

JAPANESE BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Japanese Children's Books

2022



JBBY

Cover illustration

ARAI Ryoji

Born in Yamagata prefecture in 1956, graduated from the Nihon University College of Art. Ryoji Arai has received many honors, including the 1st JBBY Award for *Taiyo orugan* (A Sound of Taiyo-Organ; Arton/Kaiseisha) in 2008; the 59th Sankei Children's Book Award for *Asa ni natta node mado o akemasu yo* (It's Morning So I Will Open the Window) in 2012; and the 22nd Japan Picture Book Award for *Kyo wa sora ni marui tsuki* (A Full Moon in the Sky Tonight; Kaiseisha) in 2016. He was the winner of the 3rd Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award in 2005, the first winner from Asia, and was shortlisted for the 2022 Hans Christian Andersen Award for Illustration.

Japanese Children's Books 2022

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JBBY Book Selection and Review Team



OKUYAMA Megumi

Children's literature critic. A former high school teacher in Tokyo, she owns the children's specialty bookshop Huckleberry Books and serves as an adjunct lecturer at Shirayuri and Nishogakusha Universities. She has authored '*Story*' *Wavering: Children's Books in an Unclear Age* (Kurosio Publishers) and *Lessons in Layeredness* (Ryoyu Shuppan) as well as co-authored *A Guide to World Children's Literature Based on Time* (Hara Shobo). She edits the journal *Japanese Children's Literature* (Japanese Children's Literature Association). JBBY member.



SAKUMA Yumiko

Translator, editor, reviewer of children's books, representative of the Japan-Africa Children's Books Project (JACBOP), and former professor at Aoyama Gakuin Women's College. Her writings in Japanese include *The Cooking Stoves of Enzaro Village* (Fukuinkan Shoten). Her more than 250 translations of books from English to Japanese range from *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White and the picture books of Maurice Sendak to *Refugee* by Alan Gratz. Her translation of *Last Summer with Maizon* by Jacqueline Woodson made the IBBY Honour List. JBBY president.



DOI Yasuko

Director and senior researcher at the International Institute for Children's Literature (IICLO). Besides researching reading activities and the history of Japanese children's literature, she plans projects such as training courses for teachers and librarians, as well as lectures and symposiums for children's book authors from Japan and overseas. Coeditor of *I Could Read by Myself!: Book Guide of 200 Books for Young Children* (Hyoronsha) among others. Jury for the 2018 and 2020 Hans Christian Andersen Awards. JBBY managing director.



FUKUMOTO Yumiko

Former librarian at Chofu City Library, lecturer at Rikkyo University, and adjunct researcher at the International Library of Children's Literature. She now focuses on translating and researching children's books. Her many translations into Japanese include *Library Lion* by Michelle Knudsen, illustrated by Kevin Hawkes (Iwasaki Shoten) and *Mary and the Mouse*, *The Mouse and Mary* by Beverly Donofrio (Holp Shuppan). She has co-authored *The Library: A User's Manual* (Kodansha) and authored the picture book *Adventures in the Library*, illustrated by Chisato Tashiro (Tamagawa University Press). She lectures widely to promote reading and libraries. Former JBBY board member.



SAKAGUCHI Mikako

Member of the Japanese Society of Science Books for Children. With the motto "science books and experiences play catch," she teaches some 270 sessions annually from play-with-science times, to elementary/middle school and university classes, to workshops targeted to library and children's center staff. She has authored the books *Science Mysteries* (Froebel-kan) and *The Price of Life and Welfare* (Otsuki Shoten), translated *Michael Faraday and Electricity* by Brian Bowers (Tamagawa University Press), and contributed to the volume *Let's Start Science Reading* (Iwanami Shoten) among others. JBBY member.



SHIOZAKI Junko

Researcher, part-time lecturer at Keio University, and a member of the steering committee of the Association of Children's Libraries (Jitoken). She obtained her PhD in Library and Information Science after working as a librarian in school and public libraries. She now researches children's books and reading while also teaching theory of children's library service at multiple universities, educating future librarians. Her publications include *The History of Library Services to Children—Development of Public Library Services to Children in Postwar Japan* (Sogensha). JBBY board member.



NOGAMI Akira

At Shogakukan, served as editor of *First Grader* monthly magazine, head of children's books, company director, and finally president and CEO of Shogakukan Creative. Taught children's literature and culture at Shirayuri University and Tokyo Seitoku University. His writings in Japanese include *To the Modern Children's Literature of Japan* (Parorusha), *Children's Literature Crossing Borders* (Nagasaki Shuppan), and *Contemporary History of Children's Culture* (Otsuki Shoten). Coeditor of *When I Was a Child, There Was a War* (Rironsha) among others. Managing director of Japan PEN Club. JBBY vice president.

For each selected title in this catalog, we provide the following:

Title in English

Title in Japanese (Title in Romanized Japanese) | Author/Illustrator | Publisher | Publication Year | Number of Pages | Trim Size | ISBN | Target Age | Keywords

Basic Book Description (Last Name of Reviewer)

Japanese Children's Books

About JBBY and This Catalog

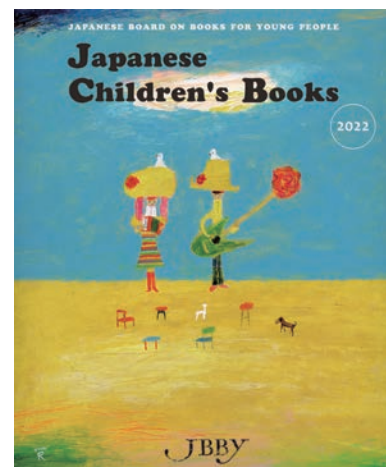
The Japanese Board on Books for Young People (JBBY) was founded in 1974 as the Japanese Section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY).

JBBY is dedicated to enhancing international understanding, and to providing information on children's books to people around the world. We promote IBBY's mission in a broad range of ways. Our international network allows us to take advantage of the prolific information generated by IBBY and to encourage mutual understanding. Our mission is to create a peaceful future for children worldwide through books.

JBBY hosts international book exhibitions in Japan that provide information about global titles to Japanese readers. In addition, we provide information on Japanese children's books to people around the world. We nominate titles for international recognition, as a means to deepen global understanding towards Japan.

In this catalog, we provide information about recent Japanese books recommended by a JBBY book selection and review team in several categories: picture books, chapter books and novels, and nonfiction. In addition, we introduce Japanese winners of and nominees for the Hans Christian Andersen Award; books selected for the IBBY Honour List from Japan; and recent translations into Japanese recommended by JBBY.

We list the recent Japanese books by category and in order of target age, including cover images and synopses along with bibliographic information. We hope you will enjoy reading about these books. For further information, please contact us: info@jbby.org



Cover illustration © Ryoji Arai

RECENT PICTURE BOOKS



Little Pumpkin Can't Sleep, Can't Sleep

ねられん ねられん かぼちゃのこ (Neraren neraren kabocha no ko) | Text/Ill. YAGYU Genichiro | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2020 | 24pp | 22x21cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8567-9 | 0+ | *Pumpkin, Sleep, Moon*

A picture book that encourages sleep through a dialogue between the moon and a small pumpkin. One evening, Moon says, "Time to sleep, Little Pumpkin!" And Little Pumpkin replies, "Can't sleep, can't sleep!" Little Pumpkin has lots of reasons: there's a frog on top of her, or a hornworm is stuck to her. When Moon points out that there is also a drone beetle stuck to her, Little Pumpkin says, "I can't sleep without Asa-chan!" At last, Little Pumpkin falls asleep. The back-and-forth between Moon and Little Pumpkin is humorous and evokes the feelings of a child who has many reasons not to go to sleep. The text is rhythmical, and orange and yellow circles stand out strikingly against the blue of night. (Doi)



Hat On

ぼうしかぶって (Boshi kabutte) | Text/Ill. MIURA Taro | Doshinsha | 2020 | 28pp | 18x18cm | ISBN978-4-494-00715-8 | Ages: 0+ | *Vegetables, Hat, Family, Outing*

On page 1, a purple eggplant father in glasses and a necktie runs along, carrying his satchel. "Eggplant father, ta-ta-ta-ta!" says the text. Turn the page, and the father has donned his hat—the eggplant's calyx. "Hat on, and I'm off!" says the text. Next, a pineapple big brother, a persimmon big sister, and some peapod siblings similarly put on their "hats" and head out. Finally, a tomato mother and roly-poly cherry tomato baby put on their "hats" and leave for an outing. This picture book's repetition is delightful, as are the transformations of brightly colored vegetables and fruits by the addition of their "hats." (Doi)



The Tree Frogs' Adventure

あまがえるのぼうけん (Amagaeru no boken) | Text: TATENO Hiroshi | Ill. KAWASHIMA Haruko | Sekaibunkasha | 2021 | 32pp | 27x24cm | ISBN978-4-418-20815-9 | Ages: 3+ | *Tree frogs, Toads, Insects, Adventure*

Three little tree frogs, Ratta, Chimo, and Arno, go exploring the forest for the first time. To begin with they are excited and enjoying themselves, but there are all kinds of insects and creatures in the forest, and the principle of the survival of the fittest prevails there. They narrowly escape being caught and eaten by a bush cricket, a toad, and an owl. Eventually they realize that running away and hiding is not cowardly but a weapon for survival, and they feast themselves on small insects and then fall asleep in the hollow of a tree. This is a fun adventure story with illustrations, based on a good understanding of the way frogs live and the things they do. (Sakuma)



All Kind of Frogs

いろいろかえる (Iroiro kaeru) | Text/Ill. KIKUCHI Chiki | Kaiseisha | 2021 | 24pp | 31x24cm | ISBN978-4-03-232670-3 | Ages: 3+ | *Frogs, Colors, Parents and children*

A green frog that likes eating is catching insects in the grass when a yellow frog that likes jumping comes bounding over. One by one they are joined by a pink frog that likes dancing, a blue frog that likes swimming, and an orange frog that likes singing, and they all play happily together. The illustrations filling the entire double-page spreads are full of energy. The clear and simple text makes use of repetition and is rhythmical. It is fun to follow the changes as a new color is introduced into the picture every time you turn the page. Eventually a black mother and a silver father appear and it is time for bed, with a sweet picture of everyone sleeping together. (Fukumoto)



Vodník's Water House: A Czech Folktale

ヴォドニークの水の館 (Vodoniku no mizu no yakata) | Text: MAKI Atsuko | Ill. FURIYA Nana | BL Shuppan | 2021 | 32pp | 29x22cm | ISBN978-4-7764-0929-8 | Ages: 3+ | *Czech Republic, Folktale, Monster*

Vodník is a water monster who makes mischief and even drowns people. One night, a penniless girl throws herself into the river, and Vodník spirits her into his house on the river bottom. While helping in the house, the girl learns that many people's souls have been trapped in jars there—including the soul of her younger brother, who had gone missing. The girl releases all the souls from the jars and determines to leave and return to her own house. An illustrator based in the Czech Republic powerfully portrays Vodník and the beautiful underwater world, in this retelling of a long-shared legend. (Shiozaki)



Mountaineering on a Cow

うしとざん (Ushi tozan) | Text/Ill. TAKABATAKE Nao | Shogakukan | 2020 | 32pp | 27x22cm | ISBN978-4-09-725085-2 | Ages: 3+ | Cows, Climbing, Humor, Adventure

"Today I'm going to climb a cow!" a tiny little man says, and then proceeds to climb up a huge cow, grabbing hold of the hair on the cow's legs. Finally reaching the cow's back, he finds someone else has got there first in a helicopter. "Not fair!" he says. Walking along the broad expanse of the cow's back, he sees another herd of cows. He hires a bicycle and rides on further, stopping at a restaurant to have some food. Then he climbs down by the tail, encountering a mountain of cow dung at the bottom. The story is meaningless with no lesson to it, and no words that stick in your mind, but it is very funny and I couldn't help laughing. In this day and age, it's important to laugh and set your mind free, isn't it? (Sakuma)



Our Cat

うちのねこ (Uchi no neko) | Text/Ill. TAKAHASHI Kazue | Alice-kan | 2021 | 32pp | 25x21cm | ISBN978-4-7520-0982-5 | Ages: 3+ | Stray cats, Pets, Family

This spring, a stray cat turned up at our house. It hid under the sofa and didn't come out for a whole month. Even after it came out, whenever I tried to get close its fur stood on end and it hissed angrily at me. This made me sad, as I thought perhaps it didn't really like me at all. Still, I kept patiently telling it not to worry. And finally, in winter it came into bed with me! The illustrations depict the cat's soft fur using ink painting techniques on Japanese washi paper, and realistically depict the cat gradually beginning to trust the first-person protagonist and closing the distance between them, teaching us the importance of taking time to befriend animals that have had a traumatic experience. (Shiozaki)



Riding the Large Candle Cart

おおきなキャンドル馬車にのせ (O-kina kyandoru basha ni nose) | Text/Ill. TAMURA Shigeru | Kaiseisha | 2021 | 40pp | 27x19cm | ISBN978-4-03-232650-5 | Ages: 3+ | Little people, Robots, Cake, Children

Nico, a little person, and Dada-kun, a small robot, skillfully use ropes and pulleys to make a single beeswax candle. They load the candle onto a horse-drawn cart and drive leisurely along the seaside road, the horse's hooves clip-clopping as they go, passing by ships carrying fruit and cocoa beans, and a train carrying little-people patisserie chefs. Arriving at their destination, they see a ginormous cake. Nico's candle is lit on the top of the cake and the moon blows it out, marking the start of Children's Day celebrations! It's a fun story with lots of things happening along the leisurely journey, and scenes of many little people making and sharing the cake. (Okuyama)



The Talkative Jellyfish

おしゃべりくらげ (Osyaberi kurage) | Text: AMAN Kimiko | Ill. MIZUUCHI Satomi | JULA Shuppanyoku | 2020 | 36pp | 19x22cm | ISBN978-4-577-61031-2 | Ages: 3+ | Jellyfish, Fishing, Mother

Yoshihei is out fishing one day when he catches a young jellyfish. He tries to return it to the sea, but it shouts "No!" and begs him not to, because it'll be teased by all the other fish. And so the little jellyfish goes to live happily with Yoshihei, until one full-moon night its mother turns up to take it home. She tells her child how worried she's been and that you shouldn't decide your own actions just because of what others think of you. Yoshihei gives up fishing and sometimes goes to the sea to call on the little jellyfish. We see the little jellyfish's daily life along with his relationship with his mother, and the various fish are humorously depicted in the embroidered illustrations. (Doi)



Kyukyu the Cleaning Robot

おそうじロボットのキュキュ (Osoji robotto no Kyukyu) | Text/Ill. KOMORI Makoto | Kaiseisha | 2021 | 36pp | 23x20cm | ISBN978-4-03-350080-5 | Ages: 3+ | Near future, Work, Vending machines, Friends

This story is about a much-loved cleaning robot who works in a vending machine corner in a city suburb occupied by robots. He is an outdated model and is named Kyukyu after the squeaking sound he makes as he walks. From early morning he washes the row of vending machines, counts the number of drinks sold and places orders for more, crushes empty cans and takes them to the recycling truck. Unfortunately, though, he is sensitive to water and has to be sent for repair when he breaks down after a sudden rainstorm. The various robots and vending machines are all unique, and we can enjoy the details in their carefully depicted facial expressions and gestures. The use of papier mâché to create chic, subdued scenes is also charming. (Nogami)



