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ABSTRACT

This annotated bibliography is directed at teachers of students in grades preK-6 and covers books about holidays. The holidays for which materials are listed are: Christmas, Easter, Halloween, Hanukkah, Passover, Purim, Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot, Thanksgiving, and Valentine's Day. A directory of publishers from whom these items are available is included. (DB)

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HOLIDAYS

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# INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA

## HOLIDAYS

LINKING RESOURCES WITH NORTH CAROLINA CURRICULUM • JULY, 1991

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### CHRISTMAS

**Ashley, Jill.** *Riddles About Christmas. (What Can It Be? Series)* unnp. \$10.98. Silver Pr., 1990. (ISBN 0-671-70552-0) (Available from Silver Burdett Pr.) Grades PreK-2

A collection of rhymed riddles describes Christmas symbols—e.g., bells, angels, gingerbread people, toys, presents, trees—depicted in bright, color photography. Each riddle appears in large print and concludes with the question, "What am I?" To find out, readers turn the page where an explanation accompanies a photograph. These are all easy to guess and should help to wile away time with the very youngest during the holiday season.

**Branley, Franklyn M.** *The Christmas Sky.* 47 p. \$14.89. Crowell, 1990. (ISBN 0-690-04772-X) Grades 2-6

A most attractive little book introducing astronomical/scientific conjecture about the date of Christ's birth, Branley's story emphasizes what we can deduce from the Bible's clues, other ancient sources, and the evidence of modern astronomy. Stephen Fieser's illustrations in impressive, dark hues suggest grand themes at work in the world as three planets clustered to form a brilliant triangle in the constellation Pisces, lighting the night sky over ancient Judea. Fieser's sturdy shepherds and soft, folded hills contrast vividly with the great hall of Herod and the majestic drama overhead. Branley narrates events with utmost reason and patience, never seeking to supplant one set of convictions with another but allowing all to co-exist. A re-edition of the 1966 text, this update is enhanced by Fieser's superb artwork.

**Brett, Jan.** *The Wild Christmas Reindeer.* unnp. \$14.95. Putnam, 1990, (ISBN 0-399-22192-1) Grades K-3

Gorgeous, full-color illustrations with an appropriate Scandinavian quality highlight this charming tale of young Teeka's problems readying Santa's reindeer for their Christmas Eve flight. Framed by Advent calendar borders depicting elves at work and counting the days of December, Brett's decorative, double-page pictures amplify her conversational narrative. Use of nontraditional names for the reindeer

(Twilight, Crag), a heroine entrusted with an important job, and a positive lesson on helping as opposed to bossing makes *The Wild Christmas Reindeer* a wonderful tool to teach young authors how to create new tales by building on familiar ones. Although children will enjoy hearing this story, they will want to read it for themselves in order to explore fully each detail-packed picture.

**The Christmas Story: Told Through Paintings.** 40 p. \$16.95. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990. (ISBN 0-15-200426-2) (Available from Harcourt) Grades K-12

Using Renaissance paintings from New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and excerpts from the King James Version of the Gospels of St. Luke and St. Matthew, Richard Muhlberger (formerly the museum's Vice Director for Education) provides readers with a guided tour through this seasonal collection. His conversational commentary for each painting gives understandable information on the religious background of the story behind it as well as historical data on artists and their times. Occasionally, a segment is enlarged for special annotation, such as the tiny figure of Jesus holding a cross in Robert Campin's *The Annunciation*. A fine resource for social studies and art education classes.

**Collington, Peter.** *On Christmas Eve.* unnp. \$15.99. Random, 1990. (ISBN 0-679-90830-7) Grades PreK-3

Dedicated "to chimneyless children everywhere," this wordless picture

book depicts a little girl's visit by fairies who light a landing path for Santa to her chimneyless house. Marshaled by a beguiling chief fairy resembling the small girl of the house, a whole platoon of the tiny creatures works busily in a snowy setting, attending to a multitude of chores. In fact, the head fairy saves Santa from discovery when the child awakens as he is filling her stocking, left in British fashion at the end of her bed. Collington has filled frame after frame with fairy activities, all colored with faint, gauzy delicacy. The fairy cottage, snug in a snow-felted tree, provides a lovely final frame.

**Cusick, Dawn.** *A Scented Christmas.* 112 p. \$18.95. Sterling, 1990. (ISBN 0-8069-7471-0) Grades 5-12

Dawn Cusick has gathered tips and helpful hints for making all sorts of Christmas garlands, centerpieces, swags, wreaths, potpourris, and other fragrant holiday decorations and offers them with excellent instructions, fully illustrated in Evan Bracken's color and black-and-white photographs shot on location at the Claddagh Inn in Hendersonville, North Carolina. A handsome book, this how-to for Christmas enthusiasts is geared toward formal arrangements, though not necessarily large-scale ones, incorporating a distinctively Victorian look. The opening chapter on tools, materials, and basic project instructions is excellent.

**Day, Alexandra.** *Carl's Christmas.* unpag. \$10.95. Farrar, 1990. (ISBN 0-374-31114-5) Grades PreK-3

Once again Carl, Alexandra Day's handsome black Rottweiler, is the focus of a wordless picture book as he babysits at Christmastime for the utterly forgettable human parents of a tiny toddler. This time the two adventure through the city, the baby astride Carl's sleek back, and on their way win a Christmas basket prize, donate its contents to the needy, join carolers, pick up another canine friend, and get home just in time for Santa's visit. Of course none of it makes sense, but why should it? The magnificently realistic dog portraits, the simple,

uncluttered backgrounds, and the dark-hued colors (like Carl) are the stuff of a child's—and an adult's—best dog fancies. Go, Carl!

**Delacre, Lulu, sel.** *Las Navidades: Popular Christmas Songs from Latin America.* 32 p. \$12.95. Scholastic, Inc., 1990. (ISBN 0-590-43548-5) Grades 1-4

Illustrator Lulu Delacre's attractive pastel, paint, and colored-pencil depictions of festive Central and South American people and landscapes complement the twelve Central and South American Christmas songs in *Las Navidades*. English translations accompany the Spanish lyrics in a side-by-side format while music and guitar chords conclude the text. Informative captions augment these chronologically-sequenced songs, describing the Christmas celebration as it progresses through Epiphany. A multipurpose selection for second language, multicultural, holiday, and music collections. Bibliography.

