventing the Future: A Photobiography of Thomas Alva Edison*: Although only a few pages deal with Edison's role in motion pictures, archival photographs of the first movie studio and Edison's first film are informative and tie in nicely with the time period.

Edens, Cooper. *Santa Cow Studios Tour*: With the usual Santa Cow slapstick, the cows go to a movie studio to see such classics as *Cowasblanca* and *It's an Udderful Life*.

Gutman, Dan. *Johnny Hangtime*: Johnny Hangtime, a young stunt performer, has to decide what to do when a director asks him to perform the same stunt that killed his father.

Lakin, Pat. *Palace of Stars*: Amanda takes her great uncle Max to a "mansion filled with velvet and gold," an 'old-fashioned' movie theater.

Quackenbush, Robert. *Who Threw That Pie?: The Birth of Movie Comedy*: The exuberance of early movie comedy is explored, concentrating on such stars as Charlie Chaplin and Ben Turpin.

Selznick, Brian. *The Boy of a Thousand Faces*: Alonzo King is fascinated by Lon Chaney and spends a lot of his time transforming his features in order to be more like his hero.

Sorel, Edward. *The Saturday Kid*: Leo loves to play the violin and attend the Saturday movies in 1930's New York. After a bully gets him unfairly ejected from the movie theater, Leo concentrates on his music and has the last laugh when his violin concert makes the newsreel in the theater.

Tuck, Ruth. *Charlie Chaplin: Genius of the Silent Screen*: A lot more text than *Mack Made Movies*, but a succinct biography of The Little Tramp, and good background on the early movie-making industry.

Collins, Suzanne. *Gregor the Overlander (Underland Chronicles)*: Balanced with humor and suspense, this novel reveals how Gregor and his two year old sister discover a secret underground world and people who have lived for centuries help them to find their way home.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: searching for fathers or other family members; cockroaches, and things that make you go yuck!; quest, and children overcoming adversities.

Alexander, Lloyd. *Book of Three*: Taran, Assistant Pig-Keeper, embarks on a dangerous mission to save Prydain from the forces of evil. This is the first novel of the Prydain Chronicles.

Britton, Susan McGee. *The Treekeepers*: While searching for her father and a cure to save an ill baby, Bird joins three other orphans on a journey to the Kingdom of Wen to overthrow the evil Lord Rendarren.

Cannon, Jannell. *Crickwing*: Crickwing is a cockroach who uses his injured wing to take advantage of a colony of worker ants. When faced with danger he uses his creative talents to help the ants.

Collins, Suzanne. *Gregor and the Prophecy of Bane*: Gregor returns to the Underland to fulfill another prophecy and restore peace between the inhabitants who live below New York City. Book 2 of the Underland Chronicles.

Collins, Suzanne. *Gregor and the Curse of the Warmbloods*: Gregor and Boots travel to Regalia to try to save their Underland friends and mother from a dangerous plague. Book 3 of the Underland Chronicles.

Coniff, Richard. *Rats: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*: An entertaining and informative overview of rats, nicely illustrated with photos.

Crocker, Carter. *Tale of the Swamp Rat*: The runt of his litter, Ossie, is the lone survivor of his rat family after a snake attack in a Florida swampland. When drought lingers, Ossie leads a migration to save the inhabitants of the swamp.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *Bud, not Buddy*: In this Newbery Award winner, Bud escapes a bad foster home in search of his long lost father, believed to be a famous Depression era bandleader.

DuPrau, Jeanne. *The City of Ember*: Trying to help their families, two children leave home when resources become scarce, discovering an unusual secret about their city.

Fleischman, Sid. *The 13th Floor*: A young boy unwittingly travels back in time as he searches for missing sister.

Jacques, Brian. *Redwall*: When the evil rat Cluny threatens Redwall Abbey, a young mouse named Matthias hopes the lost sword of Martin the Warrior will save the abbey and the surrounding forest. First book in the series of the inhabitants of Redwall.

Kerby, Mona. *Cockroaches*: A former Texas librarian wrote this age-appropriate nonfiction account of one of the oldest creatures in the world.

LaFevers, R. L. *The Forging of the Blade*: (Lowthar's Blade, Book 1.) Kenric's father, the village blacksmith, suddenly disappears. Kenric strikes out on a quest to find him and encounters evil in Lord Mordig as well as some strange creatures, such as the goblin Hnagi and the mysterious Fey.

Lewis, C. S. *Chronicles of Narnia*: Seven books comprise this classic fantasy series wherein talking animals and mythical creatures abound.

O'Brien, Robert C. *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*: In this Newbery Medal winner, Mrs. Frisby, a widowed mouse, turns to an underground society of rats for help when her home is threatened.

Oppel, Kenneth. *Airborn*: Matt, a young cabin boy aboard an airship, and Kate, a wealthy young girl traveling with her chaperone, team up to search for the existence of mysterious winged creatures reportedly living hundreds of feet above the Earth's surface.

Divakaruni, Chitra Banerjee. *The Conch Bearer*: Twelve-year-old Anand embarks on a quest to return a mystical, magical conch shell to its rightful place; this trip will take him hundred of miles from home and change him forever.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: quest, magic, choices, friendship, and India:

Bell, Hilari. *The Goblin Wood*: Makenna and Tobin have to learn to trust each other, just as do Anan and Nisha, even though they come from very different backgrounds.

Bujor, Falvia. *The Prophecy of the Stones*: Armed with magical stones, three teenage girls embark on a journey to save an enchanted land.

Calhoun, Dia. *Aria of the Sea*: Just as Anan has to make an important decision regarding his future and the conch, so Cerinthe has chosen to use her gifts as a healer over her talents as a dancer.

Demi. *One Grain of Rice: A Mathematical Folktale*: Although more suited for a younger audience, the setting of this tale may help familiarize readers with India.

Dickinson, Peter. *The Healer*: Pinkie may have powers to heal, or may be a pawn being manipulated by her enterprising stepfather.

Farmer, Nancy. *The Sea of Trolls*: In this epic tale blending a variety of traditional mythologies, Jack and his younger sister Lucy are kidnapped by outlandish Viking ‘beserkers’ and have to devise a daring way back home.

Funke, Cornelia. *Dragon Rider*: Firedrake, a young dragon, embarks on a quest to find dragon sanctuary, the Rim of Heaven. Firedrake is accompanied on his travels by two unlikely companions, Ben, an orphan human boy, and Sorrell, a grumpy fairy; together the trio face numerous fantastic adventures.

Kipling, Rudyard. *Just So Stories*: A collection of folklore-like porquoi tales set in India that may help introduce young readers to the more exotic settings and backdrops depicted in *The Conch Bearer*.

Kerr, P.B. *The Children of the Lamp: The Akhenaten Adventure*: Twelve-year-old twins discover they are descended from djinn and, with the help of their uncle, learn how to use their extraordinary powers to fight evil.

Krishnaswami, Uma. *Shower of Gold: Women and Girls in the Stories of India*: A collection and retelling of traditional tales from the Indian subcontinent, including stories from both Hindu and Buddhist works.

Paolini, Christopher. *Eragon and Eldest*: Eragon finds a mystical blue stone that leads him into a quest of self-discovery full of adventure and intrigue.

Park, Linda Sue. *A Single Shard*: Tree Ear is entrusted with a valuable piece of pottery to deliver to the emperor for his master. His journey is one of self-discovery, while his moral and physical strength is tested.

Riordan, Rick. *Percy Jackson and the Olympians. Book One. The Lightning Thief*: Percy's real quest is for his own identity, but he is drawn into an intriguing family argument between the ancient Greek gods and has to prevent them from going to war over a lost thunderbolt.

Shepard, Alan. *Savitri*: May be a little young for *The Conch Bearer* readers, but does provide an introduction to an area of potential unfamiliarity being a tale of Ancient India.