Kotatsu

こたつ (Kotatsu) | Text/Ill. ASO Tomoko | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2020 | 32pp | 26x26cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8582-2 | Ages: 3+ | Kotatsu, Family, New Year's Eve, New Year

On the morning of December 31, Kota slips into the kotatsu, a heated table with a quilt, and announces that he plans to stay up until midnight to greet the New Year. The story depicts this special day in the family's life, with the kotatsu at the center. The artist takes an aerial view, gazing down from the ceiling as he follows the family's year-end housecleaning, the preparation of traditional New Year's dishes, and such customs as eating buckwheat noodles on New Year's Eve. Although we can only see the top of each person's head, the vivid paintings conjure up images of everyone's expressions and the warm bonds that unite this family circle. The humorous illustrations contain many subtle details that are fun to discover. (Shiozaki)

12



The Kitten Brothers' Bathtime Counting Song

こねこの きょうだい かぞえうた おふろ (Koneko no kyodai kazoe uta: ofuro) | Text: ISHIZU Chihiro | Ill. ISHIGURO Ayako | BL Shuppan | 2021 | 24pp | 18x18cm | ISBN978-4-7764-1005-8 | Ages: 3+ | *Kitten, Bath, Counting song*

This picture book takes an entertaining peek at three scruffy kittens enjoying bathtime. As they get ready, the kittens sing a merry counting song with plenty of alliteration to describe each step of the process, from undressing to hopping into the tub. When their father calls them, they stop frolicking about and rush eagerly to join him in the bath, each clutching a favorite toy (a rubber duck, a boat, and a ball). They wash themselves squeaky clean, then soak in the hot tub. The rhythmical text and expressive artwork make this simple story an enjoyable read. The series also includes a book about snack time and another about bedtime. (Sakuma)

13



Cherry Lalala

さくらら (Sakurarara) | Text: MASUI Junko | Photos: KODERA Takuya | Alice-kan | 36pp | 29x23cm | ISBN978-4-7520-0954-2 | Ages: 3+ | *Cherry blossoms, Spring, Nature*

It's April in Hokkaido, the northernmost of Japan's four main islands, and the mountains are still covered in snow. "I'm here," whispers a cherry tree, but it is only when the snow melts in May that it reveals its shape. It grows so low to the ground that its many branches seem to rise from the earth. Birds flock to its branches and flowers bloom nearby, until at last the tree bursts into blossom. Beautiful photos are accompanied by the gentle narration of the Chishima-zakura cherry tree, named after the Chishima or Kuril Islands north of Hokkaido. Trees of this species are the last cherry trees in the country to bloom. "I decide when to blossom," the tree declares, demonstrating both harmony with the natural environment and positive self-determination. (Okuyama)

14



Monkey Guardian

さるじぞう (Sarujizo) | Retold: OGURO Miho | Ill. SAITO Takao | Asunaro Shobo | 2021 | 28pp | 26x26cm | ISBN978-4-7515-3050-4 | Ages: 3+ | *Monkey, Old man, Jizo (guardian), Folk tale*

An old woodcutter goes into the forest to gather firewood. Pausing to eat some rice cakes, he nods off with white rice flour stuck to his face. A group of monkeys carry him off to a temple on the opposite bank, believing him to be a statue of a guardian deity. They leave offerings of money, and when the old man awakes, he is overjoyed by his good fortune. After hearing this story, the woodcutter's jealous neighbor pretends to be a sacred statue too, but his attempt goes horribly wrong. The comical illustrations capture the humor of the monkeys carrying the old man across the river. Similar tales are found throughout Japan. This one is based on a folktale from Yamagata prefecture. (Fukumoto)

15



Bullet Train!

しんかんせん! (Shinkansen!) | Text: HOMURA Hiroshi | Ill. HASEGAWA Akira | Kumon Shuppan | 2020 | 40pp | 27x22cm | ISBN978-4-7743-3175-1 | Ages: 3+ | *Shinkansen (bullet train), Solo trip*

A little boy takes his first solo trip on a bullet train. His mother sees him off at the station. Aboard the train, the boy starts feeling anxious when he realizes there are only strangers around him. He eats his packed lunch, sees Mount Fuji, goes to the washroom, and falls asleep, dreaming that he is the train driver. Before he knows it, he has reached the station where his grandparents wait for him. The ingenious illustrations use geometric shapes, such as circles, squares, and triangles, to express the characters and scenery, while parallel lines convey the speed of the train. Although at first the other passengers are nebulous black shapes, they gradually take on color, revealing the change in the boy's feelings and perspective. (Sakuma)

16



The Sun Is Laughing

たいようが わらってる (Taiyo ga waratteru) | Text: KABIRA Jiei | Ill. mirocomachiko | Gakken | 2021 | 32pp | 31x24cm | ISBN978-4-05-205429-7 | Ages: 3+ | *Nature, Sun, Southern island, Typhoon*

On a southern island reminiscent of Okinawa, flowers, trees, and insects smile in the brilliant sunshine. Even the sun is laughing. Suddenly a typhoon races towards the island, whipping up the sea. Fish of all kinds rain down from the sky, to the astonishment of two boys. The fish are a gift from the typhoon, and the boys enjoy a hearty breakfast under the beaming sun. Its dazzling rays light up the boys' faces with smiles that keep shining even after nightfall. Painted with vivid, energetic brushstrokes, the illustrations burst with the untamed power and vitality of nature. This is a recent work by mirocomachiko, winner of the Golden Apple at the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava. (Nogami)

17



Which One Has More? A Counting Picture Book

どちらがおおい? かぞえるえほん (Dochira ga ooi? Kazoeru ehon) | MURAYAMA Junko | Shogakukan | 2020 | 12pp | 25x21cm | ISBN978-4-09-725079-1 | Ages: 3+ | *Braille, Numbers, Tactile book, Universal design*

The text is accompanied by Braille, and the colorful illustrations are raised and textured. Some are soft and some are rough, some are smooth and some are bumpy. Each page is a counting quiz with questions like: Are there more long pencils or short pencils? More round cookies or square cookies? How many watermelon slices have ten seeds? The universal design means that this book can be enjoyed by anyone, with or without a sight impairment and regardless of their age. The same author has published four books in this series, including *Sawaru meiro* (Touchable Mazes). (Okuyama)

18



Chomp, Chomp, Half!

ぱくぱく はんぶん (Paku paku hanbun!) | Text: WATANABE Tetsuta | Ill. MINAMI Shinbo | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2021 | 36pp | 20x27cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8592-1 | Ages: 3+ | *Cake, Snack, Overeating*

Grandmother bakes a big cake. Since Grandfather loves to eat, she makes sure he knows to leave half of it left over. Then, she goes out. Grandfather eats half as he was told: "Chomp, chomp, half!" Then, a dog named John comes along and eats up half of what's left: "Chomp, chomp, half!" Soon a cat, a hen, a squirrel, a praying mantis, and a honeybee all do the same, and when Grandmother comes home, she's surprised to find the cake very tiny! The repetitive rhythm and various developments are fun; this book makes readers want to turn the pages. Drawn in rough lines, the duped expressions of Grandfather, Grandmother, the animals and the insects are humorous and distinctive. (Shiozaki)

19

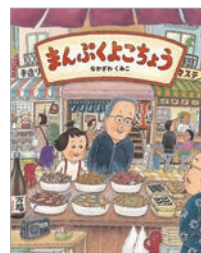


Still Going, Still Going

まだまだ まだまだ (Madamada madamada) | Text/Ill. GOMI Taro | Kaiseisha | 2021 | 32pp | 25x23cm | ISBN978-4-03-350090-4 | Ages: 3+ | *Competition, Town, Race, Dog*

"Ready, set, go!" Five children take off running. One boy keeps running even after completing the race, going around town, between buildings, and even into a forest! Along the way, a dog joins him. Eventually, the boy ends up where he started. The four children who began running with him are cheering, holding flags numbered 1 through 4 based on the order they crossed the finish line. When the boy crosses the line, the dog beats him by a hair to win 5th place, while the boy wins 6th. The scenery where the boy runs and the activities of the different people he sees are a delight. This book conveys the author's playful attitude toward competition and the individuality of a boy who doesn't worry about winning, just runs! (Nogami)

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Full Tummy Alley

まんぷくよこちょう (Manpuku yokocho) | Text/Ill. NAKAZAWA Kumiko | Bunkeido | 2020 | 32pp | 27x22cm | ISBN978-4-7999-0383-4 | Ages: 3+ | *Shopping arcade, Shopping, Raccoon dog*

Today is a big sale day in the Fully Tummy Alley shopping street, and a girl goes with her grandfather to shop. She sees places to buy dumplings, senbei, yakitori, fruit, oden, side dishes, ramen, curry, meat, fish, pickles, medicine, clothing, flowers, antiques, eyeglasses . . . and she sees that a raccoon dog deity is being honored. When she places a skewer of dumplings as an offering, some little raccoon dogs come and pick it up. Peeking into their hole, the girl can see that the raccoon dogs are having a market day too. In this book, many small shops along a narrow arcade have been illustrated in fine detail. The bustle of people on market day comes through. (Sakuma)

21



See, Be Seen

みたら みられた (Mitara mirareta) | Text/Ill. TAKEGAMI Tae | Alice-kan | 2021 | 36pp | 28x22cm | ISBN978-4-7520-0955-9 | Ages: 3+ | *Animal, Woodblock print, Onomatopoeia*

A two-page spread shows an animal in nature: "See." The next two-page spread shows a close-up of the animal looking this way. "Be seen." A cat, a praying mantis, some cows, a squirrel . . . each pair of spreads offers the sequence of "see and "be seen," with some occasional changes introduced. The spread after the cow's "be seen" spread has onomatopoeia for the cow coming over here to lick! The giant flying squirrel pops into the air with some more onomatopoeia. The joy of the picture book medium and the page turns are fully felt. Dynamic, multicolored woodblock prints create the strong impression that animals are unique and alive. (Okuyama)

22



Aobyotan (Sissy)

あおびょうたん (Ao byotan) | Text/Ill. AOKI Hiroe | Rironsha | 2020 | 32pp | 26x21cm | ISBN978-4-652-20392-7 | Ages: 7+ | *Friends, Nicknames, Pictures*

The boys in my class nicknamed me Aobyotan (Sissy). I asked my father what it meant, and he told me it meant I was too weak and so he made me train hard riding a bike and skipping rope. A new girl, Nachi Ishiguro, got nicknamed Nachiguro (a dark type of stone used to make inkstones and black Go pieces), which I know she hates. Since I'm good at art, everyone wanted me to draw the posters for the school sports day, and I didn't mind when the girls started calling me Byo-tan (Painter). I also became good friends with Nachi, and call her by her proper name instead of her nickname. The illustrations show the first-person protagonist thinking more deeply about nicknames, herself, and friendships. (Doi)

23



The Seaside Studio

海のアトリエ (Umi no atorie) | Text/Ill. HORIKAWA Rimako | Kaiseisha | 2021 | 32pp | 22x28cm | ISBN978-4-03-435160-4 | Ages: 7+ | *Art, Sea, Grown-ups*

A picture book in which a child hears from her grandmother about the time she went to stay with her mother's friend, a young woman painter, who invited her to visit after something bad happened and she couldn't go to school. The studio where the painter lived overlooked the sea and was spacious and bright, and at night it was so quiet that she could hear the chirring of insects. She enjoyed the unique and original meals, reading at night, taking walks along the beach in the morning, and being able to draw as much as she liked, imitating the painter. The simple paintings with gentle colors convey the special time she felt her existence was validated by an adult treating her as an equal. (Okuyama)



A Forgetful Family Goes Shopping

うろおぼえ一家のおかいもの (Urooboe ikka no okaimono) | Text/Ill. DEGUCHI Kazumi | Rironsha | 2021 | 32pp | 23x19cm | ISBN978-4-652-20418-4 | Ages: 7+ | *Ducks, Families, Shopping*

A duck father and mother live with their three children in a house in the mountains, but the trouble is that they are all incredibly forgetful. One day, the mother asks them to go shopping, so the father takes the children into town, but as usual they cannot remember what they are supposed to buy. Thinking it is something square they buy a block of tofu, then they think it is something heavy and buy a stone, and end up making one ludicrous purchase after another. In the last picture there is a hint what they should have bought. The illustrations show the family's absent-minded facial expressions drawn in loose lines, and it is really funny how their bad memories lead to more and more odd purchases. (Fukumoto)



Twelve Zodiac Soup

十二支のお雑煮 (Junishi no ozoni) | Text/Ill. KAWABATA Makoto | BL Shuppan | 2020 | 32pp | 27x20cm | ISBN978-4-7764-0977-9 | Ages: 7+ | *Zodiac, New Year, Zoni*

Dressed in special New Year's kimono, male and female animal pairs, each representing one of the twelve zodiac signs, wish the reader a "Happy New Year!" The rat pair sets out traditional New Year's dishes while the ox pair heads off to pray at the shrine and the tiger pair gets drunk on sake. The monkey pair toasts rice cakes and prepares the zoni, a special New Year's soup, while other creatures enjoy such festive pastimes as spinning tops, flying kites, playing sugoroku (a traditional Japanese board game), and making their first calligraphy of the year, a custom called kakizome. When the zoni is ready, everyone gathers to eat. The bold, humorous woodblock prints present various Japanese New Year's customs and different types of zoni. (Fukumoto)



Sekirei Maru

せきれい丸 (Sekirei-maru) | TAJIMA Yukihiro & KIDOUCHI Yoshimi | Kumon Shuppan | 2020 | 40pp | 25x26cm | ISBN978-4-7743-3193-5 | Ages: 7+ | *Shipwreck, War, Friends, Fishermen*

In December 1945, the ferry Sekirei Maru capsized while crossing from Awaji Island to Akashi with 349 passengers on board, three-times the boat's capacity. Only 45 passengers survived. Based on historical facts, the story follows a fictional character, the boy Hiroshi, whose father died in the Second World War. Hiroshi boards the ferry to deliver something to his aunt. When the boat capsizes and Hiroshi sinks to the bottom of the sea, he hears his dead father telling him to live. Hiroshi is saved by a fisherman whose own son, Hiroshi's friend, drowns. Hiroshi begins helping the fisherman with his work. The dynamic stenciled illustrations capture the depth of the sea, the horror of war, and the preciousness of life. (Doi)



Towa-chan and Toto-kun the Morocco Fish

とわちゃんとシナイモツゴのトトくん (Towa-chan to shinaimotsugo no Toto-kun) | Text/Ill. TASHIMA Seizo | Hidamarisha | 2021 | 36pp | 22x23cm | ISBN978-4-909749-08-6 | Ages: 7+ | *Pond, Aquatic life, Endangered species, Environment*

Pseudorasbora pumila, also known as the moroco, is a freshwater fish from the carp family that is endemic to Japan. Formerly found throughout eastern Japan, it is now an endangered species. In this book, a moroco lives hidden in a village pond between mountains that is soon to be filled. A girl named Towa-chan and her mother name the fish Toto-kun and transfer him to a quiet pond teeming with life. The creatures that the small fish encounters come alive in bold, dynamic illustrations of their growth in the autumn, winter, and spring, surrounded by nature. Through fantastical story development, the author's paean to life rings out. This is the latest work by a two-time Andersen Award nominee. (Nogami)