**Denton, Kady MacDonald.** *The Christmas Boot.* unpag. \$12.45. Little, 1990. (ISBN 0-316-18091-2) Grades PreK-1

An enchanting picture book about a black boot filled with tiny toys, children who believe it belongs to Santa Claus, and their plan to return the boot to him by way of a chimney. Author/illustrator Kady MacDonald Denton accompanies her easy-to-read text with lovely watercolor and black-line drawings. Young children will enjoy identifying all the little toys which fall out of the boot. A major flaw is the book's poor binding. Fine before or after Christmas read-aloud.

**Diane Goode's American Christmas.** 80 p. \$14.95. Dutton, 1990. (ISBN 0-525-44620-6) Grades K-12

A book for all ages, this attractive collection of stories, poems, and songs with a Christmas theme features selections from different parts of the U. S., periods of its history, and multicultural traditions. Diane Goode's festive, full-page watercolors and cameos add new dimensions to familiar favorites ("Silver Bells," "The Night Before Christmas") and less well-known

classics ("Brer Rabbit's Christmas," "Pinata Song"). A good resource for discussing American folk heritage and immigrant contributions to holiday celebrations.

**Dickens, Charles.** *A Christmas Carol.* 60 p. \$15.99. Random, 1990. (ISBN 0-394-92239-5) Grades 3-6

Scott Cook illustrates Dickens' immortal Christmas story in old-fashioned, sepia-toned pictures burnished with flecks of gold and silver, creating an heirloom richness that evokes the period art of handsome old leather-bound publications. The tale of that brusque miser, Ebenezer Scrooge, is abridged (by the author) without loss for younger audiences, who will find the quaint, gold-toned darkness of Cook's illustrations as mysterious and satisfying as the wonderful Christmas epiphany told by Dickens. Oversized format and large print—a fine storybook edition.

**Duncan, Beverly K., sel.** *Christmas in the Stable.* 32 p. \$14.95. Harcourt, 1990. (ISBN 0-15-217758-2) Grades PreK-6

A collection of nineteen poems focuses on animals present at Jesus' birth or, as in the case of "The Canticle of the Bees," reflects the perspective of an animal about the wondrous event. Celebrated are the traditional donkeys, cattle, camels, doves, and sheep, but also such delightfully unexpected creatures as a fawn, mice, spiders, a serpent, even a ladybug. Children will love Duncan's soft, glowing illustrations depicting each animal in a stable all aglow. Around each picture, expansive borders conceal a miniature version of each creature within busy, festive backdrops of holly, mistletoe, and flowers. Poems by Elizabeth Coatsworth, Rumer Godden, Phyllis McGinley, and Jane Yolen, among others, are gentle tributes to the occasion and to the creature.

**Fradin, Dennis Brindell.** *Christmas. (Best Holiday Books)* 48 p. \$12.95. Enslow Pubs., 1990. (ISBN 0-89490-258-X) Grades 2-4

In this addition to the *Best Holiday Books* series, Fradin provides readers

with a general introduction to Christmas followed by information on its historical development, various traditions past and present, and several classic carols. Black-and-white and color illustrations and photographs accompany the large-print, straightforward text. A useful resource for student reports and class discussions. Glossary, index.

**Gardam, Catharine.** *The Animals' Christmas.* unp. \$13.95. McElderry Bks., 1990. (ISBN 0-689-50502-7) Grades PreK-3

Where have all the animals gone on Christmas Eve? The hens, baby chicks, the dogs, the bull, Marigold the turkey, the sheep and rams, even Jackson the cat and her three little kittens—all have disappeared. Catharine Gardam tells a spare, simple story based on the Christmas legend that animals have voices on Christmas Eve so that they can sing praise of the newborn Jesus. Gavin Rowe's captivating, pen-and-watercolor illustrations offer tantalizing, detailed closeups of an English village all abustle with Christmas activities and, outside it, full, panoramic views of a snowswept hill topped by a ruined old church where all the animals have gathered, their homely features lit by a holy radiance as they sing with the angels. A lovely story, sure to entrance viewers as well as readers.

**Good King Wenceslas.** unp. \$14.95. Philomel Bks., 1990. (ISBN 0-399-21620-0) Grades PreK-3

John Wallner illustrates the lovely old carol about good King Wenceslas venturing from his palace into snow "deep and crisp and even," drawn to follow an old peasant to his humble home against a forest fence. By his action, King Wenceslas came into the presence of a saint. Braving a bitter winter world, Wallner's young king, his red cape billowing out, bends protectively over his frightened little page—"Mark my footsteps, my good page, tread thou in them boldly"—as the two pilgrims seek out the saintly old man. The words of the Christmas carol appear like narrative at the bottom of each full-page illustration. Musical score with all five verses follows text and

illustrations. Warm, lovely, suggestive of long ago and faraway, this book captures the beauty and humanity of the season. A fine addition to Christmas collections.

**Harvey, Brett.** *My Prairie Christmas.* unp. \$14.95. Holiday, 1990. (ISBN 0-8234-0827-2) Grades K-3

Elenore's first Christmas on the prairie is hardly like the sedate Maine holidays of memory, for a howling blizzard shrouds the little cabin and, worse, Papa fails to return from his Christmas tree expedition. Brett Harvey's pioneer story, teamed with Deborah Kogan Ray's shivery illustrations in whites, sepia browns, and glowing golds, produces a compelling narrative with a strong, stoic mother, a bear of a winter storm, and a happy ending.

**Hines, Anna Grossnickle.** *The Secret Keeper.* unp. \$12.88. Greenwillow, 1990. (ISBN 0-688-08946-1) Grades K-1

Young Joshua is unhappy because everyone in his family is keeping Christmas secrets from him, but Joshua's grandmother shows him he is not too little to have secrets of his own. Author/illustrator Hines combines delicate, chalk-textured pictures and easy-to-read narrative to present this gentle holiday story. A good book for read-aloud and discussion, *The Secret Keeper* depicts a wonderful, warm relationship between two different generations, empowers young children by showing them what they can do to participate in the excitement and mystery of the holiday, and emphasizes that the best gifts are ones made by hand.