Temple, Frances. *The Ramsay Scallop*: From 14th century England, Eleanor is launched on a pilgrimage to far-off Spain.

Yep, Laurence. *The Tiger's Apprentice* and *Tiger's Blood*: With the help of a tiger, a monkey, and a dragon, Tom must keep a magic talisman safe from falling into evil enemy hands.

George, Kristine. *Hummingbird Nest: A Journal of Poems*: A family observes the quiet strength of a mother hummingbird making a nest and providing for the baby birds in a collection of poems that include the perspective of the daughter, family dog, and cat.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: science and the art of observation, nature, animals, and poetry.

Collard, Sneed B. *A Firefly Biologist at Work*: The author writes about the life work of his stepfather, Jim Case, who studied fireflies for much of his life. Clear photos add to the balanced picture of the biologist's work in the field.

Coleman, Mary Ann. *The Dreams of Hummingbirds: Poems from nature*: This poetry collection contains 18 gentle poems about nature, including hummingbirds.

Costanza, Stephen. *Mozart Finds a Melody*: Wolfgang Mozart finds the inspiration to compose a new piano concerto from his pet starling and the sounds heard through the streets of eighteenth-century Vienna, Austria.

Damude, Noreen. *Texas Parks and Wildlife: Attracting Hummingbirds to Your Garden*: This near pamphlet is so local and has good information.

Florian, Douglas. *On the Wing: Bird Poems and paintings*: The author/painter celebrates a variety of birds through whimsical verse and watercolor.

Ghigna, Charles. *Animal Tracks: Wild Poems to Read Aloud*: A collection of simple poems about such animals as lions, hummingbirds, dogs, alligators, and seagulls featuring winsome illustrations.

Heidcamp, Arnette. *Hummingbirds: My Winter Guests*: The author tells stories of the hummingbirds which, because of illness, injury, or migration mistakes, were forced to take refuge for the winter in her sunroom.

Napoli, Donna Jo. *Albert*: While reaching his hand out the window to check the weather, a reclusive man named Albert discovers a twig placed in his hand by a cardinal beginning a nest. Eventually eggs are laid and hatched, an event which changes his life

Norman, Howard. *Between Heaven and Earth: Bird Tales from Around the World*: These five folktales, all based on surviving oral traditions, focus on birds. The illustrations, which resemble stained glass or batik in style, are by Leo and Diane Dillon.

Robbins, Ken. *A Flower Grows*: Tinted photographs record the daily progress of the growth and life cycle of an amaryllis.

Ryder, Joanne. *Dancers in the Garden*: The author provides a lyrical glimpse of pair of hummingbirds during a day in their lives in San Francisco.

Schaefer, Carole Lexa. *Two Scarlet Songbirds: A Story of Anton Dvorak*: As birds were the inspiration for George's poetry, so did birds inspire the Czech composer. The third movement of Dvorak's *American Quartet* was inspired by the song of the Scarlet Tanager.

Webb, Sophie. *My Season with Penguins: An Antarctic Journal*: The author describes her two-month stay in Antarctica while she studied and interacted with the penguins.

Yolen, Jane. *Wild Wings: Poems for Young People*: Birds in the wild are captured in photos and poems.

Hannigan, Katherine. *Ida B : . . .and Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World*: A home schooled child, Ida B. is free to learn by means of exploration and curiosity until her mother develops cancer.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: school, personal changes and challenges, loss and grief, and family:

Clements, Andrew. *Frindle*: Nick's fifth grade teacher turns his word game into a real learning experience.

Codell, Esmé Raji. *Sahara Special*: Sahara finds herself in the special ed classroom as a result of the trauma of her parents' divorce. With the help of a teacher, Sahara finds her voice and place in school and life.

Creech, Sharon. *Ruby Holler*: While Dallas and Florida did not grow up on the land like Ida B., Ruby Holler as a place becomes a part of who the siblings are and what they become.

Creech, Sharon. *Walk Two Moons*: In this Newbery Medal winner, Sal and her grandparents take a cross-country car trip in search of Sal's missing mother.

D'Camillo, Kate. *Because of Winn Dixie*: India Opal is missing her mother and overcomes the sadness of moving to a new town with the help of a big, goofy dog she befriends in the grocery store.

Gantos, Jack. *What Would Joey Do?*: Joey tries to keep his life from degenerating into total chaos when his mother sends him to be home-schooled with a hostile blind girl; his divorced parents cannot stop fighting; and his best supporter, his grandmother, is dying of emphysema.

Martin, Ann. *A Corner of the Universe*: Hattie, like Ida B., is an only child, and her family life takes a dramatic turn when her uncle comes to live with them.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *The Agony of Alice*: First in the series: Alice looks for a role model to replace her mother.

Osborne, Mary Pope. *Adaline Falling Star*: When her Arapaho mother dies, Adaline's father, Kit Carson, abruptly leaves her with her "citified" cousins. Both her family and community are prejudiced against Indians and individuals who are different so Adaline runs away to find her own place in life.

Park, Barbara. *The Graduation of Jake Moon*: Just as Ida watches her mother's decline with cancer, Jake must deal with his grandfather's Alzheimer's disease.

Potter, Ellen. *Olivia Kidney*: Ida B talks to trees, Olivia Kidney talks to ghosts in her new apartment building. She wants to believe that with the ghosts' help she can communicate with her recently dead brother.

Rogers, Mary. *Freaky Friday*: A daughter gains a more sympathetic understanding of her relationship with her mother when they spend a day in each others' shoes.

Ryan, Pam Munoz. *Becoming Naomi Léon*: After years of dreaming that her mother would return, her actual appearance does not go as Naomi had dreamed. Her mother has ulterior motives for wanting Naomi, and neither Gram nor younger brother Owen is a part of her mother's new plan.

Stanley, Diane. *A Time Apart*: Ginny goes to live with her father in an Iron Age research village in England while her mother battles cancer.

Weeks, Sara. *So B. It*: A young girl goes looking for her roots since her mentally challenged mother (who has a vocabulary of 13 words) can't tell her who she is.

Wiles, Deborah. *Love Ruby Lavender*: Coping with her grandfather's death, Ruby learns to survive on her own when her grandmother goes to Hawaii to deal with her own grief.

Yee, Lisa. *Millicent Min, Girl Genius*: Millie, eleven years old with a genius IQ, is about to enter her last year of high school. She is not shy about her intelligence but hides it with a new friend her age who helps her learn the importance of trust in a friendship.

Henkes, Kevin. *Olive's Ocean*: Martha discovers that a classmate who had been killed in a car accident wanted to be a writer, see the ocean, and get to know Martha better, and so begins a journey of personal growth as Martha learns more about relationships.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: family life, personal courage, overcoming challenges, and first love:

Blume, Judy. *Blubber*: Jill goes along with tormenting a fifth grade classmate and then finds out what feels like when she, too, becomes a target of cruelty.

Choldenko, Jennifer. *Notes from a Liar and Her Dog*: Antonia MacPherson believes she was misplaced at birth and dreams of her 'real' parents. A middle child, like Martha, Antonia must deal with her own family life rather than escape to the fantasy she tries to create.

Cooper, Ilene. *Buddy Love, Now on Video*: Like Jimmy Manning, Buddy Love is making a video about his family. However, Buddy's project is much more personal than Jimmy's, leaving him with a different way to view both himself and his family.

Estes, Eleanor. *The Hundred Dresses*: In this classic tale, Wanda Petronski boasts of having 100 dresses at home, yet wears the same old, faded one every day to school. The hurt that accompanies thoughtless words offers the opportunity to learn forgiveness as well.

Henkes, Kevin. *Words of Stone*: Blaze is mourning the death of his mother by burying imaginary friends each year and marking sites with gravestones. He is befriended by the new girl in town whose own secret is revealed and causes betrayal.

Holt, Kimberly Willis. *My Louisiana Sky*: Tiger Ann struggles to find her own identity that has always been defined by her grandmother and her mentally challenged parents.