Bus-saurus

バスザウルス (Basuzaurusu) | Text/Ill. IGARASHI Daisuke | Aki Shobo | 2020 | 36pp | 31x22cm | ISBN978-4-7505-1599-1 | Ages: 7+ | *Forest, Bus, Monster, Night*

One night, an old bus abandoned and forgotten in the forest seems to imbibe the forest's spirit, and it grows green legs and a tail from its rusty body. It heads into town as the monster Bus-saurus! When it rests at a bus stop, an elderly woman climbs aboard. As Bus-saurus moves about, some moths, bats, rhinoceros beetles, flying squirrels, a deer, and even a bear come along. Eventually, the woman stops riding, the inside of the bus rots away, and the Bus-saurus leaves the lonely nighttime townscape behind. In this delicately rendered masterpiece, a popular manga artist and recipient of the Japan Cartoonists Association Award sounds a wake-up call about modern civilization. (Nogami)



Remi's Drawer

レミーさんのひきだし (Remi-san no hikidashi) | Text: SAITO Rin & Ukimaru | Ill. KURAHASHI Rei | Shogakukan | 2020 | 32pp | 28x19cm | ISBN978-4-09-725084-5 | Ages: 7+ | *Drawer, Box, Marriage proposal*

This story takes place in a bureau drawer owned by Remi, an old woman living on her own. One day, a small brown box is newly placed in the drawer and welcomed merrily by a glass jar, a cookie tin, some ribbon and some wrapping paper. Remi sometimes takes items from the drawer in order to use them: the jar to hold jam, the ribbon to decorate a kitten's neck. But the small box never gets used. It even gets taken away by Remi's friend Leo! But it turns out that Leo wants to propose to Remi, using the box for the ring. This small drama portrayed from the box's perspective has a retro feel, with detailed art. (Fukumoto)

RECENT CHAPTER BOOKS AND NOVELS

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The Rabbit and The Hedgehog: Another Good Day

うさぎとハリネズミ きょうもいいひ (Usagi to harinezumi: kyo mo ii hi) | Text: HARA Masakazu | Ill. ISHIKAWA Eriko | Hidamarisha | 2021 | 64pp | 22x19cm | ISBN978-4-909749-07-9 | Ages: 7+ | Rabbits, Hedgehogs, Friendship

This easy-to-read book contains four stories depicting the daily lives of a rabbit and a hedgehog who live in the forest. In "Prickly and Fluffy," the two friends set up a flea market for the hedgehog to sell some of his spines that have fallen out and the rabbit to sell his fluffy hair, but they don't get any customers. Then the hedgehog sticks nuts on the spines to make them into marking pins, and the rabbit stuffs his hair into empty walnut shells to make pincushions, and all the forest animals flock to buy them. In "What I Want To Tell You," the pair connect two walnut shells with a long thread to make a telephone, and ask each other, "Can you hear me? Can you hear me?" Then the rabbit tells the hedgehog to say something, and he whispers, "Thank you for being my friend." In "For Tomorrow," the hedgehog is moping because nothing good has happened today, but the rabbit cheers him up, saying "Try to remember what made you laugh the most." In "Dandelion Seed," there is a happy ending when a dandelion seed that the hedgehog had accidentally blown away when he sneezed ends up sprouting.

The introverted, pessimistic hedgehog and easy-going, cheerful rabbit are not quite on the same wavelength, but they are full of love for each other. The conversations between the two are leisurely, and the black-and-white illustrations on each page well convey the heartwarming atmosphere. This is a perfect book for children who have just learned to read. (Fukumoto)

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The Wild Boar Hospital on Mount Kumotori

くもとり山のイノシシびょういん (Kumotoriyama no inoshishi byoin) | Text: KAKO Satoshi | Ill. KAKO Satoshi & NAKAJIMA Kamei | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2021 | 64pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8589-1 | Ages: 7+ | Wild boar, Hospitals, Doctors

A wild boar doctor and rabbit nurse examine sick animals every day in a small hospital at the foot of a mountain. A young tanuki, who has a stomachache even though he hasn't eaten anything bad, finds out it was caused by him tapping along on his stomach at the school play. A praying mantis discovers the reason he can't stop sneezing and sniffing is that he is allergic to buckwheats after telling them he jumped into some plants with small white flowers when he was chased by a goat. A greedy bear comes to the hospital with sore claws from turning over a rock while trying to get at hornet larvae in a nest, and has 26 hornet stings removed from his backside. These seven short stories feature the mountain animals that visit the hospital one after another—a tanuki, a goat, a praying mantis, a bear, a deer, a crested kingfisher, a rhinoceros beetle, and a crocodile, each with their own unique characteristics. The doctor is big and scary with disheveled hair, but he gently listens to his patients, who are in pain, and accurately diagnoses their problems. The interactions between the doctor and his patients are humorous and fun, and the illustrations, both the author's own and those newly added by her grandson, are heartwarming. Even young children will enjoy having it read to them. (Fukumoto)

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The Goodbye Treasure Box

さよならのたからばこ (Sayonara no takara bako) | Text: NAGASAKI Natsumi | Ill. MIYAHARA Yoko | Rironsha | 2021 | 64pp | 21x16cm | ISBN978-4-652-20433-7 | Ages: 7+ | Friends, Parting, Island

Seven-year-old Minami is moving from a little island to Tokyo. The book depicts her last day with Yosei, her best friend and classmate. Disappointed that Yosei didn't come to her sendoff party, Minami heads for the beach, hoping to find him. She bumps into him on the way. "Looking for Josephine," he says, crowing the name like a rooster. Minami realizes that Taro the rooster must be looking for his owner, Josephine, and that Yosei wants Minami to join the search. They set off together. Yosei finds a pretty stone and gives it to Minami, then places it on top of a stone wall. They end up walking Auntie Haru's dog as they search, stopping to ask their neighbors if they have seen Josephine. No one has, but each person shares a memory of Minami, and Auntie Haru gives the two friends some popsicles. They climb onto the roof of a shed at Yosei's house and look out at the sea and sky. Gazing at a big cloud that looks like cotton candy, Yosei says, "Good things are going to happen in Tokyo. I can feel it." Minami realizes that her heart, which had felt like an empty hole until she bumped into Yosei, is a treasure box filled with wonderful memories.

A gentle, humorous tale of how friendship relieves the fears of a little island girl. The gorgeous island scenery depicted in the illustrations seems to mirror the rich memories that fill Minami's heart. (Doi)



Wonderful to Be Alone

すてきなひとりぼっち (Suteki na hitoribocchi) | Text/Ill.
NAKAGAWA Chihiro | Nora Shoten | 2021 | 56pp | 21x16cm |
ISBN978-4-905015-58-1 | Ages: 7+ | *Alone, Lost, Turtle*

Ippei is often on his own at school. If someone praises his drawing, he'll start making another, but by the time he's done, everyone is doing something else. Sometimes he trips and falls and gets left behind. One rainy day, Ippei comes home to find the door to his house locked. His knee is scraped from falling, and he's cold and hungry. Lonely and forlorn, he sets off to find his mother but instead finds a lost turtle. Feeling sorry for it, he picks it up, but then gets lost himself. He's frightened because he doesn't recognize the shops or people. He stops to help an elderly woman who has dropped her potatoes. Realizing that Ippei is lost, the shopkeepers gather round, and a police officer takes care of him until his mother comes. This incident is a turning point after which Ippei connects more with the people around him. That night, he wakes up and steps out onto the veranda. Both the sun and the moon are visible; it's neither morning nor night. "I like this kind of being alone," he thinks. He realizes that some ways of being alone we can get used to, while other kinds are very hard. Ippei's story makes us realize that it's often when we're alone that we discover something special. The flyleaf depicts the ways in which each character in the book enjoys being alone, expanding the reader's mind, while the illustrations, which are also by the author, round out the story. (Sakuma)



Tsukushi and Her Big Sister

つくしちゃんとおねえちゃん (Tsukushi-chan to onechan)
| Text: ITO Miku | Ill. TANJI Yoko | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2021
| 72pp | 22x16cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8599-0 | Ages: 7+ |
Sisters, Thoughtfulness

This book is divided into five chapters: Stuck Up, Five More Minutes, Dodgeball, Tears, and I'm Sorry, each of which can be read independently of the others.

Tsukushi, who is in second grade, envies her sister who is two years older. Her sister not only gets good grades, but can also play the piano. Sometimes she behaves like a snob and talks down to Tsukushi, but at other times she's helpful. When Tsukushi bends down to tie up her shoelace, everything falls out of her school knapsack. Her sister stops to help find an eraser that rolled away, even though it means she will be late for school because she has a limp that slows her down. No one passes the ball to her sister during dodgeball games, and this makes Tsukushi sad. When Tsukushi sees her sister come home crying because she was too shy to give her friend the birthday present she had made for her, Tsukushi feels like crying too.

In the final chapter, "I'm Sorry," Tsukushi is longing to go to the festival but her big sister leaves without her. Furious, Tsukushi writes "Stupid!" in her sister's notebook, only to feel remorse when her sister comes back to get her. She had gone ahead to explain to her friends that she was bringing Tsukushi. Every episode depicts how the sisters, despite their frequent disagreements, display kindness and consideration towards each other, and also provides vivid glimpses of the lives and nature of contemporary Japanese children. (Sakuma)



Samu, Master Detective

めいたんていサムくん (Meitantei Samu-kun) | Text: NASU Masamoto | Ill. HATA Koshiro | Doshinsha | 2020 | 88pp |
20x16cm | ISBN978-4-494-02066-9 | Ages: 7+ | *Mystery, Solving, Handkerchief*

Samu may look like a regular second-grader, but he carries a sky-blue towel-handkerchief in his pocket that gives him superpowers. Its smell clears his mind so he can solve mysteries! (The hanky is made from a towel he mouthed as a baby.) One morning at school, three boys' shoes have vanished from the cubbies at the entrance. Samu discovers that yesterday after school, all three boys jumped in puddles and took these shoes home because they were soiled. They forgot to bring them back.

After school, when Samu goes to the park, he finds a little girl who says her doll disappeared from a bench where she had placed it. Samu asks eyewitnesses for information and identifies the culprit. Another day, a third-grade student complains of a dog following her. Samu discovers that the dog is attracted to the smell of the girl's bag, which she received in a trade with another student. That student's family are the dog's real owners! Samu continues level-headedly solving mysteries that crop up around him. It's funny how his partner in this is his beloved towel-handkerchief from babyhood.

Readers of this book will join Samu in wondering about the mysteries and enjoying the detective-work. The many enjoyable illustrations will support newly independent readers. The author passed away in 2021 after completing three books in this series; he had begun it in his twilight years, wishing to share the joys of mystery-solving with the youngest of readers. (Fukumoto)



I Went to Paris

わたし、パリにいったの (Watashi, Pari ni ittano) | Text/Ill.
TAKADONO Hoko | Nora Shoten | 2021 | 48pp | 22x17cm |
ISBN978-4-905015-57-4 | Ages: 7+ | *Sisters, Photography, Imagination, Laughter*

This book tells the story of young girl named Hana and her toddler sister, Meme. Together, they love looking at a photo album from a family trip to Paris. They enjoy the photo of a lunch eaten in Paul's garden, and a photo from in front of the Saint-Germain-des-Prés abbey. The photos were taken when Hana was much smaller, and when Meme was still in their mother's belly. Nonetheless, Meme talks of Paris as if the memories were her own. As she describes even the colors and smells of Paris, Hana almost feels that Meme is right! Then again, that seems quite strange. "How could you know all of that when you couldn't see out?" Hana says. Meme replies that she could see out through their mother's belly button! When Hana counters that their mother was wearing clothes, Meme says that she could see out through her mother's buttonholes, the lace in her slip, and a hole in her underwear! As Hana and Meme continue their back-and-forth, and imagine an eye peeking out through an opening in their mother's clothes, they dissolve in hearty laughter. Meme's imaginative made-up stories show her wish to be a part of the family and her longing to see the unknown, wide world. This delightful story of two sisters features illustrations by the author with a pleasing combination of colors. It invites readers to experience how the sisters' daily life is full of joy. (Okuyama)

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The Best Report Card

サイコーの通知表 (Saiko no tsuchiho) | Text: KUDO Junko | Ill. YOSHIZANE Megumi | Kodansha | 2021 | 176pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-06-522675-9 | Ages: 9+ | *Teacher, Report card, Friends*

Asahi is in fourth grade. When he finds out that his friend, in punishment for a bad report card, had his New Year's money deducted by his parents, Asahi wonders what report cards are for. Toki, the top student in their class, confides that she feels bad for her younger sister who always gets low marks no matter how hard she tries. Asahi proposes making a report card for their homeroom teacher, Hashiken, and the whole class gets involved. To find out what report cards are for, they interview a very strict teacher, Mr. Okubo, who teaches the class in the next room. He tells them that report cards are for their parents. The children realize that not every teacher sees report cards in the same way.

The fourth-graders are preparing to present their future dreams at a school event. Asahi, however, doesn't have a dream. After pondering what to do, he decides to just be honest. At the end of the third term, the children present their teacher, Hashiken, with his report card. They mark his method of teaching, the way he writes on the blackboard, and even the way he eats his lunch, explaining why. Hashiken thanks them for pointing out his strengths.

The contrast between Hashiken, who cares deeply about his students, and the more authoritarian Okubo is relatable, reflecting contradictions within the school system. The students' exploration of what would make a report card meaningful for them and how to grade their teacher are convincing and intriguing. (Doi)

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Don't Cut Down the Silk Tree

ネムノキをきらないで (Nemunoki o kiranaide) | Text: IWASE Joko | Ill. UEDA Makoto | Bunken Shuppan | 2020 | 160pp | 22x16cm | ISBN978-4-580-82416-4 | Ages: 9+ | *Family, Trees, Nature, Life and death*

The grandfather of the main character had a very old silk tree in his garden. Birds always flock to it, and the grandfather used to boast that it was a gift from the birds. Now, however, it seems that the grownups want to cut it down because it's too big, taller than the roof. It's dangerous, they say. This makes the boy cry. "Grandpa always told me it was a good tree," he tells his friends. "But they're talking about cutting it."

"Did they cut it down?" his friends ask.

"No, but they chopped off lots of branches," the boy replies. Even that makes him feel sad for the tree.

Rumors are circulating that a ghost is haunting the garden where a veterinarian once lived. The boy becomes acutely aware that countless creatures, some so small we don't even see them, are all born to die. Although this grieves him, he decides that he doesn't ever want to forget this fact. The author eloquently conveys the emotions of this sensitive child whose heart is touched and troubled by the deaths of every living thing and who struggles with the difficulty of expressing these feelings in words. Instead, his feelings permeate the heart of the reader. The author has won well-deserved acclaim for her empathy for children and for her ability to portray their subtle emotions along with the questions that trouble their minds and their annoyance with the way grownups behave. She was nominated for the 2022 Hans Christian Andersen Award for Writing. (Nogami)

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Our Encyclopedia of Sighs

みんなのためいき図鑑 (Minna no tameiki zukan) | Text: MURAKAMI Shiiko | Ill. NAKATA Ikumi | Doshinsha | 2021 | 168p | 22x16cm | ISBN978-4-494-02070-6 | Ages: 9+ | *School, Small groups, Friends*

Tanochin (short for Ranta Tanoe) is a fourth-grade boy whose class is working in small groups to make original encyclopedias, which they will present when parents visit. Tanochin's group works on a "sigh encyclopedia," about the reasons and situations that cause their classmates to sigh. Tanochin's group includes a boy named Koshiro, a girl named Koyuki, a girl named Nanaho, and a girl named Yura who spends her days in the school nurse's office. As a way of coaxing Yura back to class, Tanochin asks her to draw the encyclopedia's illustrations, but Koyuki declares she will do the illustrations and refuses to back down. She and Yura seem to have trouble getting along.