**Kyte, Dennis.** *Merry Christmas, Bigelow Bear.* unp. \$14.99. Doubleday, 1990. (ISBN 0-385-26523-9) Grades PreK-2

Children besotted with toy trucks, cars, bikes, or the like will empathize with Bigelow Bear, whose best friend Ollie is a little yellow truck. Bigelow's room is rigged with all sorts of tunnels, ramps, bridges, and super highways for Ollie's delight. But when Bigelow's grandmother arrives for Christmas, the little bear forgets his yellow pal in the excitement of the hour, and, oh, poor Ollie! All

ends well, however, and young readers and viewers will love the active, colorful illustrations so full of fascinating detail about a bear's Christmas extravaganza.

**Moore, Clement C.** *The Night Before Christmas.* unp. \$8.99. Random, 1990. (ISBN 0-394-92698-6) Grades PreK-3

Cheryl Harness creates an old-fashioned, Victorian setting for the beloved Christmas Eve poem, replete with a darkened house sleeping under its icy cloak, gingerbread trim, anticamassars on velvet-backed chairs, a wonderful old upright piano, and draperies in beguiling folds at every window, all of it lit by the warm yellow glow from fancy, fringed lamps. The jolly elf, descending with his frisky reindeer against the backdrop of a huge moon, is satisfyingly rotund and twinkling. A mouse (who does indeed stir) will intrigue young viewers whose eyes will grow wide at this pictorial feast of color, light and dark, and painstakingly careful details.

**Moore, Clement Clarke.** *The Night Before Christmas.* unp. \$13.95. Clarion Bks. 1990. (ISBN 0-395-53624-3) Grades PreK-1

Wendy Watson updates Moore's classic poem with colorful, detail-packed, cartoon-like illustrations of Christmas in a small, modern, snow-covered village. Children will delight in identifying all the items in each cluttered, cozy picture. Watson depicts Christmas at one particular house as a messy, happy affair. An entertaining stimulus for some lively creative writing and artwork.

**Murphy, Shirley Rousseau.** *The Song of the Christmas Mouse.* 87 p. \$12.89. HarperCollins, 1990. (ISBN 0-06-024358-9) Grades 3-6

In this enchanting tale for Christmas, Shirley Rousseau Murphy shifts point of view between a magical, singing mouse; Rick, a young boy trying to trap her; and Hattie Lou, Rick's trouble-making, seven-year-old cousin who's visiting for the holidays. Donna Diamond's lovely, black-and-white drawings realistically illustrate Murphy's flowing, well-written narrative. In addition to sharing this seasonal story as a read-

aloud, teachers can use it to discuss such science and guidance lessons as the need for wild animals to remain free, how animals survive in the winter, and ways to get along with people you do not like.

**The Nativity.** 29 p. \$13.88. Lothrop, 1990. (ISBN 0-688-09871-1) Grades PreK-2

Illustrator Juan Wijngaard's radiant paintings augment the Nativity story, which is told here through excerpts from the King James version of the Gospels of St. Luke and St. Matthew and the Book of Isaiah. His handsome, Renaissance-style depictions face each page of text, their arched, gold-leaf borders suggesting captioned cathedral windows. A reverent rendering of this classic story.

**Nerlove, Miriam. Christmas.** unip. \$10.95. Whitman, 1990. (ISBN 0-8075-1148-X) Grades PreK-2

A little girl helps her family celebrate Christmas at home and at church in Miriam Nerlove's pleasingly symmetrical drawings of a city family during the holidays. In soft watercolor and pen-and-ink illustrations as pudgy and appealing as Santa himself, the family decorates and wraps, bakes and sings. The conclusion recounts the birth of Jesus in a manger, putting secular festivities in their religious and historical context. A simple narrative just right for read-aloud and for beginning readers eager to explore Christmas books.

**Pilkington, Brian. Grandpa Claus.** unip. \$12.95. Carolrhoda Bks., 1990. (ISBN 0-87614-436-9) Grades 2-5

At the mall during the Christmas season, Harry may be "the best Santa impersonator there ever was," but he has trouble filling his days during the rest of the year. Brian Pilkington's text may be straightforward narrative, but the author/illustrator's ingenious watercolor drawings are laugh-out-loud depictions of *Grandpa Santa's* activities through the seasons. Although one picture of Santa in the show may cause a problem, this book would be a wonderful resource for creative

writing activities in which students write their own story based on the illustrations.

**Pryor, Bonnie. Merry Christmas, Amanda and April.** Illustrated by Diane de Groat. unip. \$13.88. Morrow, 1990. (ISBN 0-688-07545-2) Grades PreK-2

When Amanda and April, two small pigs, are sent to the store by their mother who needs several items to make a surprise for Santa, the little pig sisters have quite an eventful journey—making snow angels, sledding down Monster Hill, retrieving Amanda's new cap from the fork of a tree, rescuing poor Mrs. Hound from snowball-throwing ruffians, and finally arriving at the store rather confused about Mama's list. Was it "flour" or "flowers" that she wanted? A pleasant little snowy day story, just right for those eager for snow, Santa, and a softly colored picture book about adorable piglets.

**Sachs, Betsy. The Trouble with Santa.** (*Stepping Stone Books*) 62 p. \$6.99 (ISBN 0-679-90410-7). \$2.50 paper (ISBN 0-679-80410-2). Random, 1990. Grades 2-4

Billy Getten is not looking forward to being Kris Kringle in the class Christmas play. A Stepping Stone Book with Margot Apple's realistic, black-and-white illustrations, *The Trouble with Santa* incorporates information about various multicultural winter celebrations and holiday figures into its easy-to-read narrative. Teachers and media coordinators need to know before reading this warm, humorous story aloud that Billy knows there is no "man in a red suit at the North Pole," which his Grandpa Stewie confirms. However, through a series of events, Billy realizes that Santa is a symbol for the Christmas spirit.