Johnson, Angela. *Toning the Sweep*: As Emily and her mother prepare to move her terminally ill grandmother to Cleveland, the three tell of their experiences, of living through the hardships of life and of facing the inevitability of death.

Kuns, Judith Irvin. *While You Were Out*: Penelope and Martha are both dealing with their feelings for their families and dealing with the death of a friend. Writing becomes a solace for both characters as they start to heal.

McKay, Hilary. *Saffy's Angel*: Saffy (short for Saffron) feels a little out of place in her quirky artistic family. Having been adopted when her mother died, she must work to understand her place in the Casson family, and realize how important each member really is.

Nye, Naomi Shihab. *A Maze Me: Poems for Girls*: These poems reflect different questions girls have when entering adolescence.

Park, Barbara. *Mick Harte Was Here*: 13 year old Phoebe recalls her mischievous and eccentric brother's life before his death in a bicycle accident.

Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia*: Jess becomes friends with the new girl in town, Leslie. However, he struggles with loss after she drowns trying to reach their special place called Terabithia.

Perkins, Lynne Rae. *All Alone in the Universe*: All her life, Debbie has claimed Maureen as her best friend. But, the two grow apart when Maureen starts hanging around with Glenna. Like Martha, Debbie reveals herself in this internal story, learning that friends can hurt you; it's up to her not to be "all alone in the universe."

Philbrick, Rodman. *The Young Man and the Sea*: Skiff has lost his father, who has entered his own world after Skiff's mother's death. He ventures out alone to try to catch a big fish that embodies his hopes for a better life for himself and his father.

Ritter, John H. *Choosing up Sides*: Luke is at odds with his fundamentalist preacher father over his dream to play baseball, which as a sport is forbidden by their religion.

Russell, Ching Yeung. *Water Ghost*: Ying is haunted by the death of a classmate for which she feels partially responsible. Ying finds a way to help and comfort the grandmother of her friend.

Spinelli, Jerry. *Crash*: Crash is a bully, and can hurt those around him – particularly Penn Ward, an easy object of his teasing. But when his beloved grandfather has a stroke, Crash begins to develop an understanding for others.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. *Flipped*: This novel explores a painful "first love" from the points of view of eighth graders Bryce and Juli.

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Sailing for Gold (The Klondike Kid)*: Davey, an orphan, stows away on a ship bound for the Klondike to hunt for his Uncle Walt amidst the frenzy created by “gold fever.”

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: problem solving, historical fiction, adversity, danger and adventure, the gold rush and mining for gold, and maps:

Alphin, Elaine Marie. *Dinosaur Hunter*: This is a short, easy to read historical fiction piece about a boy who finds dinosaur bones on a Wyoming ranch in the 1880s.

Altman, Linda Jacobs. *The Legend of Freedom Hill*: Young Rosabel and her friend buy her mother’s freedom from a slave catcher during the gold rush.

DeClements, Barthe. *The Bite of the Gold Bug: A Story of the Alaskan Gold Rush*: While prospecting for gold in 1898, Bucky and his father must overcome danger and human treachery in the Alaskan wilderness.

Greenwood, Barbara. *Gold Rush Fever: A Story of the Klondike, 1898*: 13-year-old Tim and his dog follow older brother Roy from Seattle to the Klondike in search of gold. Their fictional adventures are interspersed with nonfiction accounts of historical events and people associated with the Gold Rush.

Gregory, Kristiana. *Seeds of Hope: Gold Rush Diary of Susanna Fairchild*: Susanna and her family journey from New York City to Oregon to start a new life. En route they encounter tragedy and her father decides to join the gold rush. This *Dear America* entry offers the typical historical information after the story.

Hopkinson, Deborah. *The Long Trail (Klondike Kid, book 2)* and *Adventure in Gold Town (Klondike Kid, Book 3)*: These two short novels complete the trilogy as Davey continues his search for Uncle Walt in the Klondike.

Jones, Charlotte Foltz. *Yukon Gold: The Story of the Klondike Gold Rush*: This non-fiction selection recounts the quest for gold in northwestern Canada.

Kay, Verla. *Gold Fever*: The story of a farmer named Jasper and his experience as a California 49er is told through short rhyming text and gives a surprising strong overview of the times.

Lawson, Julie. *Arizona Charlie and the Klondike Kid*: A young boy dreams of being like the wild west entertainer Arizona Charlie in this picture book set in the Yukon gold rush era.

Morrison, Taylor. *The Coast Mappers*: This nonfiction account details how George Davidson surveyed and mapped the Pacific coast in the 1850s.

Murphy, Claire Rudolf. *Gold Rush Winter*: An easy reader based on the life of Klondy Nelson, as she and her mother travel across Canada to meet up with her gold miner father.

Murphy, Claire Rudolf and Jane G. Haigh. *Gold Rush Dogs*: Read about the real dogs that helped shape the Yukon Gold Rush era, including Togo and Balto as well as other lesser-known canine heroes.

Siebert, Diane. *Rhyolite: The True Story of a Ghost Town*: This story in rhyme chronicles the rapid rise and fall of a southwestern Nevada town after the discovery of gold.

Stanley, Jerry. *Hurry Freedom*: This book explores the role of African-Americans during the California gold rush as they pursued freedom and opportunity.

Steiner, Barbara A. *Mystery at Chilkoot Pass*: In this *American Girl History Mystery*, Hetty travels through Canada to the Klondike where she solves the mystery of the family's missing mementos.

Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *Little House in Big Woods*: The first in the classic, easy to read historical fiction series of an American pioneer girl.

Krull, Kathleen. *Boy on Fairfield Street*: A picture book biography with vivid imagery reveals what it was like for Theodore Geisel, otherwise known as Dr. Seuss, to grow up and begin his adventure that would take him into the hearts of children.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: illustrator/author biography, drawing/art, imagination/word play, and picture book creation:

Ames, Lee J. and Rick Estrada. *Draw 50 Aliens, Ufos, Galaxy Ghouls, Milky Way Marauders and other Extraterrestrial Creatures*: Using his hallmark step-by-step drawing technique, Ames teaches youngsters to draw creatures as fantastic Seuss's.

Lasky, Kathryn. *A Brilliant Streak: The Making of Mark Twain*: Illustrated by Barry Moser (*Hummingbird Nest*, also on the current Bluebonnet Master List), this biography of Samuel Clemens allows readers to examine the American influences at work in the childhood of another great author.

Berenstain, Stan and Berenstain, Jan. *Down a Sunny Dirt Road*: As the title indicates, Stan and Jan Berenstain prefer to walk on the sunny side of their autobiographical street, stressing the positives in their lives and tempering the negatives with humor. One chapter is devoted to their attempts to break into the beginning reader market through – you guessed it – Dr. Seuss.

Christelow, Eileen. *What Do Authors Do?* and *What Do Illustrators Do?*: Let this pair of books take youngsters through the process of writing and illustrating books, and see first-hand how children's book's authors and illustrators work.

Cohen, Charles D. *The Seuss, the Whole Seuss, and Nothing but the Seuss: A Visual Biography of Theodor Seuss Geisel*: This adult biography is chocked full of pictures from Geisel's career, including many of his pre-children's book art. While its size may be offputting to children, segments and chapters read alone add much detail to his life.

Cummings Pat. *Talking with Artists, vols. 1, 2, & 3*: Cummings, herself an artist/illustrator, introduces youngsters to children's books illustrators. Many of the segments cover the early artistic experiences of these individuals as well as telling moments from their childhoods. Also recommended: Sharon McElmeel's *100 Most Popular Picture Book Authors and Illustrators* which covers Dr. Seuss as well as ninety-nine others who write and illustrate their own books.

DePaola, Tommie. *26 Fairmount Avenue*: This first entry in a series that covers young Tommie's life allows readers some insight into the 1930s, the everyday influences on a beloved author/illustrator, and a glimpse into a vivid American family. Also recommended: Eric Blegvad's *Self-Portrait*, in which the illustrator of another Bluebonnet Master List book, *Sea Clocks*, discusses his life and his art.