The person Tanochin ends up consulting is Sigh Boy, a mini-version of him wearing a kimono, which Yura drew on a piece of paper to depict Tanochin's sigh. Sigh Boy now jumps out of Tanochin's backpack every time he gets home from school. At Sigh Boy's urging, Tanochin goes to a "Sigh Festival" and finds the mini version of all the other children! Tanochin learns from mini Koyuki and Yura what happened between them in the past, and he finds a clue to help their relationship.

The five classmates' conversation unfolds in up-tempo Kansai dialect, and while they have their hard times, it's fun to watch them solve their problems their own way. The realistic story transitions smoothly to fantasy with the entrance of Sigh Boy, who adds a perfect dash of humor. The end of the book features the group's finished Encyclopedia of Sighs. (Fukumoto)

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Tomorrow's Words

あしたのことば (Ashita no kotoba) | Text: MORI Eto | Ill. ABE Kaita | Komine Shoten | 2020 | 184pp | 20x16cm | ISBN978-4-338-31904-1 | *Friends, School, Cross purposes, Words*

A collection of eight stories on the theme of how thoughtless words can be extremely hurtful and damage a relationship. "On The Way Home" is about a boy who is upset with his friend for interrupting him while they're chatting with five classmates during the lunch break. They are walking home together in silence when it suddenly starts raining, and they are finally able to clear up the misunderstanding. "I Can't Stand That Girl" relates how one girl dislikes Maki, who is popular with boys, but is able to make friends with her after a word from a friend. In "An E-mail to Tomita," Misato is freaked out when Tomita, the captain of her softball team, whispers "You're dead!" in her ear after she makes some mistakes in a tournament, and sends her a long e-mail describing how she feels. "Wind and Rain" is about two fifth-grade girls, Fuka (whose name includes the kanji for wind) and her friend Ru (with the kanji for rain), who have been in the same class since starting school, but Ru never speaks at school. When Fuka invites Ru home to hear her grandfather's Noh chanting, Ru misunderstands her to mean Western songs (both are pronounced yōkyoku), with hilarious results. The protagonists of the stories are all elementary school pupils who experience misunderstandings and miscommunications due to words. They feel frustrated at not being able to express their innermost thoughts and regret not being able to communicate their feelings to others. These delightful stories all convey hope for the future through words. (Nogami)



Oedo Mamekichi: "Quarrel Rice Cakes"

お江戸豆吉 けんか餅 (Oedo Mamekichi kenkamochi) | Text: KIRYU Tamaki | Ill. NOMA Yotaro | Froebel-kan | 2021 | 192pp | 19x13cm | ISBN978-4-577-04972-3 | Ages: 11+ | *Edoites, lifestyle, Japanese sweets, work*

Eleven-year-old Mamekichi moved from the countryside to Edo (now Tokyo) to work as a live-in employee at Tsurukameya, a confectionery shop with a good reputation. The master and mistress and the other employees were all kind, but he had a hard time with twenty-three-year-old Yonezo, the short-tempered and quarrelsome young master. Yonezo was tall and scary. One day, furious with Yonezo for getting into a big fight with a customer, the master rented a small store for him in Asakusa and told him not to come back until he'd made a success of it. And of all things, he sent Mamekichi to keep an eye on him!

Mamekichi wanted to cry, but living and working with Yonezo, he gradually came to understand his personality and learned how to treat him. Yonezo was still quarrelsome, but he was extremely good at making sweets. He also gave credit to Mamekichi and told him to try making his own confections. Mamekichi couldn't make the elegant thin rice cakes Yonezo was known for, but he came up with his own version of daifuku rice cakes filled with sweet bean paste. These proved especially popular with Tatsugoro, the customer with whom Yonezo had quarreled, and they were soon dubbed "quarrel rice cakes" and sold alongside Yonezo's rice cakes as a store specialty.

This work depicts the daily life of spirited, quick-tempered Edoites. The fast-paced dialogue between the young master, Mamekichi, and the people around them is delightful, vividly conveying the liveliness of Edo. The text boxes entitled "Mamekichi's Edo Trivia" are also interesting. (Shiozaki)



Solving Mysteries With Science: The case of the Witch's House

科学でナゾとき! (Kagaku de nazotoki! yamanba no yashiki jiken) | Text: ASADA Rin | Ill. SATO Odori | Kaiseisha | 2021 | 192pp | 19x13cm | ISBN978-4-03-649160-5 | Ages: 11+ | *Solving mysteries, Teachers, Science*

Sixth-grader Shogo is the head of the student council at his elementary school. The part-time science teacher nicknamed Mr. Giraffe is his father, but he keeps this secret from his classmates.

A boy comes to the student council asking for help to recover a ball that has fallen in the gutter outside a place dubbed the Witch's House, saying he'd seen the ball roll up the hill. Shogo and the others go with Mr. Giraffe to solve the mystery ("The Case of the Witch's House").

Shogo and his friend Daiki make medals as prizes for the first-grade children they have been paired with, but receive letters from them containing disturbing messages. Shogo and Mr. Giraffe solve the mystery ("The Case of the Confidential Letters").

Shogo finds out that his classmate Naho, who has joined a modeling agency, has been handing out some white powder to other girls that is supposed to be oxygen powder good for diets. Mr. Giraffe summons the children to the science lab to conduct an experiment to see if they can make oxygen powder ("The Case of the Mysterious White Powder").

With this book, we not only solve fascinating science mysteries but learn about human relationships and social issues. In story one, we discover that the "Witch" is an old woman with a broken arm; in story two we see the friendship between Shogo and Daiki; and story three is about a scam taking advantage of young girls wanting to lose weight. (Doi)



Candles

キャンドル (Kyandoru) | Text: MURAKAMI Masafumi | Ill. ENTA Shiho | Froebel-kan | 2020 | 312pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-577-04921-1 | Ages: 11+ | *Gender, School, Memory, Songs*

Sixth-grader Keiichi's best friend Shoma is a cross-dresser who wears skirts and loves fashion. He is also a strong fighter, and doesn't care when someone makes fun of him. Keiichi, on the other hand, lost his mother in an accident five years ago and always gives up right away. When Shoma asks him to help him fight to get their junior high school to make school uniforms genderless, Keiichi tells him he should just follow the rules.

One day, however, he happens to touch a box with a ribbon around it in the school's stationery supply room. This causes the memories of a girl named Hana Takanashi to enter his consciousness. In her memories, Hana is attracted to a girl in her class, Ei, and her singing voice. However, when the other children tease her about their relationship, Hana rejects Ei, denying that there's anything between them. She had prepared the box as a gift to Ei to make up with her, but had been unable to give it to her. Shoma notices that something is bothering Keiichi, and together they figure out the meaning of the memories and plan to reunite Hana and Ei. Through this experience, Keiichi begins to realize Shoma's pain and how difficult it is for him to live freely with his own preferences.

The book depicts LGBTQ+ issues in an upbeat manner, interwoven with fantasy elements and music from YouTube, and featuring unique characters like Keiichi's father, a hairdresser who has raised him alone since his mother's death, and Shoma's childhood friend Ruri. (Okuyama)



Jump and Catch the Snow!

ジャンプして、雪をつかめ! (Janpu shite yuki o tsukame!) | Text: OGIYANAGI Chika | Ill. KUMAORI Jun | Shinnihon Shuppansha | 2020 | 176pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-406-06479-8 | Ages: 11+ | *Divorce, Family, Friends, Snow country*

In the third trimester of grade five, Tadashi Sakakibara's parents divorce, and he moves from Tokyo with his mother to her hometown in Aomori in northern Japan. Tadashi finds it hard to bridge the gap between himself and his classmates. The northern winter is bitterly cold, freezing the water pipes if they aren't careful. They live in a house that is more like a shed without even a flush toilet. Snow falls endlessly, burying their house. One day, as Tadashi waits alone at home, shivering with cold, his mother's friend Taeko drops in. She helps him buy fuel for the heater and tells him he should help out at home instead of depending on his mother to do everything for him. Later, a classmate passes by, and he and Tadashi have a snowball fight. Tadashi's mindset begins to change. He starts doing chores like cleaning the toilet and helps adults shovel snow and knock snow off the roof. Taeko teaches him to make fried noodles, and he makes some for his friends and even for his mother. Gradually, he begins to feel like he belongs. A year later, his mother has an accident, and Tadashi takes her place in the fall festival, dressing up as a woman and performing the apple dance. The story follows a year in the life of a boy who finds it hard to adapt to a new environment, focusing on the new bonds he forges and the new way of life he discovers through the kindness and friendship of other people. (Shiozaki)

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Gift of Chocolates

チョコレートのおみやげ (Chokoreto no omiyage) | Text: OKADA Jun | Ill. UEDA Makoto | BL Shuppan | 2021 | 48pp | 22x16cm | ISBN978-4-7764-1010-2 | Ages: 11+ | *Chocolate, Balloon seller, Rooster, Story making*

After taking a walk in Kobe city, Yuki, a fifth grader, and his aunt, Miko, stop at a bench near the port to eat a box of chocolates and make a story. "It feels like time is melting away," Miko says and asks Yuki to share all the things he has seen and liked that day. Selecting images from these impressions as material, Miko weaves a story. "A little boy and a rooster lived together in a European-style house on top of a hill," she begins. Each day, the rooster climbed onto the roof and checked the wind direction so that the boy could choose where to sell balloons. But one day, just on a whim, the rooster lied. The boy didn't come back for three months, during which time the rooster turned into a weathercock.

"That's not fair when he only lied once!" Yuki protests and picks up the thread of the story. The little boy, he says, brought the rooster a box of chocolates which, like his aunt had said, "melted time away," bringing the rooster back to life, and they lived happily ever after.

The author uses the frame narrative to skillfully weave this tale within the humorous dialogue between the boy and his aunt, revealing their different perspectives on life. Every page is adorned with beautiful pencil and watercolor illustrations that conjure up images of Kobe's townscape with its European influence. (Doi)

46



The Moon and Miso Soup with Pork

月にトンジル (Tsuki ni tonjiru) | Text: SATO Madoka | Ill. SATO Makiko | Akane Shobo | 2021 | 192pp | 21x16cm | ISBN978-4-251-04478-5 | Ages: 11+ | *Friendship, Growth, Dark side*

Toru, a sixth grader, belongs to a group of four who call themselves Tetsu-yon, the iron four, because they've been close friends since kindergarten. The other members are the group's leader Daiki, Shun, who is good looking and likes to cook, and Machi, a girl who is always cheerful. Toru, who is good at soccer and is sensitive to harmony among his friends, thought that their group would endure forever. When Daiki's family move far away, however, the relationships among the remaining members become strained. Toru realizes that they each have very different interests. He fears that the bond that holds them together will completely disintegrate, remembering something his grandfather had told him before he died a year ago. "Just like the moon, you have a dark side that we don't see, but in time, it will become clear, just like fat congealing in miso soup with pork when the soup cools down." Toru worries that he has only been looking at the surface and has missed the other side hidden within the feelings of his friends. Later, however, he comes to see that the four friends had already begun walking in different directions, and this allows him to step out in a new direction himself. Whereas before the idea that people have a hidden side disturbed him, he begins to think that this is precisely what makes people interesting.

The depiction of an adolescent's dawning understanding and internal development is convincingly real and vibrant. (Sakuma)

47



What She Is to Me, What I Am to Her

わたしのあのこ あのこのわたし (Watashi no ano ko, ano ko no watashi) | Text: IWASE Joko | Ill. UEJI Naoko | PHP Institute | 2021 | 208pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-569-78969-9 | Ages: 11+ | *Individuality, Family, Friends, Parent and child*

Fifth-grade Aki's parents are not married, and she lives with her mother, but the family gets along well. They call her father by his first name, Michio. One day, Aki takes a record that Michio gave her to her friend Mocchi's house to listen to, because unlike Aki, Mocchi has a record player. Aki is a little jealous of Mocchi living in a house with two parents and her brother. Unfortunately, while they are listening to Aki's record, Mocchi's little brother Shin shows up and scratches it. Aki, who often speaks without thinking, blames Mocchi for not stopping Shin; and Mocchi, who often struggles to explain her feelings to others, apologizes repeatedly. Aki soon regrets her words and actions, but her friendship with Mocchi grows strained for a while. Then, one day, Shin spikes a high fever while Mocchi's mother is out, and Mocchi instinctively asks Aki for help. Aki does all she can.

This story's scenes are narrated from Aki and Mocchi's alternating points of view. Each girl's way of feeling things, her struggles, the various misunderstandings, and the gradual recovery of a valued friendship are portrayed with care. Using the everyday interactions of two children who have different personalities and families, this book explores how people can interact and get along together and what friendship means. (Shiozaki)

48



With You

ウイズ・ユー (Uizu yu) | Text: HAMANO Kyoko | Ill. NAKATA Ikumi | Kumon Shuppan | 2020 | 248pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-7743-3078-5 | Ages: 13+ | *Young caregivers, Romance*

Yuto is in year three of junior high and has lived with his mother and his brother Naoto, two years older, since his father left. His mother only cares about his talented brother, and Yuto wonders miserably what the point of his own existence is. One October night with the high school entrance exam looming, he goes for a run to take his mind off things and notices Akane sitting on a swing in the park. Akane is a year below him at school, but looks after her sick mother and her elementary school-aged sister all by herself. Her father has been posted to another town for work, and she doesn't have anyone she can turn to for help. Her only respite is going for a walk after she's finished the housework and put her little sister to bed. Yuto often sees her on his nightly runs and becomes curious about her. He strikes up a conversation, and eventually they start going for nightly walks together, confiding in each other.

One day, Yuto hears his mother talk about young caregivers, and realizes this applies to Akane. Wanting to help her, he asks his mother, who works in the welfare office, for advice and together they think about possible solutions. Realizing that there are people who need him, Yuto begins to rethink his relationship with his family. This story is a junior high school romance that also focuses on contemporary social issues. It is refreshing to see Yuto and Akane begin living with their sights firmly fixed on the future. (Shiozaki)



Looking For Elise

エリーゼさんをさがして (Erize san o sagashite) | Text: NASHIYA Arie | Ill. NAKAMURA Hinata | Kodansha | 2020 | 224pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-06-521277-6 | Ages: 13+ | *Piano, the Elderly, Volunteering*

Ami is in year two of junior high school. She wants to continue her piano lessons, but is forced to quit when her mother says it's a waste of time because she'll never be any good. Her mother always tries to impose her values on her, while her father is indifferent. One day she talks about "Für Elise" with an old lady she doesn't know, and decides to call her Elise. When Ami tells Elise that her hands are a little too small to play the piano, Elise replies that "You don't have to have the same hands as everyone else, you know," and that "If you can't have nimble hands, then have graceful hands."

Ami is invited by Paula C, a high school student she meets by chance who likes to play the guitar, to volunteer with her as a singer at a day care center. This gives her an opportunity to learn about the various elderly people and the circumstances they are put in. She also becomes close with Gen Mizuno, a classmate who likes to draw, and through him becomes more broadminded.