**Sharmat, Marjorie Weinman. I'm Santa Claus and I'm Famous.** unip. \$14.95. Holiday, 1990. (ISBN 0-8234-0826-4) Grades K-4

In this clever, whimsical book, young readers are treated to a humorous biography of Santa Claus in which the current holder of this job describes his training for students

at a school's Career Day. Marilyn Hafner's colorful cartoons with conversation balloons and narrative captions are a wonderful complement to Marjorie Weinman Sharmat's witty, easy-to-read prose. A humorous supplement to social studies units on careers, this book is more suitable for independent reading than for whole-class read-aloud.

**Stock, Catherine. Christmas Time.** unip. \$11.95. Bradbury Pr., 1990. (ISBN 0-02-788403-1) Grades PreK-1

Soft, inviting watercolors present a series of gentle holiday scenes in the life of a little girl who helps select and decorate the family's Christmas tree, mails a letter to Santa Claus, helps bake cookies, sings carols with friends, and finds a wonderful red fire engine—her special request—under the tree. A minimal text of short, simple sentences and the small child's shy refusal to join children lined up to talk to Santa in the store ("too many people" and "too much noise") make this one an ideal choice for prekindergarteners and kindergarteners.

**Tornqvist, Rita. The Christmas Carp.** Translated from the Swedish by Greta Kilburn. 32 p. \$13.95. R&S Bks., 1990. (ISBN 91-29-59784-6) (Available from Farrar) Grades 1-4

In Prague where Thomas spends Christmas with his widowed grandfather, a fish, the carp, is the honored dish rather than a turkey or goose. But when Thomas chooses a huge carp at the fish market, he becomes immediately protective of the live creature, naming it Peppo and putting it in a bathtub of water on which he floats walnut boats lit with little candles. Translated from the Swedish, the story is lovingly illustrated by Marit Tornqvist in detailed pastels showing a Prague of quaint, quiet customs and a grandfather of unusual sensitivity toward his lonely little companion. The Christmas message is unsentimentally conveyed, and the conventional symbol of Christ—a very special fish—becomes more than symbol.

**Trent, Robbie.** *The First Christmas.* unp. \$9.89. HarperCollins, 1990. (ISBN 0-06-026166-8) Grades PreK-1

In this reissue of a 1948 edition, Robbie Trent combines simple verse with Marc Simont's appealing illustrations to retell the story of *The First Christmas*. This volume's small size, few pages, and large print make it especially inviting for beginning readers. Concluding the easy-to-read text are lyrics to the familiar "Away in a Manger."

**Tyler, Linda Wagner.** *The After-Christmas Tree.* unp. \$12.95. Viking Penguin, 1990. (ISBN 0-670-83045-3) Grades PreK-2

In easy-to-read, first-person narrative, a child tells how family and friends extend the life of their Christmas tree beyond New Year's Day by having a tree-trimming party and creating edible ornaments for wild birds and other backyard animals. Illustrator Susan Davis contributes clever, detailed watercolors to depict joys of the season and to show young readers how to make the ornaments. A lovely book to discuss after-Christmas feelings and wildlife survival during winter months.

**Westman, Barbara.** *The Day Before Christmas: A Story of Charlotte and Emilio.* unp. \$14.89. HarperCollins, 1990. (ISBN 0-06-026429-2) Grades PreK-2

Such blues, such reds, and such greens as you've never seen fill this little book about springer spaniel Charlotte and her impish little brother Emilio as they celebrate Christmas in a wonderful dog village. Westman's opaque paint makes every page a polished present fit for Christmas Day. The two young pups cavort and caper through the traditional festivities, Charlotte always earnest, Emilio always orbiting nearby. Fun and bright, as cheerful as a Christmas fireplace.

**Wilner, Isabel.** *B Is for Bethlehem: A Christmas Alphabet.* unp. \$12.95. Dutton, 1990. (ISBN 0-525-44622-2) Grades PreK-3

A collection of rhyming couplets introduces the letters of the alphabet

through events associated with the birth of Jesus, all of it lavishly illustrated by Elisa Kleven in rich, stylized, full-paged panels against softly starred backgrounds. The colors are wonderful, the tapestried scenes inviting, and the alphabet appropriately Christmas-centered: "S is for Stable and Star, and for Story / Of animals, angels, manger, and glory." Children will love the brilliant colors and busy details spun out in radiant, simple dignity.

## EASTER

**Ashley, Jill.** *Riddles About Easter.* (What Can It Be? Series) unp. \$10.98. Silver Pr., 1991. (ISBN 0-671-72726-5) (Available from Silver Burdett Pr.) Grades PreK-2

In short, descriptive rhymes, riddles about Easter test younger children's familiarity with such symbols as decorated eggs, bunnies, lilies, church choirs, and egg hunts. Sharp color photography accompanies brief explanations of the origin of each symbol. This collection is a pleasant diversion for Easter-minded folks and may well inspire similar rhymes and pictures after a read-aloud.

**Stock, Catherine.** *Easter Surprise.* unp. \$11.95. Bradbury Pr., 1991. (ISBN 0-02-788371-X) Grades PreK-1

Catherine Stock's soft, glowing watercolors in muted blues, greens, yellows, and pinks tell a simple story of a little girl and her older brother Max who travel to a lake cabin for the Easter holiday. At Stocking Heel Lake, the children decorate eggs, ride in a rowboat, and discover surprises left them by the Easter Bunny, including a pink toy mouse for their kitty, Rhubarb. Typical of Catherine Stock's easy little narratives, this gentle, low-keyed text is sensitive toward smaller children's anxieties, in this case the younger child's slower discovery of the hidden treats. A fine read-aloud/picture book for smaller ones.