Duquette, Keith. *Cock-a-Doodle Moo!: A Mixed-Up Menagerie*: This outrageous look at animals that never were, but could be by joining two different species, is accompanied by short ditties describing a variety of creatures, such as a Girantula, created by joining a giraffe and a tarantula. Suggest this one with Dr. Seuss's *On Beyond Zebra*.

Gelman, Rita Golden. *Doodler Doodling*: Young Ted Geisel was a great doodler; illustrator Paul Zelinsky celebrates that art in his free-wheeling drawings that complement Gelman's spare text.

Leedy, Loreen. *Look at My Book: How Kids Can Write & Illustrated Terrific Books*: The subtitle clearly explains the contents, and Leedy's storyline, told in a near-graphic novel format, concerning a group of children creating books gives a solid overview of the process.

Lyon, George Ella. *Mother to Tigers*: Young Ted loved to go to the zoo with his father. In this biography, Helen Delaney Martini brings the zoo home as she establishes the first animal nursery in the Bronx Zoo.

Prelutsky, Jack. *Scranimals*: Let children visit the wacky and imaginative Scranimal Island where all sorts of wondrous creatures live, including a Radishark and a Bananaconda.

St. George, Judith. *You're On Your Way, Teddy Roosevelt*: This illustrated biography of Teddy Roosevelt (concentrating on his childhood) introduces youngsters to a book similar in genre to *The Boy on Fairfield Street* and to the man who presented Dr. Seuss with his Boy Scout Medal.

Schulman, Janet and Kathy Goldman, compilers. *Your Favorite Seuss*: Thirteen of Dr. Seuss's best known books, and complementary essays that expand each story, trace Geisel's distinguished literary career.

Seuss, Dr. *And To Think I Saw It on Mulberry Street*: The good doctor's first picture book shows his genius at work as he lets young Marco's imagination turn first one ordinary sight, and then another, into a series of fantastic events.

Sierra, Judy. *Wild About Books*: In a patterned verse that is reminiscent of Dr. Seuss, (and a dedication that acknowledges his influence) Sierra pays tribute to two of his signature interests: books and zoos.

Silverstein, Shel. *Runny Babbit*: Published posthumously, this billy sook takes word play to a different level, transposing initial consonants from one word to another. To bead a rook, runny babbit goes to the lublic pibrary. Capitalizing on the Seuss connection, teachers may find some interesting activities in Cheryl Potts's *Poetry Galore and More with Shel Silverstein* that introduces many oral reading and language arts skills through Silverstein's poetry.

Thomson, Sarah L. *Imagine a Day*: This flight of fancy asks readers to explore their imaginations, a trait Dr. Seuss used so well, and think about a myriad of possibilities for spending a day, the kind where "a tree is a ladder/between earth and air," and "you forget how to fall." Pair this with *Imagine a Night* by the same author.

Weidt, Maryann N. *Oh, the Places He Went: A Story about Dr. Seuss*: This accessible and balanced biography covers much of Geisel's adult years and some background information about many of his popular books.

Young, Sue. *Scholastic Rhyming Dictionary*: Besides introducing youngsters to a potentially unfamiliar organizational pattern, this handy tool should help those aspiring to create their own Seussisms.

Loy, Jessica. *Follow the Trail*: Two sisters and their three friends take the reader along with them on a camping trip explaining what to take, how to tell the temperature, how to use a compass, and many other interesting tidbits of useful camping information.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: nature, camping, habitat, and observation:

Ackerman, Diane. *Animal Sense*: This slim collection of poems examines animals through their five senses, highlighting animals such as the owl, “a pair of binoculars with wings.” Ackerman asks readers to look at animals in a less traditional way, a natural extension to *Follow the Trail* that encourages youngsters to observe the world around them.

Arnold, Katya. *My First Nature Guide*: Young, armchair naturalists can study nature without ever leaving their homes as they seek and find numerous plants and animals in this wordless book.

Arnosky, Jim. *Field Trips*: Although more detailed than *Follow the Trail*, this accessible field guide provides numerous tips for hunting bugs, studying animal tracks, observing birds, and making the most out of a walk on the shore, all the while sharing Arnosky's love of nature.

Bishop, Nic. *Forest Explorer: A Life-Size Field Guide*: Dramatic, full color photographs showcase animals, first individually with short descriptions, and second, *in situ* as they appear in nature. Bishop follows the same pattern in *Backyard Detectives: Critters Up Close*.

Dorros, Arthur. *Animal Tracks*: Dorros asks readers to take an active part in nature study as they're led to think about tracks in the wild, from identification of specific animals to hypotheses concerning the presence of particular groups of tracks.

Drake, Jane. *The Kids' Campfire Book*: Children who want to extend the introductory information in *Follow the Trail* will find a wealth of suggestions about camping, including advice on starting a fire, devising and playing games and songs, and appreciating the night sky.

George, Jean Craighead. *My Side of the Mountain*: Although this title is a stretch for the intended audience of *Follow the Trail*, the classic story of Sam Gribbley and his experiences living on his own defines the category of survival tales. Less sophisticated readers may want to explore George's Outdoor Adventure Series, through entries such as *Fire Storm*.

Gilson, Jamie. *4B Goes Wild*: Exploring a wealth of situations, including homesickness and developing self-esteem, fourth graders survive a three-day, two night field trip at Camp Trotter in Wisconsin.

Jenkins, Steve. *The Top of the World*: Here's camping in its most extreme forms, as Jenkins introduces readers to the climbers of Mount Everest and the obstacles they face.

Johnson, Angela. *A Cool Moonlight*: Due to a physical condition, Lila has to remain away from sunlight, so she spends much of her time outside in the dark. What she sees in the outdoor world sometimes complements and sometimes contrasts with the world in *Follow the Trail*.

Maupin, Melissa. *Texas Outdoor Adventure Guide for Kids*: Published by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, this handy guide lists and describes places in Texas that have outdoor programs for kids such as fishing, water sports, bird and wildlife watching, nature study, and camping. Contact information for each site is included.

McCully, Emily Arnold. *The Squirrel and John Muir*: This fictionalization of the relationship between John Muir (who founded the Sierra Club and helped create Yosemite National Park) and a young girl, Floy “Squirrel” Hutchings who lived in Yosemite when Muir first visited there, provides a story narrative about observing and conserving nature.

Mora, Pat. *Listen to the Desert/Oye al desierto*: In a stunning dual language edition, author Pat Mora and illustrator Francisco X. Mora challenge readers to consider the elements of one natural habitat: the Southwestern desert.

Ray, Deborah Kogan. *The Flower Hunter: William Bartram, America’s First Naturalist*: Working first with his father, botanist John Bartram, and later on his own, William Bartram found, identified, and cultivated plants native to America. His passion for nature, and the processes he followed as both a scientist and an artist, strongly influence this biographical account.

Rey, H. A. *Find the Constellations*: This introduction to astronomy extends the brief comments in the Loy book and is written simply and concisely, with no scientific jargon to bewilder young stargazers. Follow with Rey’s (who was a scientist as well as the author of Curious George books) *The Stars: A New Way to See Them*.

Ross, Kathy. *Crafts for Kids who are Wild About the Wild*: One of a series of craft books (many about elements of the natural world) that suggests craft ideas that not only utilize easy-to-find materials but also lead youngsters to think about principles and concepts.

Ross, Michael Elson. *Backyard Buddies Series*: Through series entries such as *Rolypolyology*, *Snailology*, and *Ladybugology*, Ross shares ideas for studying, collecting, and caring for a variety of creatures. The scientific method is stressed throughout.

Organization Handbooks. Handbooks, such as *The Boy Scout Handbook* and the *Brownie Girl Scout Handbook*, complement *Follow the Trail*. The particular editions and handbooks ordered will vary from library to library, depending on the strength of the organizations in a particular area.