The story realistically describes the process of Ami going from feeling crushed by the pressure from her mother to believing she should do what she can in her own way. It's refreshing to see her eventually reject her mother's belief that she has to win, and begin to make her own way in life. (Sakuma)



Third Place

サード・プレイス (Sado pureisu) | Text: SASAKI Ari | Ill. SAKAI Sane | Froebel-kan | 2020 | 256pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-577-04920-4 | Ages: 13+ | *Belonging, Friends, Career choice, Identity*

These stories are about four junior high school students who attend Supplementary Garden (a.k.a. Supplementary), a free after-school activity for local high school students.

Mizuki feels suffocated by school life because she hides her love of science fiction manga from her classmates. When a friend from elementary school invites her to Supplementary, she ends up helping a college student volunteer-organize a cosplay event. ("Back-up Account")

Daiki was accused of shoplifting when in elementary school and, hurt that his mother doesn't believe in his innocence, attends Supplementary to avoid being at home. When he's invited to help organize a festival there, he discovers the joy of interacting with other people. ("Non-Standard Product")

Piyotchi is worried about her brother, who wants to quit school and is constantly fighting with their parents. At Supplementary she learns that there are various career paths available, and after listening to those who are attending distance-learning high schools, she supports her brother. ("Change!")

Ryo Teranishi, who passed the entrance exam to high school but is frustrated that his grades are the lowest in his class, uses Supplementary as a place to study. He's taking out his stress on a drumming game at the arcade when a staff member from Supplementary comes along and suggests he attend a drumming class there. ("Growing Pains").

These stories vividly depict how these children who feel suffocated at school expand their world and see themselves and others in a different light when they attend Supplementary Garden, and we see that all children have potential regardless of their situation. (Doi)



Graduation Trip

卒業旅行 (Sotsugyo ryoko) | Text: KODEMARI Rui | Ill. TANJI Yoko | Kaiseisha | 2020 | 232pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-03-643220-2 | Ages: 13+ | *Band, America, Shooting incident*

Nana Harada, who is studying abroad at a high school in Pennsylvania, joins a band with her schoolmates, Chloe, Ithan, Nick, and Noel. They plan to go on a graduation trip to Woodstock, the site of a famous music festival. Nick is a year older than the others. Ithan and Chloe are going out together, while Noel is gay and in love with Ithan. Nana plays keyboard, and the band produces many original songs from the poems she writes. In the spring of her senior year, she goes back to Japan to prepare for entrance into a Japanese university. While she is away, Noel is shot and killed at an elementary school where he was performing as a volunteer. The story begins in the summer, one year after his death, when Nana visits America again. Chloe is now living in Manhattan, Ithan works in Hudson, and Nick lives in the town where they all went to high school. Nana visits each of them and learns that they are all struggling with guilt over Noel's death and the cruel rumors surrounding it. Nana and Nick visit the school where he died to discover the truth. Noel's mother's choice to forgive her son's killer helps them to overcome their grief and to find hope in the renewal of their friendship. Elements such as the song lyrics and a discussion at Nick's house concerning the death penalty are deftly woven through the story of Nana's journey, resulting in a harmonious blend of lyricism and logic. (Okuyama)



Dear Mr. "Punk's Not Dead"

拝啓 バンクスノットデッドさま (Haikai pankusu notto deddo-sama) | Text: ISHIKAWA Hirochika | Ill. NISHIKAWA Maiko | Kumon Shuppan | 2020 | 224pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-7743-3079-2 | Ages: 13+ | *Punk rock, Bands, Brothers*

Since childhood, first-year high school student Harumi has lived with his brother Migiya, who is two years younger. The two brothers do not know their father, and they also do not know where their mother lives or with whom, though she deposits money and comes home on the odd occasion. Harumi must work two part-time jobs, at a Chinese restaurant and a karaoke place, all while attending school, doing the housework, and looking after Migiya.

Due to the influence of a man named Shin, a childhood friend of their mother who still lives nearby, the brothers have grown up listening to punk rock and dream of forming their own band. Harumi would play base, and Migiya would sing. Harumi doubts he can afford to play in a band when he first starts high school, but when a classmate invites him to the pop music club and a university student at one of his jobs mentions looking for a bassist, he gradually begins to pursue music. Readers follow Harumi as he learns songs by The Clash, Bad Brains, and The Blue Hearts while connecting with various people. Through his encounters, Harumi learns that each seemingly "normal" person may actually be struggling with relationships, or have an amazing talent at guitar or rap. He also sees that despite not having been raised by his parents, he has been looked after by Shin and other adults. Above all, his sweetly innocent brother has supported him. This novel portrays a boy in his teens discovering the wider world. (Okuyama)

53



Borderless Caregiver: Alive or Not, I Support You

ボーダレス・ケアラー (Bodaresu keara) | Text: YAMAMOTO Etsuko | Ill. TAKENAMI Otoha | Rironsha | 2021 | 240pp | 19x14cm | ISBN978-4-652-20430-6 | Ages: 13+ | *University student, Romance, Life and death, Caregiving*

SEO Kaito is a university student whose mother asks him to stay with and support his grandmother, who has dementia, over a summer vacation. Every morning, Kaito's grandmother takes her deceased Shiba Inu dog named Mamezo on a walk, using a leash.

Walking along with her, Kaito offers to take the leash at one point—and Mamezo appears. That's not all: Kaito encounters his classmate Kosuke Shimada, who died in a car accident in the fall of their second year of high school, and he meets a junior-high girl in a uniform. The leash turns out to be a connection between Kaito and those on the borderline between life and the afterlife. Kaito nicknames the girl Sailor, and in talking with her, he realizes that those he's meeting have stayed too attached to life to cross to the afterlife. He decides to help them along as a "borderless caregiver." But is it better to cross to that world or stay in this one? Kaito becomes unable to decide and increasingly attached to Sailor. Investigating her past, he learns that she was in an accident at age fifteen and has been bedridden ever since; her real name is Natsu, and she is now twenty-two. When Kaito goes to the hospital to see her, she opens her eyes for the first time in seven years. After summer ends, Kaito remains with his grandmother and serves as a real caregiver for both her and Natsu. The end of this YA-appropriate book reveals Kaito's goodness and lingers in the heart. (Shiozaki)

54



My Diagonal Stitch: The Boy Who Loves Crafts and the Cute Newbie

ぼくのまつり縫い (Boku no matsurinui) | Text: KOBE Haruma | Ill. IDA Chiaki | Kaiseisha | 2020 | 192pp | 19x13cm | ISBN978-4-03-649150-6 | Ages: 13+ | *Crafts, Club activities, Friends, Gender*

Yuto Harimiya is in his first year of junior high. He initially joined the soccer team and hid that he enjoys handicrafts, but then he summoned his courage and switched to the sewing club. The only other members are both girls: the president, who is a second-year student, and Yuto's classmate Itoi. At their advisor's recommendation, the club members sell accessories they created over Spring Break at a flea market. There, a girl who Yuto first thought was a boy, due to her hair and clothes, buys a pouch; she also joins the club at the beginning of the next term. For some reason, though, she seems upset with Yuto.

When Ogura, the new joiner, goes out to buy supplies to sew costumes for the drama club's play, she runs into Yuto, and they end up going to the craft shop together. The shop's owner is an androgynous Gothic Lolita named Momo, and when Ogura sees him, she questions his appearance and calls it "weird." She and Yuto get into a fight. After that, Ogura sometimes skips meetings, and when the drama club suddenly alters its costume order, the sewing club president skips out as well. Yuto and Itoi struggle to repair the relationships in the club, and Yuto eventually comes to understand Ogura's feelings.

The second in a series, *My Diagonal Stitch* is named after a blind stitch that is used in sewing to make seams invisible. By breaking down stereotypes about what is "boyish" and "girlish," it refreshingly shows the importance of each person's individuality and interests. (Nogami)

55



Yashajin River

夜叉神川 (Yashajingawa) | Text: ANDO Miki | Ill. TANAKA Chisato | Kodansha | 2021 | 240pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-06-521852-5 | Ages: 13+ | *Demon, River, Friends, Life*

Yashajin is a people-eating deity that symbolizes the terrible demon-like feelings that lurk in people's hearts. This collection of five stories unfolds along "Yashajin River," beginning at its source and gradually heading downstream.

In the first story, "River Fishing," a boy gets invited fishing by Tsuji, a popular classmate at the cram school he started attending after entering junior high school. Tsuji abuses some wild creatures at the fishing spot, and when the main character tells him to stop, Tsuji says, "I will exterminate you!" When an eerie voice emanates from the river mist, Tsuji jumps into the river to escape, and the main character saves him from drowning. Tsuji says he has seen a ghost.

In the second story, "Blue Goldfish Bowl," a sixth-grader no longer able to go to school finds an old fishbowl in her bedroom, and she shuts the spirit of a school bully inside. In "Onigamori Shrine," a student prays at a shrine near a Yashajin River tributary for a friend's success auditioning for a theatre company—and curses a rival. In "Snowdrop," a boy and a dog stop an obstinate old man on a bench near the river from trying to die, as his wife has already done. In "The Last Shore," a boy living near Yashajin River discovers war's brutality as it manifested on the southern island of Okinawa. Thoughts that bloom in any human heart, from the wicked to the kind, are explored in detail with a hint of darkness in superb prose. (Nogami)

RECENT NONFICTION

56



Tale of The Moose

あるヘラジカの物語 (Aru herajika no hanashi) | Draft: HOSHINO Michio | Text/Ill. SUZUKI Mamoru | Asunaro Shobo | 2020 | 36pp | 26x28cm | ISBN978-4-7515-2967-6 | Ages: 3+ | *Wild animals, Battles, Life and death, Alaska*

In the Alaskan wilderness, a fierce battle unfolds between two male moose for control of their herd. When their antlers get tangled up and they collapse on the ground exhausted, some wolves attack. Then a brown bear turns up and drives the wolves away, stealing their prey. After it leaves, other wild animals appear one after another to help themselves, and lastly the birds peck off the remaining meat. As spring follows winter, an American lark nests in one of the moose's skulls. She lays her eggs and eventually the chicks fly away. Inspired by a photograph left by HOSHINO Michio, a photographer who lost his life in a brown bear attack, this touching picture book dramatically depicts how the lives of wild animals in nature intersect. (Nogami)

57



Do You Wonder About...the Wonders of Toilet Paper?

このかみななに? (Kono kami nani?) | Text/Ill. TANIUCHI Tsuneo | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2020 | 36pp | 18x30cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8580-8 | Ages: 3+ | *Toilet paper, Paper products*

This picture book is all about toilet paper, something that we use every day without giving it a second thought. With every turn of the page, we are presented with a surprising and fun photo—for example, nine elementary school students lined up in the schoolyard holding up a long extended roll of toilet paper. We learn about its excellent properties, such as being long, soft, fluffy, thin, strong, easily broken down when wet, and water-absorbent. At the end of the book, a section entitled "Toilet Paper Secrets" covers ten specific topics of interest, including the time it takes to dissolve in water, which is determined by the Japan Industrial Standards for manufactured goods; the differences with overseas toilet paper; the raw materials used; and its history. (Sakaguchi)

58



Protecting the Rails: Doctor Yellow

せんろをまもる! ドクターイエロー (Senro o mamoru! dokuta iero) | Text/Ill. KAMATA Ayumi | Shogakukan | 2021 | 32pp | 19x27cm | ISBN978-4-09-725109-5 | Ages: 3+ | *Shinkansen, Safety, Work*

Children love the shinkansen, but Doctor Yellow, the car that maintains the bullet train tracks, is the star. Once every ten days, Doctor Yellow speeds along the Sanyo line, covering the 1,175 kilometers between Tokyo and Hakata in southern Japan on the island of Kyushu. It can travel at up to 270 kilometers per hour and carries no passengers. The book depicts a day in Doctor Yellow's life, while at the same time introducing the jobs performed by such cars as the ballast exchange car and the multi-tie tamper. A fold-out illustration reveals Doctor Yellow's interior, showing how it can single-handedly undertake a variety of maintenance work. The book offers a fun peek at an unusual train, casting light on many jobs that are done behind the scenes. (Sakaguchi)

59



Kitchan Who Befriended an Elephant

ゾウとともだちになったきっちゃん (Zo to tomodachi ni natta Ki-chan) | Text: IRIE Naoko | Ill. ABE Hiroshi | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2020 | 48pp | 23x20cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8565-5 | Ages: 3+ | *Elephant, Zoo, Gesture*

Kitchan regularly visits the zoo with her father where she is particularly attracted by the elephants. She learns to tell them apart by their faces and physiques and notices how they all swish their tail when they're enjoying good food. The zoo-keeper teaches her how elephants communicate, and Kitchan bonds with a female from Thailand. One day, Kitchan visits after a long absence. Something seems different. Just then, she sees her elephant friend beckoning to her. She wants to show Kitchan her baby. By the end of the book, the reader will want to go to the zoo and observe firsthand the gestures and habits of elephants. The book draws from field observations and research on elephant communication. (Sakaguchi)

60



What Kind of Fruit Behind the Window?

まどのむこうのくだものなあに? (Mado no muko no kudamono nani?) | Text/Ill. ARAI Maki | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2020 | 36pp | 27x20cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8568-6 | Ages: 3+ | *Fruit, Windows*

A small square "window" in a page reveals part of a fruit. Turn the page, and an illustration of the whole fruit appears. Turn the page after that, and see a cross section of the same fruit cut in half. The fruits featured in this book are strawberry, melon, pineapple, watermelon, mikan orange, apple, kiwi, and pomegranate. Because one small part of each fruit is shown before the whole, it is possible to discover beauty and magic in the details our eyes usually miss. Created with plenty of time and detail, the illustrations are realistic yet vibrant—and delicious-looking. This book can also be enjoyed back-to-front and as a fun fruit quiz. (Sakuma)

61



Welcome to the Sushi Restaurant! From Living Creature to Food

おすしやさんにいらっしやい! (Osushiya san ni irasshai!) | Text: OKADA Daisuke | Photos: ENDO Hiroshi | Iwasaki Shoten | 2021 | 44pp | 22x29cm | ISBN978-4-265-83083-1 | Ages: 7+ | *Fish, Food, Life, Workshops*

The author of this book runs a sushi restaurant, and here presents photos of a workshop with eight children (from preschool through elementary school) in which he prepares fish including alfonso, conger eel, and squid, to make sushi. First, the children examine the whole fish, closely observing the fins, eyes, and inside the mouths, and imagining how they lived in the sea. He then removes the stomachs, contents of the intestines, and ink bags, and demonstrates the different ways of cutting, grilling, and seasoning the fish. Finally, they all eat the sushi together. The children's murmured reactions add to the sense of being present in the workshop, and we can share the sensation of the lives of these creatures becoming part of our own bodies. (Okuyama)

62



Akbar Loves School!