**Tarlow, Nora.** *An Easter Alphabet.* unp. \$15.95. Putnam, 1991. (ISBN 0-399-22194-8) Grades PreK-1

Nora Tarlow leads us on a sentimental journey through spring and Easter illustrations decorating turn-of-the-century and early twentieth-century postcards and magazine covers in this alphabetical tribute to events surrounding Easter. Quaint, charming commercial art by Kate Greenaway, Bessie Collins Pease, Mary La Fetra Russell, and the ever durable "Anonymous" features daffodils, smocked dresses, bonnets, bunnies, and baskets galore. Nice rhymes—"I for Indocrs, after egg-hunting ends" and "J for the Joy we share with our friends." An appealing specialty book, perhaps for the library that has everything.

## HALLOWEEN

**Bunting, Eve.** *In the Haunted House.* unp. \$13.95. Clarion Bks., 1990. (ISBN 0-395-51589-0) Grades K-3

Surprises and good humor abound in this tour of a Halloween haunted house by two pairs of sneakers, whose owners are not revealed until the last line of Eve Bunting's delightful narrative in rhyming couplets. More than one reading may be necessary to point out clues illustrator Susan Meddaugh has placed in her delightful pencil and watercolor scenes to suggest the true nature of this house "where the scary ones hide." Children will love the ending in which the older brother is the one frightened by what he sees in the house, not his little sister. A wonderful read-aloud for holiday fun and for teaching young students how to use humor and rhyme in their stories.

**Cohen, Miriam.** *The Real-Skin Rubber Monster Mask.* unp. \$12.88. Greenwillow, 1990. (ISBN 0-688-09123-7) Grades K-2

A Halloween addition to author Miriam Cohen and illustrator Lillian Hoban's series about the adventures

of a multicultural class of friends, this sensitive story deals realistically with children's fears and feelings. Second-grader Jim buys a truly scary mask to use for trick-or-treating this year, but when he frightens himself with it, his Halloween fun is almost ruined. Cohen's sympathetic text and Hoban's playful illustrations work well together. Good read-aloud resource to begin discussion about how children can help each other with their problems.

**Fox, Mem. *Guess What?* unpag. \$13.95. Harcourt, 1990. (ISBN 0-15-200452-1) Grades 2-5**

Through a series of rhyming questions and answers and Vivienne Goodman's incredible surrealistic paintings, readers discover that "a crazy lady called Daisy O'Grady" is a witch. At once bizarre and witty, this picture book may be too intense for the youngest visitors to elementary school libraries. But older readers (and adults) will get a kick out of discovering all the humor and horror Goodman has packed into her quirky, Norman Rockwellesque portraits.

**Friskey, Margaret. *The Perky Little Pumpkin: A Halloween Story.* 31 p. \$13.27. Childrens, 1990. (ISBN 0-516-03564-9) Grades PreK-1**

In a simple story for children just beginning to love Halloween symbols and activities, Margaret Friskey introduces a perky little pumpkin eager to become a jack-o'-lantern and scare Halloween revelers. After being bought and carved into a fierce and scowling jack-o'-lantern, however, the little pumpkin seems destined to sit in lonely splendor on the fence post, not fled from in fright by all the costumed children. Unscary watercolors by Tom Dunnington in predominant orange, black, and blues are geared toward the younger set of preschoolers.

**Gardner, Beau. *Whooh's a Fright on Halloween Night?* unpag. \$10.95. Putnam, 1990. (ISBN 0-399-22212-X) Grade PreK**

This pull-the-tab and spin-about book combines a brief text of rhyming couplets with simple, cutout-style artwork depicting

Halloween scenes. Teachers and media coordinators can use this nonscary book with small groups, but its format suggests restricted circulation to insure longevity.

**Guthrie, Donna. *The Witch Has an Itch.* unpag. \$2.25 paper. S&S, 1990. (ISBN 0-671-70346-3) Grades K-2**

When wicked witch Gromelda develops an allergy to evil magic, she slowly realizes that she will have to change her reputation "starting from scratch." Donna Guthrie's clever narrative contains alliterative rhymes to chronicle the progress of Gromelda's itch. Katy Keck Arnsteen's colorful illustrations are pleasant, not scary. Teachers can use this story to inspire Halloween poems and to discuss changing bad reputations to good ones.

**Hiser, Constance. *Ghosts in Fourth Grade.* 68 p. \$13.95. Holiday, 1991. (ISBN 0-8234-0865-5) Grades 3-5**

On Halloween James and his friends decide to rig the deserted old Hathaway place to resemble a haunted house and scare the class bully into submission. But their project backfires—or so it seems at first. Having overheard their scheming, Mean Mitchell terrorizes the whole gang that night until he flees in panic when James appears in his glow-in-the-dark, Dracula makeup. This is easy, innocent Halloween fare with an unredeemed bad boy in the person of Mean Mitchell—no sappy, cloying ending here. Just the thing for October 31 or thereabouts. Black-and-white line drawings by Cat Bowman Smith.

**Johnston, Tony. *The Soup Bone.* unpag. \$12.95. Harcourt, 1990. (ISBN 0-15-277255-3) Grades 1-3**

Tony Johnston's use of alliteration and repetition in his text and Margot Tomes' earth-toned, witty illustrations evoke a peasant folktale quality in this story of an old woman's adventures with a skeleton on Halloween night. Although surprises and fun are evident in this tale, the skeleton character is no nonthreatening Mickey Mouse cartoon but a rather realistic depiction of a human being's bones. Teachers and media

coordinators may find this tale too scary for some first graders, but it fits the bill for those who enjoy ghost stories at Halloween.

**Kraft, Jim. *Wade's Haunted Halloween.* unpag. \$2.50 paper. Bantam, 1990. (ISBN 0-553-34931-7) Grades K-3**

Using barnyard characters from the Saturday morning cartoon series *U. S. Acres*, Jim Kraft builds a satisfying tale about the importance of keeping promises which incorporates details explaining Halloween's history and customs. As a seasonal read-aloud or high-interest selection for reluctant readers, this amusing story with its appealing illustrations can also precede a class discussion about children's fears and how to deal with them. A flaw is the book's paperback binding.