Smith, Heather and Joe Rhatigan. *Earth-Friendly Crafts for Kids: 50 Awesome Things to Make with Recycled Stuff*: There’s a healthy regard for the environment that informs this entire book, as the authors not only provide some easy-to-follow, well considered craft projects made from recycled material but also remind youngsters to be cognizant of the packaging and disposal of many everyday items.

Sweet, Melissa. *Pinky and Rex and the Double-Dad Weekend*: So what do two best friends and their dads do when their scheduled camping trip is rained out? They make alternate plans and create a camp-in that includes museum visits, inside family fun, and the pleasures of enjoying one another’s company.

Mann, Elizabeth. *The Empire State Building*: A vastly interesting Wonders of the World Book that reveals the history and architectural feat of the Empire State Building as well the competition with the construction of the Chrysler Building.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: architecture, Empire State Building, and New York City:

Ames, Lee J. *Draw 50 Buildings and Other Structures*: Ames provides step-by-step instructions for drawing fifty famous buildings (including the Empire State Building) and other structures from various parts of the world.

Arbogast, Joan Marie. *Buildings in Disguise*: In enumerated chapters, photographs and brief text showcase various forms of novelty architecture and the history behind a number of wacky, mimetic buildings. Map endpapers show the location of each building.

Gerstein, Mordicai. *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers*: Philippe Petit, the tightrope walker who, suspended above lower Manhattan in 1974, walked and danced between the twin towers of the World Trade Center, a New York City building that, like the Empire State Building, became an architectural symbol.

Giblin, James Cross. *The Skyscraper Book*: Giblin's clear explanations define skyscrapers, their construction, and their place on the American landscape.

High, Linda Oatman. *Under New York*: While The Empire State Building looks out over the city, there's an equally as fascinating series of events happening under the city in subways, around the miles of underground cable, and within mini malls. Also suggested: *Subway: The Story of Tunnels, Tubes and Tracks* by Larry Dane Brimmer which discusses the building of subway systems around the world and David Weitzman's more localized history, *A Subway for New York*.

Jakobsen, Kathy. *My New York*: Jacobsen's folk art oils shine in this tour of famous Manhattan landmarks.

Kalman, Maira. *Next Stop Grand Central*: Kalman's vibrant overview of Grand Central Station, as much a New York City landmark as the Empire State Building, shows the frenetic energy of travelers, performers, lovers, and police who all populate this train station.

Kirk, Connie Ann. *Sky Dancers*: This fictional story is based on the many Mohawk Indians who worked on the Empire State Building, and adds to the Mann account the pride and point of view of a young boy whose father is one of those steelworkers.

Mann, Elizabeth. *The Hoover Dam*: Built during the Great Depression (like the Empire State Building) the Hoover Dam was an extraordinary feat of engineers, workers, and designers in their attempt to harness the power of a giant river.

Marcus, Leonard S. *Storied City*: Take a walking tour through the boroughs of New York and make connections to the rich, recommended literature that surrounds many distinctive spots, from Lower Manhattan to Staten Island.

Macaulay, David. *Unbuilding*: If, as Macaulay has suggested in previous books, society is remembered through the structures it builds, perhaps the reverse is also true: society is also remembered by the structures it squanders. That twist informs the fictional supposition in *Unbuilding* as detailed illustrations and diagrams show the dismantling, removal, and eventual relocation of the Empire State Building.

Milo, Francesco. *The Story of Architecture*: Non-linear double page spreads cover the broad scope of architectural styles, cultures, and building techniques through the ages. Detailed color illustrations, maps, and photographs enhance the wealth of information in the text.

Newmann, Dietrich. *Joe and the Skyscraper: The Empire State Building in New York City*: The story chronicles the construction of the Empire State Building through the eyes of Joe Carbonelli, a sixteen-year-old water boy who worked on the project. Lewis Hines's black and white photographs as well as postcard facsimiles add authenticity to the text.

Palatini, Margie. *Ding Dong Ding Dong*: Sophisticated humor, puns, and witticisms hallmark this picture book about a persistent ape that moves up to the Big Apple selling "Ape-On" cosmetics with a surprising result.

Peck, Richard. *A Long Way from Chicago*: Although this novel takes place a long way from New York City, the setting of the Great Depression allows youngsters a view of the time period but in a rural environment.

Roth, Susan. *Hard Hat Area*: Take readers into the clouds with Kristen, an apprentice ironworker, who visits various crewmembers (including a foreman, deeker, plumber upper, welder, and a crane operator) on a construction site; checks their progress; and brings snacks and tools to each. Roth's stunning collages, overlaid on a photomontage of the New York skyline, showcase the various workers, their jobs, and their equipment *in situ*; clear explanatory notes describe the work and responsibilities for each person involved in the construction.

Rubin, Susan Goldman. *There Goes the Neighborhood: Ten Buildings People Loved to Hate*: Including the commercial (McDonalds's Golden Arches); the celebratory (Eiffel Tower); and the personal (Phillip Johnson's Glass House), Rubin presents ten architectural structures that all engendered enormous negative press before becoming cultural icons.

Selden, George. *The Cricket in Times Square*: A country cricket must survive in New York City just a few blocks away from the Empire State Building.

Vanderwarker, Peter. *The Big Dig: Reshaping an American City*: Informative color photographs and a clear, explanatory text outline the political, social, and engineering challenges of Boston's Big Dig, the "largest and most complex construction project any American city has ever seen."

Yue, Charlotte and David Yue. *The Wigwam and the Longhouse*: Like the architects of the Empire State Building, the Woodlands Indians of North America built structures of a particular time and place, which, in the incidences chronicled here, are in concert with their needs, their land, and their materials available before Europeans came to America.

Zaunders, Bo. *Gargoyles, Girders & Glass Houses: Magnificent Master Builders*: Roxie Munro's detailed watercolors complement background stories surrounding seven worldwide construction wonders (including the Brooklyn Bridge and Chrysler building in New York City).

Marsden, Carolyn. *Silk Umbrellas*: Noi, an eleven year old Thai girl, is confronted with a drastic change when her father loses his farming job and her sister has to work in a factory. Noi doesn't want to join her sister, but what will she do?

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: umbrellas, family, friendship, Thailand, and silk making:

Bond, Ruskin. *Binya's Blue Umbrella*: The connection here is with umbrellas; Noi makes them and Binya (from rural India) covets a particular umbrella – so much so that she trades her most prized possession for it. Like Noi, however, Binya must also consider the value of objects as well as the value of individuals.

Creech, Sharon. *Granny Torrelli Makes Soup*: Twelve-year-old Rosie needs her grandmother's influence as much as does Noi, but Granny Torrelli's help comes through the advice she passes on to Rosie about friendship and love.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. *Pictures of Hollis Woods*: Hollis and Noi learn self-expression in art through the gentle teachings of an artist they care for deeply.

Giles, Gail. *The Breath of the Dragon*: Both Malila and Noi's grandmothers instill in them a deep sense of Thai tradition. Both girls learn to demonstrate these traditions through art.

Glass, Tom. *Even a Little Is Something: Stories of Nong*: This gentle examination of modern Thai youngsters gives readers a strong cast of characters who navigate the cultural waters of a country that struggles with reconciling both past and present.

Harrison, Supenn and Judy Monroe. *Cooking the Thai Way* (Easy Menu Ethnic Cookbooks): This basic introduction to Thai cooking includes dishes such as Lemon Chicken Soup and Panaeng Beef Curry. Historical information about the country and the people completes the book.

Ho, Mingfong. *Hush: A Thai Lullaby*: Although the primary audience for this book is much younger than readers of *Silk Umbrellas*, the lush Thai countryside and flora and fauna mentioned in the text offers a glimpse of a potentially unfamiliar setting.