学校が大好き アクバルくん (Gakko ga daisuki Akubarukun) | Text/Photos: NAGAKURA Hiromi | Alice-kan | 2021 | 40pp | 27x22cm | ISBN978-4-7520-0980-1 | Ages: 7+ | *School, First grade, Learning, Pencils*

Akbar is in the first grade of elementary school. His school is located high in the mountains, and many children have to walk over an hour to get there. There are 16 students in his class and the new school year has just started. They have language, math, and Koran classes. Akbar writes down words the teacher dictates in his notebook with his precious pencil, and solves math problems counting with his fingers. He plucks up the courage to raise his hand in math class, even though he isn't too confident. This picture book shows us a day in the life of a boy at elementary school in Afghanistan. The abundant photographs vividly capture Akbar's facial expressions, conveying his curiosity and the sheer joy of learning. (Shiozaki)

63



Icebugs

がろあむし (Garoamushi) | Text/Ill. TATENO Hiroshi | Kaiseisha | 2020 | 40pp | 29x24cm | ISBN978-4-03-437080-3 | Ages: 7+ | *Insects, Metamorphosis, Underground, Natural environment*

This book provides dramatic and detailed description of the eight-year life cycle of the icebug. Since these small insects live beneath the rocks that fall from crumbling cliffs, we are also made aware of the impact of environmental changes on nature during time. Over the course of a year, the transparent white larva emerges from a tiny black egg the size of a sesame seed and grows by feeding on small insects underground. It is interesting to see the various creatures that live in the microscopic world of darkness depicted in minute detail. Fifty photographs of these creatures are included at the end of the book. An excellent and ambitious picture book that questions human behavior from the insect's point of view. (Nogami)

*The Japanese name for the icebug is garoa-mushi, from the genus *Galloisiana*, named after the French diplomat Galois who discovered it in Japan in 1914.

64



Scrolls of Frolicking Animals: The Origin of Japanese Comedy

これが鳥獣戯画でござる (Kore ga choju giga de gozaru) | Text: YUKI Masako | Shogakukan | 2021 | 40pp | 27x22cm | ISBN978-4-09-727709-5 | Ages: 7+ | *Manga, Animals, Masterpiece, Play*

The *Chou jinbutsu giga* is a set of picture scrolls which dates back to the twelfth century. Not only are the scrolls designated national treasures, but many consider them to be the origin of Japanese manga. Based on the first scroll which follows the antics of anthropomorphic animals, the book focuses on a comical scene of a rabbit and a frog sumo wrestling and how that came about. Although the originals have no text, the book transforms each scene into a dramatic story. In the appendix, all the scenes from the first scroll are introduced, followed by an explanation of the contents of the second and third scroll as well. The humorous touch allows readers to fully experience the entertainment value of these ancient scrolls. (Nogami)

65



The Red Fire of Sakurajima

桜島の赤い火 (Sakurajima no akai hi) | Text/Photos: MIYATAKE Takehito | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2021 | 44pp | 26x20cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8611-9 | Ages: 7+ | *Volcano, Sakurajima, Photos*

Sakurajima is an active volcano in Kagoshima at the southern end of Kyushu. A postcard photo of its crater glowing red at night inspired the author, a photographer, to capture it on film. He shot the volcano from various locations and angles for the best picture of the red crater against the darkness. This photo picture book also includes shots of it erupting, spewing sparks into the night sky, and of volcanic lightning against a plume of smoke and ash. The text describes the reactions of children to his photos, the mechanism of volcanic eruptions, and the history of Sakurajima. The dynamic images make the reader feel that Earth is alive. (Okuyama)

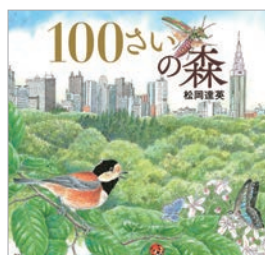
66



A Calcium Tale that Starts with Teeth

はからはじまるカルシウムのはなし (Ha kara hajimaru karushiumu no hanashi) | Text: ISAWA Naoko | Ill. Daisuke-Hongorian | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2021 | 44pp | 20x20cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8594-5 | Ages: 7+ | *Teeth, Calcium, Natural cycles*

This picture book introduces the cycling of calcium through different forms here on Earth, in a story that begins with a boy losing a tooth and ends with a girl growing a new one. When the boy buries his tooth in some soil, the calcium becomes part of a komatsuna plant, making its leaves crispy. When a snail eats the leaves, their calcium becomes part of its shell. Then, after a snail-eating beetle eats the snail, the calcium in the leftover shell dissolves in the earth and finds its way into Japanese beech tree leaves. From there, it travels into deer antlers, coral, parrotfish poop, and eventually seaweed; after a girl eats the seaweed, it helps to form her tooth. This book's sophisticated design makes the concept clear. (Doi)



The Hundred-Year-Old Forest

100さいの森 (Hyakusai no mori) | Text/Ill. MATSUOKA Tatsuhide | Spv. ITO Yasuhiko | Kodansha | 2020 | 36pp | 25x27cm | ISBN978-4-06-521124-3 | Ages: 7+ | Tokyo, Meiji period (1868–1912), Forest, Living creatures

The lush forest surrounding the Meiji Shrine near Harajuku, Tokyo, was planted by humans a century ago. In this book, a chinquapin tree tells the story of the forest. Initially, broadleaf trees such as beech and oak were placed between tall conifers; eventually, the fast-growing broadleaf trees took over, and the conifers toppled and decayed. Small organisms such as insects and mushrooms took up residence at trees' bases, and birds, raccoons and other animals began to thrive in this rich forest. The beautiful, true-to-life illustrations portray growth and change and prompt consideration of the forest's and humanity's future. Detailed end matter written by the supervising editor fleshes out Meiji Shrine's history. (Okuyama)



Fuki's Encyclopedia of Idea Toys

ふきさんのアイデアおもちゃ大百科 (Fuki-san no aidea omocha daihyakka) | Text: SATO Fuki | Kaiseisha | 2020 | 96pp | 24x19cm | ISBN978-4-03-524210-9 | Ages: 7+ | Playing, Making, Toys

A professional modeler and mother of two boys introduces more than forty toys that she made while playing with her sons. All are simple to create using familiar materials. Stick a drawing of a ninja to some clear plastic and place it on a train window, and the ninja runs! Draw parts of a face on stacked paper cups, and move the cups to make the face transform! Supplies and steps to construct the toys, as well as ideas for deepening and extending children's play with them are included. The toys leave room for children's own innovations, so their play may go on and on! Ideas for fun in the house, the tub, outdoors, and even without toys are included, making the book useful anytime, anywhere. (Sakaguchi)



Hear the Sound of the Rhinoceros Beetle: 11 Months Underground

カブトムシの音がきこえる (Kabutomushi no oto ga kikoeru) | Text: KOJIMA Wataru | Ill. HIRONO Kenichi | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2021 | 44pp | 26x20cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8615-7 | Ages: 9+ | Rhinoceros beetles, Larvae, Pupae

This picture book covers the 11 months from the time rhinoceros beetle eggs are laid in the soil through the stages of larva and pupa, until they emerge from the ground. Realistic drawings and detailed explanations show the small larvae silently eating leaf mold, the fat larvae hibernating under the snow, and the process of creating egg-shaped cocoons and becoming pupae. The book also shares interesting research findings, such as how larvae form clusters attracted by the carbon dioxide they each emit, and the way pupae protect themselves from outside enemies by hitting their backs against the wall of the cocoon, causing it to vibrate. Nature's mechanisms for protecting life are impressive. (Fukumoto)



Rhinoceros Are Disappearing from the World

この世界からサイがいなくなってしまう (Kono sekai kara sai ga inaku natte shimau) | Text: MITAMURA Taro | Gakken | 2021 | 120pp | 22x16cm | ISBN978-4-05-205327-6 | Ages: 9+ | Africa, Rhinoceros, Environment, Extinction

Rhinoceros are hunted by poachers for their horns, and if things continue this way they could be extinct within twenty years. The author is a reporter from Japan's national broadcaster NHK who covered the story in South Africa. With vivid prose and photos, she tells us how people are trying to prevent poaching and protect the rhinos, how they are protecting and raising rhino orphans, why poachers are so rampant, and how the Black Mamba, a women-only ranger unit that doesn't carry weapons, works to prevent poaching by gaining the trust of local people. She draws readers attention to the fact that the earth does not belong only to humans, and that various species support each other. (Sakuma)



Diet Member with ALS Goes to the House of Representatives in a Wheelchair

全身マヒのALS議員 車いすで国会へ (Zenshin mahi no ALS giin, kurumaisu de kokkai e) | Text: FUNAGO Yasuhiko and others | Kodomo no Miraisha | 2021 | 32pp | 27x19cm | ISBN978-4-86412-185-9 | Ages: 9+ | ALS, Diet (Japanese Parliament), Inclusive education

Mr. Yasuhiko Funago, who is fully paralyzed due to the incurable disease ALS, was elected to the Diet in 2019 and goes to work in a wheelchair. This picture book shows us what sort of person he is, looking at his career, his life, how he communicates without a voice, what kind of support he receives, and the things he enjoys. It also explains how the Diet building has been made barrier-free thanks to a number of Diet members using wheelchairs, and the inclusive education (where children with and without disabilities grow up together) Mr. Funago hopes to implement in society during his time in the Diet. (Sakuma)



The Secret of the Flying Water Flea

空を飛ぶミジンコのなぞ (Sora o tobu mijinko no nazo) | Text/Photos: HOSHI Teruyuki | Shonen Shashin Shinbunsha | 2020 | 64pp | 19x27cm | ISBN978-4-87981-726-6 | Ages: 9+ | Water flea, Observation, Photographs

The author, a wildlife photographer, introduces the ecology of water fleas, which in Japanese are called mijinko meaning "dust child" or "specks". The author observes water fleas growing in rice paddies, streams and school swimming pools to unravel their secrets, including how their tiny bodies are formed, where they live, and what they eat. When their habitat starts to dry up, water fleas produce ephippia, which are durable dry-season eggs. These may be carried on the wind or by birds to distant places where they generate new life. The book begins with the author seeking answers to certain questions. Through methodical observation, the author reveals the workings of nature along with the basics of scientific research. (Fukumoto)

73



Creating a Little Satoyama: A Butterfly Garden

小さな里山をつくる (Chiisana satoyama o tsukuru)
| Text/Photos: IMAMORI Mitsuhiro | Alice-kan | 2021
| 88pp | 29x22cm | ISBN978-4-7520-0977-1 | Ages: 9+
| *Satoyama (mixed forest and farmland), Butterflies, Flower, Photograph*

The author's work as a photographer focuses on the relationship between nature and humans. He spent thirty years transforming 300 square meters of terraced rice paddy at the foot of Mount Hiei in Kyoto into a satoyama, an area of mixed woodlots, wetland and farmland. Through photographs, he presents how he raised a diverse range of flowers that attract various butterfly species throughout the year. The relationship between the butterflies and their host plants, as well as the rich diversity of butterfly ecology, are illustrated with vivid images. The text conveys the author's tender gaze as he responds to the miracle of these small lives and savors nature's beauty through the changing seasons. (Fukumoto)

74



Question Box: The What and Why of Animals

動物なぜなに質問箱 (Dobutsu naze nani shitsumon bako) | Text: KOSUGE Masao | Ill. ABE Hiroshi | Kodansha | 2021 | 63pp | 24x19cm | ISBN978-4-06-516872-1 | Ages: 9+ | *Animals, Ecology, Zoo*

The Asahiya Zoo in Hokkaido is Japan's northernmost zoo. Once threatened with closure, it was revived with creative interactive exhibits. In this book, the former director and the zoo keeper who were responsible for its revival respond to ten questions from children. Their answers develop in ways that both entertain and deepen the reader's understanding of animal ecology. For example, when asked how giraffes sleep, they cover everything from the amount of sleep giraffes need to human sleeping positions and bed bacteria. The children ask such things as why the naked mole rat lives so long and why male lions don't hunt. The answers all contain the message that we too are nature's creatures. The illustrations demonstrate a keen eye for observation, lovingly rendering each animal's characteristics. (Sakaguchi)

75



Namahage Ogres

なまはげ (Namahage) | Text: IKEDA Makiko | Ill. HAYAKAWA Junko | Chobunsha | 2020 | 36pp | 27x22cm | ISBN978-4-8113-2821-8 | Ages: 9+ | *Traditional event, Intangible cultural asset, Ogre, God*

This picture book relates the origins of Namahage, a UNESCO intangible cultural heritage from Oga, Akita prefecture, in which men dressed as ogres go from house to house on New Year's Eve to warn residents to work hard. Although they look terrifying, the Namahage are considered guardian deities that bring good fortune. Once a year, they come down from the snow-covered mountains to visit each home, frightening naughty children and scolding laggards into behaving. This dramatic tale of a family of Namahage who come to Oga and turn the forest into farmland for the villagers is illustrated with compelling woodblock prints on a black base. Included is a thorough, easy-to-read explanation of the origins and meaning of this fascinating tradition. (Nogami)

76



In a 2-Square-Meter World

二平方メートルの世界で (Ni heho metoru no sekai de)
| Text: MAEDA Mion | Ill. HATA Koshiro | Shogakukan | 2021 | 40pp | 27x22cm | ISBN978-4-09-725104-0 | Ages: 9+ | *Illness, Children, Language*

This picture book is based on an essay by Mion, an eight-year-old girl, which won the Grand Prize in the Children's Non-Fiction Contest sponsored by Kita-Kyushu City. The main character lives in Hokkaido and is hospitalized several times a year for tests and treatment. Her world is her two-square-meter hospital room. She suffers from the burden she causes her family, the painful medical tests, fasting, and having to give up things like participating in school events. One day, however, she discovers messages written on the underside of her hospital bed table. Things like: "Hang in there!" and "Another operation – this sucks!" She realizes that she's not alone. The frank narrative and gentle illustrations make it clear that, although lonely, the lives of children suffering from illness are also precious. (Okuyama)

77



Picture Book of Japanese Garden

日本庭園を楽しむ絵本 (Nihonteien o tanoshimu ehon)
| Text/Ill. ONO Yayoi | Asunaro Shobo | 2021 | 48pp | 21x22cm | ISBN978-4-7515-2972-0 | Ages: 9+ | *Japanese gardens, Seasons, Nature, Japanese culture*

The Japanese have always had an appreciation for the beauty of nature and the changing seasons, delighting in an array of flowering plants and landscapes. Traditional Japanese garden designs, which reproduce scenes from nature, along with the culture of admiring them, developed from this pursuit of natural beauty. In this story, an elderly Japanese man introduces a French photographer to Japanese gardens, describing their origins and the different types. Line drawings in fine ball pen and soft colors illustrate how to enjoy such gardens, the Japanese custom of connecting with nature, and the mindfulness with which Japanese people maintain these gardens. The book includes a map introducing famous gardens in different parts of Japan. (Shiozaki)

78



Living in Fukushima: Rin-chan's Ten Years—Home, School, and Town Change, But Life Goes On

福島に生きる凛ちゃんの10年 (Fukushima ni ikiru Rin-chan no junen) | Text/Photos: TOYODA Naomi | Nobunkyo | 2021 | 36pp | 27x22cm | ISBN978-4-540-20169-1 | Ages: 9+ | *Fukushima, Nuclear disaster*

Rin was three when the March 2011 nuclear disaster hit her town of Iitate, Fukushima prefecture. Due to unhealthy levels of radiation, she and her family went to live in temporary housing in a neighboring town. She attended preschool in a prefab building, started school in a temporary school, and together with her family, she received regular thyroid exams. Her family then grew and moved to a house in Fukushima City. When the evacuation order for Iitate was lifted in 2017 but some dangers remained, Rin commuted by bus to a new Iitate school. This photo picture book traces her growth and the changes of a decade. May children exposed to radiation in Fukushima never be forgotten. Part of the series *Nonetheless, It's My Home*. (Sakuma)



If They Keep Disappearing, Will They Vanish? Japan's Salamanders

日本サンショウウオ探検記 (Nihon sanshouo tankenki) | Text/Photos: SEKI Shintaro | Shonen Shashin Shinbunsha | 2021 | 56pp | 19x27cm | ISBN978-4-87981-734-1 | Ages: 9+ | *Salamanders, Amphibians, Habitat, Diversity, Environmental pollution*

Forty-five species of salamander are known to live in Japan, and all appear in clear photographs in this book. Recent genetic research shows that salamanders previously thought to be the same species are, in fact, different species, though they may live only one mountain away from each other. Japan's rich aquatic environments have supported this variety. In the book, the habitat for each species is shown on a map, underlining how narrow its range is. As amphibians, salamanders need both the water and the land where they live to be preserved, and they can easily be pushed to extinction. Close-ups of salamanders' winsome faces, which humans don't often get to see, urge us to protect our environment now. (Sakaguchi)



If We Didn't Have Toilets...