**Kroll, Steven. *Branigan's Cat and the Halloween Ghost.* unpag. \$14.95. Holiday, 1990. (ISBN 0-8234-0822-1) Grades K-2**

Carolyn Ewing's detail-packed watercolors evoke a wonderful folktale quality in Steven Kroll's story about Branigan the woodcutter, his black cat Llewellyn, and fantastic adventures on Halloween night. A gentle cat feared by townspeople because of his frightening appearance, heroic Llewellyn earns their gratitude by ridding the town of Martin Grimes' ghost. Teachers can use this book not only as a nonthreatening ghost story for Halloween but also to discuss its obvious theme of "you can't judge a book by its cover."

**McAllister, Angela. *Nesta, The Little Witch.* unpag. \$12.95. Viking Penguin, 1990. (ISBN 0-670-83376-2) Grades K-2**

Although her classmates at the School for Spells can't master the simplest incantation, Nesta's hard work and practice enable her to excel at witchcraft—to the envy of her wicked teachers, Windbag Wartnose and Morag the Hag. Along with the fun of spells gone wrong and evil schemes thwarted, this delightfully humorous and imaginative story sneaks in a few morals (jealousy and dirty tricks get punished, hard work is rewarded, parents should support

their children's interests). Susie Jenkins-Pearce's whimsical watercolors and McAllister's musical prose integrating rhyme and alliteration make this a wonderful read-aloud as well as stimulus for young writers and artists to create their own spells and to depict the results.

**Stock, Catherine.** *Halloween Monster.* unp. \$11.95. Bradbury Pr., 1990. (ISBN 0-02-788404-X) Grades PreK-1

After Tommy is reassured by his mother that there are no monsters or witches ("just little children all dressed up"), he decides to become a Halloween monster himself. When his friend Billy, costumed as a fierce pirate, reminds Tommy that he's supposed to be afraid to go out trick-or-treating, the bold new monster replies, "Tommy didn't want to go. But I do." Catherine Stock's reassuring watercolors, especially the treat-decorated end papers, will please all fledgling monsters.

## HANUKKAH

**Chaikin, Miriam.** *Hanukkah.* unp. \$14.95. Holiday, 1990. (ISBN 0-8234-0316-7) Grades Pre-K-2

In simple, easy-to-follow prose, Miriam Chaikin recounts the history of *Hanukkah* and describes how Jewish families celebrate it. Although aimed at very young readers, her text includes many informative details, such as dates and definitions (*Maccabee*, *latke*). Unaccountably, however, she omits the death of Mattathias and the role of his son, Judah the Maccabee, in Jerusalem's liberation. Ellen Weiss's pen-and-ink, pastel drawings amplify the text with interesting details (e.g. the elephants used by Antiochus' army). A pleasant, introductory picture book to explain this holiday.

**Fradin, Dennis Brindell.** *Hanukkah.* (*Best Holiday Books*) 48 p. \$12.95. Enslow Pubs., 1990. (ISBN 0-89490-259-8) Grades 2-4

Another addition to the *Fesl Holiday Books* series, *Hanukkah* introduces young readers to the Jewish people, the history and traditions of this holiday, and ways in

which it is celebrated. Large print, easy-to-read text, and ample black-and-white and color photographs and illustrations make this selection a good one for student reports and class discussions. Glossary, index.

**Kimmel, Eric A.** *The Chanukkah Guest.* unp. \$14.95. Holiday, 1990. (ISBN 0-8234-0788-8) Grades K-3

In this entertaining story with folktale overtones, ninety-seven-year-old Bubba Brayna mistakes a bear for the village rabbi and shares her first night of Hanukkah (Kimmel spells it Chanukkah) with him. Kimmel draws readers into this improbable premise by carefully explaining that the dear woman does not "hear or see as well as she used to" and proceeds to create a very funny dialogue between woman and beast. Giora Carmi's earth-toned illustrations have a charming, Old World peasant quality. A good multicultural resource to stimulate children to create their own holiday folktales.

**Manushkin, Fran.** *Latkes and Applesauce: A Hanukkah Story.* unp. \$12.95. Scholastic Inc., 1990. (ISBN 0-590-42261-8) Grades K-3

Fran Manushkin's poetic prose and Robin Spowart's soft chalk illustrations evoke a Russian folktale quality in this story of a family caught in a blizzard during the eight days of Hanukkah. An exuberant text incorporates features of the holiday celebration which concluding pages explain in more detail (brief history of the holiday, recipe for latkes, directions for playing dreidel). Children will be intrigued by the use of upside down question marks in the print. Unhappily, the binding is poor. Otherwise, this book is a charming addition to holiday and multicultural collections. Brief bibliography.

**Poskanzer, Susan Cornell.** *Riddles About Hanukkah.* (*What Can It Be? Series*) unp. \$10.98. Silver Pr., 1990. (ISBN 0-671-70553-9) (Available from Silver Burdett Pr.) Grades PreK-2

A collection of rhyming riddles queries young audiences about the traditions of Hanukkah as repre-

sented through symbolic items like the menorah, latkes, the dreidel, chocolate coins (gelt), and the Star of David. Full-color photographs depict each riddle's answer on the page following the verbal description along with an historic explanation of the symbol's Hanukkah significance. Families are featured in many photographs, smiling and enjoying the celebration.

**Schotter, Roni.** *Hanukkah!* unp. \$13.95. Little, 1990. (ISBN 0-316-77466-9) Grades PreK-2

A family celebrates Hanukkah in a festive, colorful picture book depicting high moments of the Jewish holiday. Five children, their parents, and grandmother bustle about the warm, cozy house as Grandma lights the last menorah candle, Sam shapes a dreidel, Nora and Dan fry latkes, Ruthie paints decorations, and Moe the baby tries throughout the story to say "Hanukkah"—finally doing so at the end. A happy, fun-filled event highlighted by Marilyn Hafner's bright, detailed watercolors captures a close family involved with their religious traditions. This little book will educate and amuse simultaneously. A short concluding explanation reviews the history of Hanukkah and defines associated terms.