Hong, Lily Toy. *The Empress and the Silkworm*: The common thread between this book (set in China) and the Marsden, is silk. In this legend, Empress Si Ling Chi discovers the process of making silk, a process kept secret for 3,000 years.

Johnson, Sylvia A. *Silkworms*: Crisp photos show silkworm moths weaving their cocoons with the silk thread used to make the cloth Noi and her grandmother use in creating their umbrellas.

Kessler, Cristina. *My Great Grandmother's Gourd*: Set in the Sudan, this story of a grandmother who refuses to abandon all of her country's traditions and eventually saves the day during a drought, reminds readers of cultural as well as familial heritage.

Krudop, Walter. *The Man Who Caught Fish*: In the tradition of a folklorist, Krudop gives youngsters an original tale of a Thai king who wanted more than was his due and is eventually punished for his greed.

MacDonald, Margaret Read and Supaporn Vathanaprida: *The Girl Who Wore Too Much: A Folktale from Thailand*. This retelling of a Thai legend, in both Thai and English, has a strong moral lesson about greed and overvaluing possessions. Also recommended: *Thai Tales: Folktales of Thailand* by the same authors.

Marsden, Carolyn. *The Gold-Threaded Dress*: The connection with *Silk Umbrellas* comes through cultural heritage. A young Thai-American girl so desperately wants to fit in with her friends, that she risks harming an exquisite ceremonial dress.

Miles, Miska. *Annie and the Old One*: Like Noi, Annie loves her grandmother but she is afraid to use her grandmother's lessons about weaving. She unravels a Navajo blanket every night believing that when it is completed her grandmother will die.

Sobol, Richard. *An Elephant in the Backyard*: Noi and Shen-Ya both paint elephants and this book describes how important elephants are in a Thai village.

Torres, Levla. *Liliana's Grandmothers*: Noi's grandmother influences her, and so do Liliana's: two important women each from a different country, each speaking a different language, and each having different interests.

Thoennes, Kristin. *Thailand*: This simple, colorful introduction to Thailand comes from the Countries of the Word Series.

Montgomery, Sy. *Tarantula Scientist*: Dramatic color photographs allow readers a close experience with Sam Marshall and his love for the much dreaded tarantula; the book includes spider myths and spider reality.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: exotic animals, tarantulas, science/inquiry, and endangered species:

Allen, Christina. *Hippos in the Night*: Allen's emotional and enthusiastic account of her role in AfricaQuest takes readers to Kenya and Tanzania where they come face to face with all manner of wild creatures, from lions to elephants to wildebeest. The science takes a back seat here, but is replaced with unparalleled encounters with animals in the wild.

Birdseye, Tom. *Tarantula Shoes*: Eleven-year-old Ryan believes an expensive pair of tennis shoes will help him make the basketball team, but his efforts to raise the necessary cash bring him face to face with the shoe company's false advertising and his own exploitative use of his pet tarantula.

Dendy, Leslie and Mel Boring. *Guinea Pig Scientists: Bold Self-Experimenters in Science and Medicine*: As youngsters consider how scientists work and think, share with them these ten profiles of scientists who willingly subjected themselves to experimentation in order to test their personal hypotheses.

Facklam, Margery. *Spiders and their Web Sites*: While searching for tarantulas may appear to be quite exotic, Facklam reminds readers that "no matter where you are, there is a spider not far away." Pair this one with Seymour Simon's *Spiders* for readers who want to see the many features and examples of fascinating arachnids.

George, Jean Craighead. *The Tarantula in My Purse and 172 Other Wild Pets*: Not all tarantulas are found in exotic locations or in pristine laboratories. One is found in Jean Craighead George's purse, a circumstance she shares with readers interested in exotic pets.

Lasky, Katherine. *Interrupted Journey: Saving Endangered Sea Turtles*: The concentrated efforts of environmentalists, children, doctors, and scientists who work together underscore the numerous procedures in place to learn about and save the sea turtles on our Eastern and Gulf coasts.

Lindop, Laurie. *Probing Volcanoes*: This entry from the Science on the Edge Series profiles the work and processes of "daredevil scientists." While the activities are different from those described in *The Tarantula Scientist*, the information shares another way in which scientists work in the field.

Marrin, Albert. *Secrets from the Rocks: Dinosaur Hunting with Roy Chapman Andrews*: Andrews, widely thought to be the man on whom Indiana Jones (from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*) is based, showed a flare for adventure that complements, but never overrides, the history and process of hunting dinosaurs.

Montgomery, Sy. *Search for the Golden Moon Bear*: Science as mystery creates an exciting genre as Montgomery travels to Southeast Asia to find the golden-furred bear, an animal she wants to establish (through DNA analysis) as a recognized species.

Various Authors. *Scientists in the Field Series*: The books in this series (of which *The Tarantula Scientist* is one) all allow readers to think like scientists and to discover the many ways scientists operate in the field. Examples are Pamela S. Turner's *Gorilla Doctors: Saving Endangered Great Apes*; Sy Montgomery's *The Snake Scientist*; and Sneed B. Collard's *The Prairie Builders: Reconstructing America's Lost Grasslands*.

Sis, Peter. *The Tree of Life*: Sis asks young readers to mirror Darwin's scientific methods as he follows Darwin's processes of thinking. On the final end pages, Sis challenges youngsters to continue their focused inquiry and become the next great scientific minds.

Smith, Greg. *Ninjas, Piranhas, and Galileo*: Elias, Honoria, and Shohei are best friends attending a top-notch private school. When they enter the school's science fair contest they discover they must not only solve scientific problems, but also the more prickly ones about themselves.

Thimmesh, Catherine. *The Sky's the Limit: Stories of Discovery by Women and Girls*: In this profile of eleven girls and women who notice, question, and discover elements of the world around them, Thimmesh pays tribute to curiosity. The focus here is on three aspects of discovery, with each representing a chapter that emphasizes a unique meaning of the word: (1) "to obtain knowledge of through observation and study," (2) "to be the first to find, learn of, or observe," and (3) "a desire to know or learn."

Tyson, Leigh Ann. *Harry the Tarantula*: What better way to learn about people, or animals, than to interview them? That's the tack DJ Katy Did (from KBUG radio) takes as she discovers much about mystery guest, Harry, by asking this tarantula a series of informative and humorous questions.

Walker, Sally. *Fossil Fish Found Alive: Discovering the Coelacanth*: Here scientists are presented as detectives as they discover the presence and characteristics of the Coelacanth, a fish long thought to be extinct. Part of the story is a race against time since early scientists had no means of preserving the fish, and part of the story is an examination of international politics that can interfere in scientific research.

Zinnen, Linda. *The Dragons of Spratt, Ohio*: Far from the level of inquiry shown in *The Tarantula Scientist*, this offbeat novel about the world of animal testing and cosmetic research, features a mad scientist, a smart young girl who wants to be the next Coco Chanel, and a dedicated boy trying to preserve the dragons that live near his home.

Raven, Margot. *Circle Unbroken*: When her grandmother shows her granddaughter how to make a basket, she weaves into the instructions the history of her Gullah culture.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: the importance of culture, overcoming hardships, art, family and traditions, baskets, and Gullah culture and history:

Belton, Sandra. *Beauty, Her Basket*: In the lilting speech patterns of the sea islands, a young girl's grandmother explains the need for beauty in a sweet grass basket, both with the flowers held by it and the traditions woven through it.

Boling, Katherine. *New Year Be Coming! A Gullah Year*: Verses written in the Gullah dialect describe the months of the year and activities that characterize them.

Branch, Muriel Miller. *The Water Brought Us: The Story of the Gullah-Speaking People*: Through both interviews and observations, Branch brings readers an historical overview and contemporary examination of the Gullah-speaking African Americans living on the sea islands of South Carolina and Georgia. The individuals here share their reverence for tradition and consider the threats tourism might bring.