もしもトイレがなかったら (Moshimo toire ga nakattara) | Text: KATO Atsushi | Ill. SAKURAI Atsuko | Shonen Shashin Shinbunsha | 2020 | 148pp | 22x16cm | ISBN978-4-87981-728-0 | Ages: 9+ | *Toilets, Disaster, Equipment, Health*

When a disaster occurs and temporary shelters are needed, the first problem is always toilets. This book creatively uses photos and diagrams to show how manhole toilets, portable toilets and others can be installed and used. It also shows how home toilet alternatives can be prepared in case of an emergency. Seven tips for preparedness are shown in concrete detail. In addition, stories of how nightsoil was used in the Edo period (1603-1868) and color photos of interesting toilets from around the world convey the idea that "no matter where humans are found, toilets are needed." This book shows the importance of toilets, which we normally use without a second thought, and offers much information to preserve life and health. (Sakaguchi)



Making Mountains: The Tokyo Chainsaws Challenge

山をつくる (Yama o tsukuru) | Text: SUGA Seiko | Komine Shoten | 2020 | 208pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-338-08165-8 | Ages: 9+ | *Lumberjacks, Forestry, Young people, Lifestyles*

Tokyo Chainsaws is a company of modern lumberjacks based in Hinohara village on the western edge of Tokyo. The company's foresters both maintain company-owned forest and help maintain the forests of Tokyo. The author embedded with them for two years and describes their work in detail, from felling trees in winter, to planting trees in spring, to thinning undergrowth in summer, to removing branches in fall. Their tools are also introduced. The foresters are all young people, including women, who try to create a sustainable forestry industry without relying on national or regional subsidies. They have fans, including a club to enjoy the growth of planted trees over thirty years! This book prompts readers to consider the future of forestry, human lifestyles, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. (Sakaguchi)



What is Washi Paper? Vols.1-4

和紙ってなに? 全4巻 (Washi te nani?) | Edt. *Washi te nani?* Editorial Team | Rironsha | 2020 | 48pp each | 29x22cm | ISBN978-4-652-10257-2 | Ages: 9+ | *Washi paper, Traditional industries, Technology*

This series of four books introduces Japanese washi paper using photographs. The first two books, *Washi of Eastern Japan* and *Washi of Western Japan*, show the history, raw materials, production techniques, uses, products, and features of papers made in some 56 regions around the country. The regions' different washi-related toys, festivals, and ingenuity are also celebrated. The third book, *Basics of Washi*, introduces how to make washi paper and how it differs from other papers. The fourth book, *Washi in Everyday Life*, shows how washi can serve a ribbon-like function in decorative paper cords and traditional fire-works, as well as in newer products such as masking tape. Each volume in the series uses beautiful photos and clean layout to showcase the wonders of washi. (Sakaguchi)



Japanese Broth: Blessings of the Sea 1—Konbu

和食のだしは海のめぐみ1 昆布 (Washoku no dashi wa umi no megumi 1-konbu) | Text/Photos: ABE Hideki | Spv. Nihon Konbu Kyokai | Kaiseisha | 2020 | 40pp | 29x24cm | ISBN978-4-03-436810-7 | Ages: 9+ | *Konbu, Japanese cuisine, Sea, Hokkaido*

In 2013, UNESCO designated traditional Japanese cuisine as an intangible cultural heritage. This book is the first of three about dashi, or broth, which is the basis of many Japanese dishes. While this book focuses on konbu seaweed in dashi, the next focuses on katsuobushi (dried bonito) and the third on niboshi (dried sardines). Konbu as a seaweed in the ocean, the ins-and-outs of konbu harvesting and processing, types of konbu, how to make konbu broth, ways to eat konbu, the symbolic use of konbu on festive occasions, the influence of environmental destruction on konbu—all are introduced in words and pictures. In nature, konbu protects small fish and serves as food for sea urchins and others. The explanation of how drying brings out its savory flavors is fascinating. (Doi)



The Birth of the Chibanian Age

チバニアン誕生 (Chibanian tanjo) | Text: OKADA Makoto | Poplar | 2021 | 224pp | 20x14cm | ISBN978-4-591-17034-2 | Ages: 11+ | *Geomagnetism, stratum, geoscience, scientific research*

The magnetic poles of the earth have reversed several times in the past. The cause is still unknown. Recently, traces of a magnetic reversal were discovered in the earth's stratum from 770,000 years ago in Chiba, east of Tokyo. As a result, that stage in chronostratigraphy was named Chibanian. The author follows the thrilling race between Italy and Japan to approve and ratify the name, introducing geological research and the proposal to the International Union of Geological Sciences. Filled with illustrations and photographs and designed to be read from any chapter, this book conveys the fascination of geoscience through the phenomenon of the reversal of the earth's magnetic field. The author also introduces other books for those who want to learn more. (Sakaguchi)

85



Animals Teach Us about Life in the Ocean

動物たちが教えてくれる海の中の暮らし (Dobutsu tachi ga oshiete kureru umi no naka no kurashi) | Text: SATO Katsufumi | Ill. KIUCHI Tatsuro | Fukuinkan Shoten | 2020 | 44pp | 26x20cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8585-3 | Ages: 11+ | *Marine organisms, Behavior, Scientific research*

Studying the behavior of marine life is challenging. This book introduces new findings using a method called biologging, in which small recorders are attached to animals for study, and features Weddell seals and king penguins in Antarctica, and sperm whales around the Ogasawara Islands. It explains how these animals have evolved not only in terms of the speed and depth to which they dive, how they swim, and the routes they take, but also in terms of the way they dive to feed most efficiently. Accompanied by illustrations depicting ocean depth in different shades of blue, with frame-by-frame images of the way animals swim, these detailed explanations tell us about discoveries made in a world we cannot see for ourselves. (Sakaguchi)

88



IKEGAMI Akira Thinks with You: A Future without War

池上彰の君と考える戦争のない未来 (Ikegami Akira no kimi to kangaeru senso no nai mirai) | Text: IKEGAMI Akira | Rironsha | 2021 | 320pp | 19x13cm | ISBN978-4-652-20365-1 | Ages: 13+ | *War, Nuclear weapons, Pacifist constitution*

This book provides a solid overview of war, especially modern wars, including: what war is; the history, causes, and types of war; Japan's wars in Asia; the rules under international law; and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Twenty-four text boxes throughout the book provide simple, easy-to-understand explanations of specific terms such as the Strategic Defense Initiative and the Zero fighter. The author also encourages us to take action, with statements like "War is started by human beings... which means human beings can stop it," and "Even small amounts of power can add up to a big power." Readers can join him in considering how we can ensure that the people's wish to eliminate war from the world does not end up being just a wish. (Sakaguchi)

86



I Love Dung Beetles! Chasing Insects that Eat Poo

フン虫に夢中 (Funchu ni muchu) | Text: IDOKI Eri | Comment: NAKAMURA Keiichi | Kumon Shuppan | 2020 | 144pp | 22x16cm | ISBN978-4-7743-3075-4 | Ages: 11+ | *Dung beetles, Museum, Interests*

In 2018, NAKAMURA Keiichi opened a museum in Nara that displays specimens of dung beetles. The beetles roll animal feces into balls and push them to their nests in an impressive "handstand" position. Nakamura first encountered these insects in middle school and became entranced, observing and collecting them for years. After getting a job, working for a few decades and raising his children, he left his job in his early fifties and opened the museum. This book not only introduces the dung beetle in fascinating detail, but it also tells the story of a young man holding onto his interests and realizing his dream. The museum director's own commentary appears at the end. (Fukumoto)

89



Out and About with Professor Getcho: Exploring Nature in Okinawa

ゲッチョ先生と行く沖縄自然探検 (Getcho sensei to iku Okinawa shizen tanken) | Text: MORIGUCHI Mitsuru | Iwanami Shoten | 2021 | 256pp | 18x11cm | ISBN978-4-00-500936-7 | Ages: 13+ | *Okinawa, Organisms, Diversity, Scientific research*

This book is set during summer vacation when a brother and sister from Tokyo go to visit their uncle in Okinawa, Japan's southernmost prefecture, and are introduced to the charms of nature as they travel around the islands of Okinawa, Yonaguni, Ishigaki, Iriomote, and Miyako. The author's hand-drawn illustrations are powerfully realistic, depicting not only protected species like the Okinawa rail and the Iriomote wild cat, but also various plants, insects, birds, dugongs, and even animal bones. The pictures capture the ecosystems occupied by a wide variety of creatures, vividly conveying the richness of nature. The book includes an index of over 350 life forms, making it easy to find what you are looking for. This is a great way to learn about the charms of Okinawa. (Sakaguchi)

87



The Red Dragonfly That Unites Then and Now

万葉と令和をつなぐアキアカネ (Manyo to reiwa o tsunagu akiakane) | Text/Photos: YAMAGUCHI Susumu | Iwasaki Shoten | 2020 | 152pp | 22x16cm | ISBN978-4-265-08319-0 | Ages: 11+ | *Red dragonfly, Nature, Coexistence*

The autumn darter is a red dragonfly beloved in Japan since Manyo times (late seventh to late eighth century). Though it used to be found all over, the dragonfly's numbers have greatly decreased. But in some rice fields in Kashiwazaki city, Niigata prefecture, autumn darters were found to be thriving. This turned out to be because the farmer, Tsunezo Uchiyama, believed in the soil and plants and did not apply any chemical fertilizers; autumn darters need a healthy, natural place to live. As a photographer who specializes in insects, the author of this book uses prolific images to elicit affection for nature and help readers understand the need for coexistence. (Shiozaki)

90



Gorillas Taught Me Everything That Is Important in Life

人生で大事なことはみんなゴリラから教わった (Jinsei de daiji na koto wa minna gorira kara oshowatta) | Text: YAMAGUCHI Juichi | Ienohikari | 2020 | 224pp | 19x13cm | ISBN978-4-259-54773-8 | Ages: 13+ | *Gorilla, Scientific research, Lifeways*

The author, an international primatologist who spent 40 years researching gorillas, presents his thoughts on life and on being human. The ten chapters cover such topics as his first encounter with gorillas and the lessons he has learned from them, and explores how we should live. The author lived among gorillas in an African jungle where he noticed that they peer into each other's faces to preserve equality and peace in their social group. He introduces their approach to raising the young, male-female relationships, conflict, and friendship, as well as the differences between gorillas and other primates. The book serves as an encouraging message for teenagers struggling to communicate with others, offering insights on how to live. (Sakaguchi)



The Hans Christian Andersen Award

Winners



KADONO Eiko 1935- **2018 Author Award**

Born in Tokyo, KADONO Eiko moved to Brazil for two years when she was 25, and based on her experiences there she wrote her first book. Since then she has written many books for children of several generations. Her chapter book *Majo no takkyubin* (Kiki's Delivery Service), written in 1984, won a number of prizes and was included on the IBBY Honour List. This story was adapted into a wildly popular animated film by MIYAZAKI Hayao. Kadono has been decorated by the Emperor of Japan for her significant contributions to children's literature.



UEHASHI Nahoko 1962- **2014 Author Award**

Born in Tokyo, UEHASHI Nahoko researched indigenous people in Australia for her PhD in cultural anthropology. Her literary debut came in 1989, when her first book won an award that brought her into the spotlight. In 1996, she began to write her historical fantasy series *Moribito* (Guardian), which became a huge hit and received several literature awards in and outside of Japan, including the IBBY Honour List and the Batchelder Award in the USA. Her series *The Beast Player* is now out in the USA and the UK.



MADO Michio 1909-2014 **1994 Author Award**

MADO Michio was born in Tokuyama. When he was a small child, his family left for Taiwan, leaving him behind with his grandfather. He began to write poetry at the age of 19. In 1934, two of his poems were recognized by KITAHARA Hakushu, the most respected poet of the time. This marked the beginning of Mado's career as a creator of nursery rhymes, songs and poems for children. *The Animals*, co-published in the USA and Japan as a bilingual book, was translated by then Empress Michiko of Japan.



ANNO Mitsumasa 1926-2020 **1984 Illustrator Award**

Born in Tsuwano, a village located in a valley surrounded by mountains, ANNO Mitsumasa developed a strong desire to experience places beyond those mountains while growing up. This is reflected in his books. He taught art in elementary school for ten years; his first two picture books reflect his love of playing with visual perception, and his drawings, often compared to Escher, not only abound with visual trickery and illusions but also display a playful sense of humour.



AKABA Suekichi 1910-1990 **1980 Illustrator Award**

Born in Tokyo, AKABA Suekichi emigrated to Manchuria at the age of 21. He worked in industry and began to paint while still there. He was awarded special recognition three times at the Manchurian National Art Exhibition. After returning to Japan at the age of 36, Akaba mastered painting techniques on his own; he published his first picture book in 1961. His influences include traditional Japanese painting and Felix Hoffmann.

These authors and illustrators, among the finest creators of Japanese children's literature, were all nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Award. Five were named winners.

Nominees since 2000



ARAI Ryoji
1956-
2022 Illustrator



CHO Shinta
1927-2005
1998, 2000 Illustrator



HAYASHI Akiko
1945-
2008, 2010 Illustrator



ISHII Momoko
1907-2008
2002 Author



IWASE Joko
1950-
2022 Author



KAKO Satoshi
1926-2018
2012 Illustrator



KANZAWA Toshiko
1924-
2000, 2006 Author



KATAYAMA Ken
1940-
2014, 2016 Illustrator



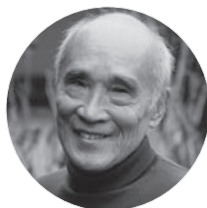
NASU Masamoto
1942-2021
2012 Author



OHTA Daihachi
1918-2016
1970, 2002-2006 Illustrator



SATO Satoru
1928-2017
2004 Author



TANIYAMA Shuntaro
1931-
2008, 2010 Author



TASHIMA Seizo
1940-
2018, 2020 Illustrator



TOMIYASU Yoko
1959-
2020 Author

Japanese Books Selected for the IBBY Honour List

JBBY has selected books for three categories (writing/illustration/translation) of the IBBY Honour List every two years since 1996. Since 2008, JBBY has given these books the JBBY Award.