## PASSOVER

**Poskanzer, Susan Cornell.** *Riddles About Passover.* (*What Can It Be? Series*) unp. \$10.98. Silver Pr., 1991. (ISBN 0-671-72724-9) (Available from Silver Burdett Pr.) Grades PreK-2

In rhymed-riddle format, this collection of Passover history and symbols asks children to identify the ancient emblems of the occasion when God "passed over" the houses of the Jews and punished Pharaoh's Egypt with ten terrible plagues for keeping the Jews in bondage. Described and pictured are the Red Sea, locusts, a seder feast, and a lovely Elijah's cup, among other related symbols. This riddle collection knits the story together as it asks and answers questions, sustaining a narrative thread for those less familiar with the Jewish ritual.

## PURIM

Goldin, Barbara Diamond. *Cakes and Miracles: A Purim Tale*. unsp. \$13.95. Viking Penguin, 1991. (ISBN 0-670-83047-X) Grades K-3

Blind Hershel longs to help his widowed mother make *hamantashen*, the traditional Purim pastry, to sell at market, but his mother says bluntly that a person "needs eyes to shape the dough." As Hershel sleeps, an angel comes to him in a dream and urges, "Make what you see." And, "You see when you close your eyes. You see in your dreams." Thus it is that blind Hershel makes magnificent Purim cookies out of the *hamantashen* dough, his mother and he become the toast of the village, and Hershel—who heretofore had to content himself with making mountains, caves, and tunnels out of the cool river mud—is assured of a career as a baker when he grows up. Erika Weihs illustrates these plucky villagers in primitive, plain lines and soft colors befitting their hard but inspired lives.

## ROSH HASHANAH

Goldin, Barbara Diamond. *The World's Birthday: A Rosh Hashanah Story*. unsp. \$13.95. Harcourt, 1990. (ISBN 0-15-299648-6) Grades K-3

Because Daniel understands Rosh Hashanah as a celebration of the sixth day of Creation, he decides to have a birthday party for the world complete with guests, cake, and candles. Goldin's easy-to-read text and Jeanette Winter's colorful illustrations incorporate information about the holiday which is augmented on a concluding page. A major flaw of this book is its very poor binding. Otherwise, this title is a nice addition to holiday and multicultural collections.

## SUKKOT

Zalben, Jane Breskin. *Leo and Blossom's Sukkah*. unsp. \$13.95. H. Holt & Co., 1990. (ISBN 0-8050-1226-5) Grades PreK-2

Two little bears, Leo and Blossom, help their family celebrate Sukkot by building their own sukkah, or hut, and decorating it with fruit, vegetables, and leaves in a project beset by trouble when Leo can't resist snatching an apple and upsetting the little hut. But the bear parents help the little ones build a sturdier sukkah. This simple introduction to the Jewish festival is beautiful with color and animated by the small bears' pranks against a richly decorative sukkah.

## THANKSGIVING

Child, Lydia Maria. *Over the River and Through the Wood*. unsp. \$3.95 paper. Scholastic Inc., 1987. (ISBN 0-590-41190-X) Grades PreK-6

Brinton Turkle illustrates Lydia Maria Child's classic Thanksgiving poem in double-page, scenic sweeps of color alternating with soft, pencil cameos of a nineteenth-century American family on the great feast day. Busy, colorful scenes of the sleigh ride depict an eager family passing through snowbound town and woods, and pencil illustrations portray the activities at Grandmother's house as the old folks set the table, roll out pies, and watch at the window. The poem's words provide the text, reappearing at the end with the simple musical score. A fitting touch of Currier and Ives glows throughout.

Cuyler, Margery. *Daisy's Crazy Thanksgiving*. unsp. \$14.95. H. Holt & Co., 1990. (ISBN 0-8050-0559-5) Grades 2-4

Although Daisy wants to spend Thanksgiving with her grandparents to escape the hectic bustle of her

parents' restaurant, she finds to her dismay that she has traded a busy holiday for a chaotic, screwball one. Robin Kramer's humorous watercolors augment the wacky mayhem in Margery Cuyler's easy-to-read narrative. A wonderfully offbeat story to stimulate students to create their own tumultuous variations on the traditional holiday family gathering.

Hayward, Linda. *The First Thanksgiving*. (*Step into Reading Series*) 48 p. \$6.99 (ISBN 0-679-90218-X). \$2.95 paper (ISBN 0-679-80218-5) Random, 1990. Grades 1-3

A Step 2 Book of the Random House *Step into Reading* series provides an authentic introduction in text and drawings to the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving for beginning readers with basic vocabulary. Excellent watercolors by James Watling fill the pages with details of the famous voyage and settlement, including a cutaway of the *Mayflower* showing its interior structure from top to bottom with passengers gathered and goods loaded. The contributions of Samoset, Squanto, and Massasoit to the Pilgrims' survival and the participation of the Indians in the first great feast of thanksgiving are recorded. A good historical account.

Hoban, Lillian. *Silly Tilly's Thanksgiving Dinner*. (*I Can Read Books*) 63 p. \$11.89. Harper-Collins, 1990. (ISBN 0-06-022423-1) Grades K-2

Silly Tilly Mole is at it again, still "forgetting to remember" what she plans to do. Inviting Mr. Bunny to her home for Thanksgiving dinner, she hands him what she thinks are invitations for other forest creatures of her acquaintance. Alas, silly Tilly, she has given Mr. Bunny each animal's favorite recipe (which she had planned to make). All ends well, however, when Mr. Woodchuck, Mrs. Squirrel, Mrs. Fieldmouse, and the rest show up, bearing their dishes for a grand Thanksgiving feast at Tilly's place. Bright, cheerful illustrations.

Leedy, Loreen. *The Dragon Thanksgiving Feast: Things to Make and Do*. unp. \$14.95. Holiday, 1990. (ISBN 0-8234-0828-0) Grades K-3

Accompanying this easy-to-read tale of comical dragons and their Thanksgiving celebration are recipes and instructions for a variety of activities related to the holiday, such as table decorations and games. Leedy's whimsical line-and-wash illustrations complement her rhyming-couplet narrative and simple instructions. A useful book for classroom and household endeavors, it appropriately specifies when getting adult help is necessary.