Corwin, Judith Hoffman. *African Crafts*: Shows how to design masks, beads, toys, and other African crafts using simple household materials.

Daise, Ronald. *Little Muddy Waters: A Gullah Folk Tale*: An accompanying audio cassette, read by the author, allows youngsters to hear the dialect and speech patterns in this colorful rendition of a Gullah tale.

Doyle, Brian. *Mary Ann Alice*: When the Canadian government decides to dam the Gatineau River, Mary Ann Alice and her family must face leaving the culture and surroundings that are so much of their life.

Flournoy, Valerie. *The Patchwork Quilt*: Tanya's grandmother uses clothing scraps to make her quilts, stitching and sharing with her granddaughter the family's history. When grandmother falls ill, it's up to Tanya and her mother to carry on the family tradition.

Govenar, Alan, editor. *Masters of Traditional Arts*: This two-volume set provides short, biographical essays on those individuals who have received a National Heritage Fellowship awarded by the National Endowment of the Arts. Each segment tells of the recipient's life and provides information about his or her art – from singing to weaving to fiddling. An accompanying CD, which includes live video and a wealth of photographs, can also be ordered.

Hamilton, Virginia. *Bruh Rabbit and the Tar Baby Girl*: It's a familiar trickster tale, but in Hamilton's rhythmical and lyrical retelling that capitalizes on the Gullah dialect, the retelling of Bruh Rabbit encountering the Tar Baby is both fresh and captivating.

Jaquith, Priscilla. *Bo Rabbit Smart for True: Tall tales from the Gullah*: This collection of folktales comes from oral sources recorded in 1949 and includes both porquoi and trickster tales.

Polacco, Patricia. *The Keeping Quilt*: It's family history, like that showcased in *Circle Unbroken*, that ties together this narrative about a Russian Jewish extended family and their heritage -- all remembered through Great Grandmother Anna's quilt.

Seabrook, Brenda. *Bridges of Summer*: Zarah certainly didn't want to go to a remote island off the South Carolina coast and stay with her grandmother. But, once she arrives, she learns about a culture and a way of life that she's proud to claim.

Siegelson, Kim. *The Terrible Wonderful Tellin' at Hog Hammock*: When Jonah's grandfather dies, Jonah looks for a way to remember and honor him. He decides to carry on grandfather's Gullah storytelling tradition, even though Jonah's scared he might let grandfather down.

Yamane, Linda. *Weaving a California Tradition: A Native American Basket Maker*: Yamane shares with readers the process a young girl (a Western Mono Indian) follows as she weaves baskets for an annual celebration.

Young, Ed. *I, Doko, the Tale of a Basket*: This oral tale from Nepal, narrated here by the basket Doko, weaves for readers a multigenerational story of family and tradition.

Sandin, Joan. *Coyote School News*: Historical fiction of the 1930s relates the yearlong experiences of Monchi Ramírez and his classmates who share their writings in the student newspaper.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: class newspapers/ newspapers, learning from others, the importance of cultural heritage, school stories, and new horizons include:

Avi. *The Secret School*: The opening sentence introduces a spunky and creative heroine: “On a cool Monday morning in early April 1925, Ida Bidson, aged fourteen, carefully guided her family’s battered Model T Ford along a narrow, twisting dirt road in Elk Valley, Colorado.” Soon Ida’s inventiveness is put to the test when the eight pupils in Elk Valley learn their teacher must leave before the spring term is over, and she is the only one who can take over the job.

Borden, Louise. *The Year of Miss Agnes*: Far removed from the Arizona setting of *Coyote School News*, Miss Agnes’s year takes place in Alaska. One student, Fred (Frederika), tells how she and her friends grow with Miss Agnes who seems so different from their own Athapascan family and neighbors, and how Miss Agnes opens a door to the world for the children.

Clements, Andrew. *The Landry News*: A fifth-grader starts a newspaper with an editorial that prompts her burnt-out classroom teacher to really begin teaching again, but he is later threatened with disciplinary action as a result.

Hampton, Wil. *Kennedy Assassinated*: Hampton takes the class newspaper into the big time with this autobiographical account of a young cub reporter (Hampton himself, right out of college) covering the Kennedy Assassination.

Leedy, Loreen. *The Furry News: How to Make a Newspaper*: Let Leedy’s animal characters take youngsters through a step-by-step guide of publishing a newspaper. The process, from inception to news gathering to editing to production, concludes with a helpful glossary.

Meyer, Carolyn. *Rio Grande Stories*: Twelve students in a fictional school in Albuquerque, New Mexico tell stories about themselves and their families the local Heritage Project.

Peck, Richard. *The Teacher’s Funeral*: Peck’s romp gives students a humorous look at what happens when a boy’s sister becomes the teacher in early part of 20th century.

Teague, Mark. *Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation*. Newspaper articles and letters tell the story of LaRue being falsely accused of harming the neighborhood cats.

Winerip, Michael. *Adam Canfield of the SLASH*. When Adam Canfield, ace school reporter, receives a tip about corruption in city government, he and his fellow students test the power of the press against local politicians.

Wheeler, Lisa. *Sea Dogs: An Epic Ocean Operetta*: This whimsical story within a story features canine swashbuckling adventures in a comic book style venue.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: pirates, high seas adventure, wordplay, graphic novels, musical productions, and dogs:

Adkins, Jan. *What If You Meet a Pirate?*: Pictures and text describe what pirates were really like, especially the pirates of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.

Avi. *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*: In this nautical adventure, thirteen-year-old Charlotte Doyle takes over a ship after a mutinous crew rebels during her voyage home to America.

Auch, Jane. *Bantam of the Opera*: Luigi, a singing rooster, stows away and gets a ride to view the opera, *Rigoletto*, in this picture book full of word play, puns, and jokes.

Barrie, James. *Peter Pan*. Wendy and her brothers team up with Peter Pan and the lost boys and travel to Neverland where they encounter the pirate, Captain Hook. Pair this one with Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson's *Peter and the Starcatchers*, a modern "prequel" to *Peter Pan*.

Fleischman, Sid. *Giant Rat of Sumatra or Pirates Galore*: The year: 1846; the setting: the San Diego harbor. A ship limps into port, but its landing signals the start of a great adventure for its inhabitants: Shipwreck, a twelve-year-old cabin boy, unassuming, curious, and quick-witted; Captain Alejandro Gallows, a charming scoundrel with the gift of gab; and a crew, mostly loyal, but one quick to steal from his dashing leader.

Gonzalez, Catherine Troxell. *Lafitte: The Terror of the Gulf*: Jean Lafitte, pirate of the Gulf of Mexico and defender of New Orleans, often sets the standard for romantic pirates. This biography helps youngsters separate fact from fiction.

Hesse, Karen. *Stowaway*: Read Nicholas Young's fictional journal that tells of his adventures when he leaves his father, sails with Captain James Cook, and sees the world of the late eighteenth century.

Lear, Edward. *Owl and the Pussycat*: "The owl and the pussycat went to sea/in a beautiful pea-green boat,/they took some honey,/and plenty of money,/wrapped in a five pound note." And so begins a classic nonsense poem, blending whimsy and humor that might strike a chord with *Sea Dogs* fans.

Lichtenheld, Tom. *Everything I Know About Pirates: A Collection of Made-Up Facts, Educated Guesses, and Silly Pictures bout Bad Guys of the High Seas*. This irreverent and witty examination of the buccaneers parodies many nonfiction books, but it delivers a bounty of outrageous puns, humor, and just plain silliness.

McCully, Emily Arnold. *The Pirate Queen*: Based on a combination of history and legend, this story introduces readers to Grania O'Malley, an Irish swashbuckler.

Murawski, Laura. *How to Draw Dogs*: Budding artists can find information about dog breeds as well as sequential steps for successfully drawing them.

Osborne, Mary Pope and Will Osborne. *Pirates Past Noon* (The Magic Tree House series): Jack and Annie are sent back to the days of pirates to solve a mystery. The Osbornes also have published *Pirates, a Nonfiction Companion to Pirates Past Noon* which provides factual information about pirates.

Spiegelman, Art and François Mouly, editors. *It Was a Dark and Silly Night*: This collection of graphic novels by authors and illustrators such as Lemony Snicket, William Joyce, and Neil Gaiman, may touch the comic book lover.

Rogers, Gregory. *The Boy, the Bear, the Baron, the Bard*: In “graphic novel” format, this wordless picture book tells the story of a boy who is suddenly transported back to Shakespearean England.

Vogel, Frederick Heather. *The Voyage of Patience Godspeed*. When Patience accompanies her father, a New England whaler, on an extended voyage, several crew members mutiny and Patience must save the ship. Sequel: *The Education of Patience Godspeed*.

Wise, William. *Christopher Mouse: The Tale of a Small Traveler*: Meet a small traveler who has very big adventures.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: mice stories, adventures within miniature worlds, animal adventures, friendship, courage, loyalty, humor, and family:

Asch, Frank. *Class Pets* series (*The Ghost of P.S. 42, Battle in a Bottle, Survival School*): Mice siblings Molly and Jake leave their crowded lodgings in search of a new home, finally settling on an elementary school.

Avi. *The End of the Beginning: Being the Adventures of a Small Snail (And an Even Smaller Ant)*: As two friends begin their quest for great adventure, they confront danger, excitement, and wondrous creatures. And, at the end of their journey, they just may have discovered “the beginning of a beautiful friendship.”

Birney, Betty. *The World According to Humphrey* and *Friendship According to Humphrey*: Humphrey the hamster is passed from house to house as students take turns caring for their class pet, who, in turn, impacts their lives in various ways.

Broome, Errol. *Magnus Maybe*: The courage of a pet mouse named Magnus is tested after he is stranded outside his cage one day and his owners begin setting traps for other non-pet mice in the house. Facing his fears, Magnus decides to find a new home for them all.

Byars, Betsy. *Little Horse* and *Little Horse on His Own*: In the first book a miniature horse endures some breathtaking adventures after falling in a river and being swept away from home. Little Horse’s adventures continue in the sequel as he tries to return to his home valley.

Cleary, Beverly. *The Mouse and the Motorcycle, Runaway Mouse* and *Ralph S. Mouse*: The adventures of Ralph the motorcycle-riding mouse are chronicled from Ralph’s first lessons on how to start a bike to fulfilling his dreams of venturing outside to live a ‘life of speed and danger and excitement.’

Dicamillo, Kate. *The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread*: The stories of Despereaux the love-struck mouse, Chiaroscuro the rat who craves both light and soup, and Miggery Sow the cauliflower-eared serving girl are blended in this fantasy rife with plot twists and turns.

Howe, Deborah and James. *Bunnicula*. With the story told from a dog’s point of view, the arrival of Bunnicula, the vampire bunny, causes much concern at the Monroe house.

King-Smith, Dick. *Babe the Gallant Pig*. Farmer Hogget’s sheepdog Fly raises a young pig with surprising and humorous results.

King-Smith, Dick. *The School Mouse*: Living in a schoolhouse, Flora, a young mouse, is so fascinated and intrigued by classroom happenings that she refuses to leave with her family when they migrate to a nearby field.

Larrick, Nancy. *Mice are Nice*: This collection of poetry about mice includes descriptions of the animals themselves, their habits and habitats.

Lawson, Robert. *Ben and Me*: Amos the mouse narrates the story of Ben Franklin in his own inimitable style.

Markle, Sandra. *Outside and Inside Rats and Mice*: Crisp color photographs, showing rats and mice in their natural environments as well as glimpses inside their bodies, allow youngsters a scientific introduction to Christopher's animal family.

Mayer, Marianna. *The Adventures of Tom Thumb*: No bigger than his father's thumb, young Tom, born through Merlin's magic, has a large dose of cleverness that allows him to return to the love of his family.

Prelutsky, Jack. *If Not For the Cat*: The title poem describes a young mouse and effectively introduces the haiku/riddles about seventeen animals featured in this collection.

Reiche, Dietlog. *Freddy in Peril* (translated by John Brownjohn): A cat, two guinea pigs, and a colony of brave sewer rats band together in order to save Freddy, a golden hamster, from an evil scientist who's discovered that Freddy can read and write, and plans to "hamsternap" him in order to dissect his brain.

White, E. B. *Stuart Little*: The Littles welcome a new son unconditionally, even though he is a mouse.

Youme, Landowne. *Sélavi, That Is Life: A Haitian Story of Hope*: Sélavi and his orphaned friends seek security in a place that is extremely unstable.

Other books that have one or more of these connective threads: survival and hope, heroism, homelessness, social justice/activism, and Haiti and other places with political unrest:

Barron, T. A. *The Hero's Trail: A Guide for a Heroic Life*: Are the children in *Sélavi* heroes? Barron asks readers to think about heroes, and gives numerous examples from both history (Ruby Bridges) and literature (Merlin) that showcase heroic lives in times crisis.

Bridges, Ruby. *Through My Eyes*: The photograph of young Ruby, being ushered into a previously all-white school in New Orleans by federal marshals, is a symbol of courageous youth. Ruby's own story, simply told, gives voice to that strength of character that helps her persevere.

D'Adamo, Francesco. *Iqbal* (translated by Ann Leonori): A fictitious coworker tells the true story of thirteen-year-old human rights crusader Iqbal Masih who was murdered shortly after achieving international recognition for his efforts to put an end to the horrific conditions endured by children slaving in Pakistani carpet factories.

Fox, Paula. *Monkey Island*: Eleven-year-old Clay Garrity's normal family life comes to an abrupt end, and he suddenly finds himself abandoned and homeless.

Gunning, Monica. *A Shelter in Our Car*: Zettie struggles with homelessness while trying to maintain a facade of normalcy.

Harrington, Janice. *Going North*: Poetic narrative text and powerful illustrations tell the story of an African-American family's move from Alabama to Nebraska in the 1960s.

Hesse, Karen. *The Cats in Krasinski Square*: In a fictionalized story based on real events during World War II, a young girl and her sister thwart one Gestapo operation by releasing cats to divert the tracking dogs and smuggle food into the Warsaw Ghetto.

Hoose, Philip. *It's Our World, Too: Stories of Young People Who Make a Difference*: Modern day activists, including a young girl from Houston who spearheaded a project to feed the homeless, provide inspiration for young people who want to make a difference. Backmatter offers practical tips for getting started in community and governmental projects.

Hoose, Philip. *We Were There, Too: Young People in U. S. History*: Covering almost 600 years, Hoose offers short vignettes of young people who have been influential in the course of America's history.

Meyer, Carolyn. *White Lilacs*: Young Rose Lee Jefferson is caught in a political situation that makes her feel helpless. Based on an historical incident from Denton, Texas, the book deals with a white community's efforts to destroy a black community presently living in the site of a proposed park.

Temple, Frances. *Tonight By Sea*: A young girl and her uncle plan a daring sea escape from Haiti to get away from the political turmoil in their native country.

Warren, Andrea. *Escape from Saigon: How a Vietnam War Orphan Became an American Boy*: Matthew Ray Steiner was born Hoang Van Long in Vietnam in 1966, and this book details his experiences at the Holt Center in Saigon, his encounters with the men and women involved in Operation Babylift, and describes his new life in the United States.

Williams, Mary. *Brothers in Hope: the Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan*: This story is based on an account of one of the Lost Boys who was forced from his southern Sudan home on a trek of almost one thousand miles to seek refuge in Kenya, and includes an afterword summarizing the resettlement in the United States of approximately 3,800 children.

Wolkestein, Diane. *The Magic Orange Tree and Other Haitian Folktales*: A collection of Haitian folktales that may help readers with a sense of the culture and backdrop of *Selavi*.