McGovern, Ann. *The Pilgrims' First Thanksgiving*. 48 p. \$2.50 paper. Scholastic Inc. (ISBN 0-590-40617-5) Grades K-2

The appeal of this story of the very first Thanksgiving is its child's-eye point of view of the long, hard voyage to America and the celebration of the first harvest. Young readers will find the rigorous life of Pilgrim children fascinating—they turned roasts on spits all day long beside hot fireplaces, guarded new crops to scare away birds, and stood with hats on their heads to eat at the table, benches being luxuries for adults. Joe Lasker's green-washed pen-and-ink drawings are appropriately child-conscious.

Nerlove, Miriam. *Thanksgiving*. unp. \$10.95. Whitman, 1990. (ISBN 0-8075-7818-5) Grades PreK-2

Miriam Nerlove's soft, rounded—one wants to say plump!—illustrations in color-washed pen and ink recall the first Thanksgiving shared by the Pilgrims with the Indians and then follow a small boy through his happy celebration with his mother, aunt and uncle, and cousins at their grandmother's house. One-parent households are subtly acknowledged in the little boy's busy activities with his mother as they prepare for their trip to Grandma's. Cheerful and warm, with easy text and mild, sweet pictures for the youngest audiences.

*Over the River & Thro' the Woods*. unp. \$2.25 paper. S&S, 1990. (ISBN 0-671-72337-5) Grades PreK-1

This paperback version of illustrator Normand Chartier's depiction of the classic Thanksgiving song features a colorful, humorous, appealing rabbit family on a snowy sleigh ride to Grandmother's house. Children will love these animal characters and chuckle at the young rabbits' antics.

Pilkey, Dav. *'Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving*. unp. \$13.99. Orchard Bks., 1990. (ISBN 0-531-08505-8) Grades PreK-2

In this parody of Clement Moore's Christmas poem, a multicultural class of eight lively children visits Farmer Mack Nuggett's turkey farm, falls in love with birds named Shemp and Groucho, and hatches a plot to save them from becoming main courses for eight Thanksgiving feasts. Adults will chuckle over wacky phrasing and allusions while young readers will love the bold, bright, cartoon-style illustrations and satisfying conclusion. A humorous, nontraditional selection.

Smith, Janice Lee. *The Turkey's Side of It: Adam Joshua's Thanksgiving*. 56 p. \$11.89. Harper-Collins, 1990. (ISBN 0-06-025859-4) Grades 2-4

An hilarious addition to the Adam Joshua series, Smith incorporates useful details of the first Thanksgiving into this witty, well-written book about how a group of children add some new twists to the classic Pilgrim-and-Indians story. Dick Gackenbach's black-and-white illustrations humorously depict Adam Joshua, his family and friends. Readers will enjoy this laugh-out-loud book and identify with Adam Joshua as he deals with disappointment at not getting a leading role in the pageant and creatively makes the best of being cast as a turkey.

Stock, Catherine. *Thanksgiving Treat*. unp. \$11.95. Bradbury Pr., 1990. (ISBN 0-02-788402-3) Grades PreK-1

Catherine Stock's memorable, soft watercolors show a little boy feeling

left out at Thanksgiving when his family works to prepare the big feast, shooing him kindly out of their way. Sensing the child's isolation, his grandfather invites him to help gather chestnuts which the old man shakes down from a tree with his cane. The family is thrilled to roast them in a fine wood fire. Busy, festive scenes—shucking corn, stuffing turkey, peeling vegetables, cutting firewood—are rendered in a golden, autumn-like haze. An attractive book which speaks to intergenerational ties between the very old and the very young, both of whom may feel a little awkward during big family get-togethers.

## VALENTINE'S DAY

Cole, Joanna. *Monster Valentines*. unp. \$2.50 paper. Scholastic Inc., 1990. (ISBN 0-590-42216-2) Grades K-2

Although opposites in almost every way, monsters Prunella and Rosie are best friends until their quarrel over some homemade valentines. Jared Lee's quirky cartoon illustrations will delight young readers and may inspire amusing artwork for Valentine's Day. Joanna Cole's easy-to-read narrative includes many examples of "Roses are red" rhymes ranging from sentimental to sarcastic, adding a bit of fun to the traditional shmaltz. Unique material for discussing social skills and friendship.

Stock, Catherine. *Secret Valentine*. unp. \$11.95. Bradbury Pr., 1991. (ISBN 0-02-788372-8) Grades PreK-1

Narrated by a little girl anticipating Valentine's Day, this appealing story shows her making valentines for her parents, her grandmother, her cat Muffety, and for a lonely elderly neighbor. As the little black child cuts out red construction paper hearts and trims them with lace doilies, Muffety is her charming companion, playing with crayons and snuggling close to the valentine project underway. Best of all, the little narrator herself receives a lovely card smelling of lavender and signed

only "From your Secret Valentine." A bonbon of a book, quietly amusing—the cat almost steals the story.

**Watson, Wendy. *A Valentine for You*. unp. \$14.95. Clarion Bks., 1991. (ISBN 0-395-53625-1) Grades 1-4**

In a collection of love songs and rhymes, Wendy Watson celebrates Valentine's Day with busy, softly colored (think of candy "conversational hearts") drawings of a care-free, zany little group at home, at school, in the neighborhood, and generally making merry in snowy, heart-bedecked surroundings. Her valentine is a people-filled treat of pictures and margins illustrating nonsense rhymes and playful catches as well as tenderer reminders of the day like "Down in the valley, the valley so low" and such ditties as "Roses are red, violets are blue, / Sugar is sweet, / And so are / You." Buy this S.W.A.K. valentine!

## DIRECTORY

Bantam - Bantam Books, Inc., 666 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10103 (800/223-6834)

Bradbury Pr. - Bradbury Press, Inc., 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022 (800/257-8247)

Carolrhoda Bks. - Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 241 First Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN 55401 (800/328-4929)

Childrens - Childrens Press, 5440 N. Cumberland Ave., Chicago, IL 60656 (800/621-1115)

Clarion Bks. - Clarion Books, 215 Park Ave. S., New York, NY 10003 (800/225-3362)

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