Writing



Writing 2018
FURUUCHI Kazue
Hula Boys
Furadan
Komine Shoten



Writing 2010
HAMANO Kyoko
Fusion
Fuyjon
Kodansha



Writing 2004
UEHASHI Nahoko
Guardian of the God
Kami no moribito
Kaiseisha



Writing 1998
OKADA Jun
The Stories of the Kosoado Woods
Kosoado no mori no monogatari
Rironsha



Writing 2022
HANAGATA Mitsuru
Tokujiro and I
Tokujiro to boku
Rironsha



Writing 2016
IWASE Joko
Since the New One Came
Atarashii ko ga kite
Iwasaki Shoten



Writing 2008
TAKADONO Hoko
Let's Be Frrrrrriends
Otomodasa ni narimasho
Froebel-kan



Writing 2002
TOMIYASU Yoko
Mokko in Mount Yamamba
Yamamba yama no Mokko tachi
Fukuinkan Shoten



Writing 1996
ITO Hiroshi
Hurrah, I'm a Monkey
Osaru ni naru hi
Kodansha



Writing 2020
NASHIYA Arie
Sensing Your Presence
Kimi no sonzai o ishiki suru
Poplar



Writing 2014
MAHARA Mito
Where the Steel Sparks Fly
Tetsu no shibuki ga haneru
Kodansha



Writing 2006
OGIWARA Noriko
The Tale of the Flute Player
Fujinhisho
Tokuma Shoten



Writing 2000
ITO Yu
A Bridge to the Other World
Oni no hashi
Fukuinkan Shoten



Writing 1994
IWASE Joko
Tanikawa Said It's Not a Lie
Uso janaiyo to Tanikawa kun wa itta
PHP Institute

Illustration



Illustration 2022
TASHIMA Seizo
Gotcha!
Tsukamaeta
Kaiseisha



Illustration 2020
TAMURA Shigeru
Night Sounds
Yoru no oto
Kaiseisha



Illustration 2018
SUZUKI Koji
Dome Story
Domu gatari
Text: Arthur Binard
Tamagawa University Press



Illustration 2016
YOSHIDA Hisanori
The Ranch of Hope in Fukushima
Kibo no bokujo
Text: MORI Eto
Iwasaki Shoten



Illustration 2014
ABE Hiroshi
To the New World
Shin sekai e
Kaiseisha



Illustration 2012
INOUE Yosuke
**Hats
Boshi**
East Press



Illustration 2010
ITO Hideo
Ushio
Ushio
Billiken Shuppan



Illustration 2008
ARAI Ryoji
A Sound of Taiyo-Organ
Taiyo orugan
Kaiseisha



Illustration 2006
CHO Shinta
**The Story of the Earthworm
Named Ossan**
Mimizu no Ossan
Doshinsha



Illustration 2004
SAITO Takao
**The Frogs and the Cat:
Story Inspired by Heike
Monogatari**
Kaeru no Heike monogatari
Text: HINO Kazunari
Fukuinkan Shoten



Illustration 2002
CHO Shinta
**The Magical Fun of
the Long-nosed Ogre**
Tengu no hauchiwa
Text: KAYAMA Yoshiko
Kyoiku Gageki



Illustration 2000
ONO Kaoru
The Night of Kagura
Okagura
Text: WAKI Akiko
Poplar



Illustration 1998
KOBAYASHI Yutaka
My Sweet Village
*Sekai ichi utsukushii
boku no mura*
Poplar



Illustration 1996
MATSUOKA Tatsuhide
**Exploring the Dinosaur Age
with My Robot**
Boku no robotto kyoryu tanken
Fukuinkan Shoten

Translation



Translation 2022
Trans. NAGNO Toru
Pholus the Centaur
by Roberto Piumini
Kentauros no Porosu
Iwanami Shoten



Translation 2020
Trans. NISHIMURA Yumi
De Blauwe Maansteen
by Tonke Dragt
Aoi tsuki no ishi
Iwanami Shoten



Translation 2018
Trans. MOTAI Natsuu
**Please Be Quiet, My Father is
Taking a Nap: Jewish Folktales**
*Oshizukani, chichi ga hirune shite
orimasu*
Iwanami Shoten



Translation 2016
Trans. HARADA Masaru
No Crystal Stair
by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson
Haremu no tatakau honya
Asunaro Shobo



Translation 2014
Trans. JINGU Teruo
Swallows and Amazons
by Arthur Ransome
Tsubame-go to Amazon-go
Iwanami Shoten



Translation 2012
Trans. SAITO Michiko
A Season of Gifts by Richard Peck
Shikago yori tondemonai machi
Tokyo Sogensha



Translation 2010
Trans. KODAMA Tomoko
Dido and Pa by Joan Aiken
Daido to tochan
Fuzanbo



Translation 2008
Trans. CHIBA Shigeki
Dumb Creatures by Jeanne Willis
Ori no naka no himitsu
Asunaro Shobo



Translation 2006
Trans. HISHIKI Akirako
Maj Darlin by Mats Wahl
Mai ga ita natsu
Tokuma Shoten



Translation 2004
Trans. MATSUOKA Kyoko
Ramona Forever by Beverly Cleary
Ramona to atarashii kazoku
Gakken



Translation 2002
Trans. SAKUMA Yumiko
Last Summer with Maizon
by Jacqueline Woodson
Magaretto to Meizon
Poplar



Translation 2000
Trans. SAKAI Haruhiko
The Arabian Nights
edited by Wiggin and Smith
Arabian naito
Fukuinkan Shoten



Translation 1998
Trans. WAKI Akiko
The Silent Shore by Ruth Elwin Harris
Oka no ie no Sera
Iwanami Shoten



Translation 1996
Trans. KAKEGAWA Yasuko
Darkling by K. M. Peyton
Unmei no uma Dakuringu
Iwanami Shoten



Recent Translations into Japanese Recommended by JBBY

JBBY selected books in three categories (picture books, chapter books and novels, nonfiction) for its recent publication *Translated Children's Books*. JBBY publishes this catalog every year for Japanese readers.

Picture Books

All Are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold & Suzanne Kaufman (US) | *Yokoso! Koko wa minna no gakkō dayo*, trans. YOSHIGAMI Kyota; Suzuki Shuppan

Alma Y Cómo Obtuvo Su Nombre by Juana Martinez-Neal (US) | *Aruma no namae ga nagai wake*, trans. UNO Kazumi; Goblin Shobo

Cuando las niñas vuelan alto by Raquel Díaz Reguera (ES) | *Takaku tobitate onnanoko*, trans. HOSHINO Yumi; Chobunsha

The Day War Came by Nicola Davies & Rebecca Cobb (UK) | *Senso ga yatte kita hi*, trans. ITO Nobuko; Suzuki Shuppan

El mapa de los buenos momentos by Fran Nuño & Zuzanna Celej (ES) | *Shiawase na toki no chizu*, trans. UNO Kazumi; Holp Shuppan

Ga je mee? by Charlotte Dematons (NL) | *Boku to issho ni*, trans. NOZAKA Etsuko; Bronze Shinsha

If All the World were... by Joseph Coelho & Alison Colpoys (UK) | *Omoide wa kienai yo*, trans. YOKOYAMA Kazue; Bunken Shuppan

Julian is a Mermaid by Jessica Love (US) | *Jurian wa mameido*, trans. YOKOYAMA Kazue; Thousands of Books

Mam is a Haenyeo by Ko Hee-young & Eva Armisen (KR) | *Mama to umi no yakusoku*, trans. OTAKE Kiyomi; Shufunotomoshia

Perdu by Richard Jones (UK) | *Kitto dokoka ni*, trans. FUKUMOTO Yumiko; Froebel-kan

The Proudest Blue by Ibtihaj Muhammad & Hatem Aly (US) | *Ne-san no aoi hijabu*, trans. NOZAKA Etsuko; BL Shuppan

Robinson by Peter Sis (US) | *Robinson*, trans. TAKAYANAGI Katsuhiro; Kaiseisha

Stella and Seagull by Georgina Stevens & Izzy Burton (UK) | *Sutera to kamome to purasuchikku*, trans. ITO Nobuko; Iwasaki Shoten

Thank You, Omu! by Oge Mora (US) | *Arigato, Amo!*, trans. MIHARA Izumi; Suzuki Shuppan

Three Moms & Three Lunchboxes by Ji-Seung Kook (KR) | *San-nin no mama to mittsu no obento*, trans. SAITO Mariko; Bronze Shinsha

Tiger Walk by Dianne Hofmeyr & Jesse Hodgson (UK) | *Tora to issho ni*, trans. SAKUMA Yumiko; Tokuma Shoten

The Water Princess by Susan Varde & Peter H. Reynolds (US) | *Mizu o kumu purinsesu*, trans. SAKUMA Yumiko; Saela Shobo

Chapter Books and Novels

Alaska by Anna Woltz (NL) | *Oide, Arasuka!*, trans. NOZAKA Etsuko; Froebel-kan

All American Boys by Jason Reynolds & Brendan Kiely (US) | *Oru amerikan boizu*, trans. NAKANO Reina; Kaiseisha

Amal Unbound by Aisha Saeed (US) | *Toraware no Amaru*, trans. SAGARA Michiko; Saela Shobo

Anne Frank: The Graphic Diary adapted by Ari Folman & ill. David Polonsky (DE) | *Gurafikkuban Anne no nikki*, trans. FUKAMACHI Mariko; Asunaro Shobo

БЕЛЫЙ ВОЛК by Grigoriĭ Dikov & Dim Rezchikov (RU) | *Shinimori no shiroi okami*, trans. AIBA Tae; Tokuma Shoten

Blended by Sharon M. Draper (US) | *Kyarameru iro no watashi*, trans. YOKOYAMA Kazue; Suzuki Shuppan

The Bridge Home by Padma Venkatraman (US) | *Hashi no ue no kodomotachi*, trans. TANAKA Natsuko; Kodansha

Copyboy by Vince Vawter (US) | *Kopi boi*, trans. HARADA Masaru; Iwanami Shoten

The Curse of the School Rabbit by Judith Kerr (UK) | *Usagi to boku no komatta mainichi*, trans. KODAMA Tomoko; Tokuma Shoten

English Fairy Tales (excerpt) by Joseph Jacobs (UK) | *Kajiya to yo-sei tachi*, edit./trans. WAKI Akiko; Iwanami Shoten

Hedgehog and Mole Go Ballooning by Alison Uttley (UK) | *Harinezumi to mogura no fusen ryoko*, trans. KAMIJO Yumiko; Fukuinkan Shoten

Jelly by Jo Cotterill (UK) | *Himitsu no noto*, trans. SUGITA Nanae; Shogakukan

The Last Soldier by Keith Gray (UK) | *Tosan ga kaeranai machi de*, trans. NOZAWA Kaori; Tokuma Shoten

The Light Princess by George MacDonald & Maurice Sendak (US) <i>Karui ohimesama</i> , trans. WAKI Akiko; Iwanami Shoten
Meister Marios Geschichte by Rafik Schami (DE) <i>Ningyo tsukai Mario no ohanashi</i> , trans. MATSUNAGA Miho; Tokuma Shoten
The Mystery of the Colour Thief by Ewa Jozefkowicz (UK) <i>Iro dorobo o sagashite</i> , trans. OSAKU Michiko; Poplar
My Brother's Name is Jessica by John Boyne (UK) <i>Ani no na wa Jeshika</i> , trans. HARADA Masaru; Asunaro Shobo
To Nightowl, From Dogfish by Holly Goldberg Sloan & Meg Wolitzer (US) <i>Yoru fukuro to doggu fisshu</i> , trans. SANBE Ritsuko; Shogakukan
Planet Earth is Blue by Nicole Panteleakos (US) <i>Supa Nova</i> , trans. CHIBA Shigeki; Asunaro Shobo
La Plus Précieuse des Marchandises by Jean=Claude Grumberg (FR) <i>Kamisama no kamatsu</i> , trans. KONO Mariko; Poplar
This Post Is Password Protected by Young-mee Hwang (KR) <i>Cheri shurinpū: watashi wa watashi</i> , trans. YOSHIHARA Ikuko; Kinnohoshisha
Princess Cora and the Crocodile by Laura Amy Schlitz and Brian Floca (US) <i>Ohime-sama ni natta wani</i> , trans. NAKANO Reina; Fukuinkan Shoten
The Reluctant Journal of Henry K. Larsen by Susin Nielsen (CA) <i>Boku dake no buchimake nikki</i> , trans. NAGATOMO Keiko; Iwanami Shoten
Rymlingarna by Ulf Stark & Kitty Crowther (SE) <i>Oji-chan tono saigo no tabi</i> , trans. HISHIKI Akirako; Tokuma Shoten
The Skylarks' War by Hilary McKay (UK) <i>Rubato no ita natsu</i> , trans. TOMINAGA Hoshi; Tokuma Shoten
The Snow Angel by Lauren ST Jhon (UK) <i>Yukiyama no enjeru</i> , trans. SAKUMA Yumiko; Hyoronsha
Spinning Silver by Naomi Novik (US) <i>Gin o tsumugu mono</i> , trans. NAWA Kaori; Seizansha
Trilogie der Wendepunkte by Klaus Kordon (DE) <i>Berurin sanbu saku</i> , trans. SAKAYORI Shinichi; Iwanami Shoten
Trouble Don't Last by Shelly Pearsall (US) <i>Kanata no hikari</i> , trans. SAITO Michiko; Kaiseisha
The Vanderbeekers and the Hidden Garden by Karina Yan Glaser (US) <i>Niwa zukuri wa himitsu</i> , trans. TANAKA Kaoruko; Tokuma Shoten
Waiting For Anya by Michael Morpurgo (UK) <i>Anya wa kitto kuru</i> , trans. SATO Mikamu; Hyoronsha
Warum Wir Günter Umbringen Wollten by Hermann Schulz (DE) <i>Bokutachi ga Gyunta o koroso to shita hi</i> , trans. WATANABE Hirotsuke; Tokuma Shoten
The Wee Christmas Cabin of Carn-na-ween by Ruth Saeyer (US) <i>Kurumasu no koya</i> , trans. KAMIJO Yumiko; Fukuinkan Shoten

A Wolf Called Wonder by Rosanne Parry & Mónica Armijo (US) <i>Okami no tabi</i> , trans. DATE Jun; Akane Shobo
青銅葵花 by 曹文軒 (CN) <i>Seido to himawari</i> , trans. NAKA Yumiko; Juritsusha
Nonfiction
Balderdash! by Michelle Markel & Nancy Carpenter (US) <i>Kodomo no hon no sekai o kaeta Nyuberi no monogatari</i> , trans. KANEHARA Mizuto; Nishimura Shoten
The Bug Girl by Sophia Spencer & Margaret McNamara (US) <i>Mushi garu</i> , trans. FUKUMOTO Yumiko; Iwasaki Shoten
Cats and Kittens by Tomie dePaola (US) <i>Neko to nakayoku naro yo</i> , trans. FUKUMOTO Yumiko; Mitsumura Kyoiku Toshō
Children in Our World: Culture and Diversity by Marie Murray & Hanane Kai (UK) <i>Ima, sekai wa abunai no?</i> , trans. OYAMA Izumi; Hyoronsha
Consent (for Kids!) by Rachel Brian (US) <i>Kodomo o mamoru kotoba dōte nani?</i> , trans. NAKAI Haruno; Shueisha
Dášeňka by Karel Čapek (CZ) <i>Dashenka</i> , trans. HANDA Ryosuke; Seidosha
Fauja Singh Keeps Going by Simran jeet Singh & Baljinder Kaur (US) <i>Hyakusai ranna no monogatari</i> , trans. OTSUKA Noriko; Nishimura Shoten
The House By The Lake by Thomas Harding & Britta Teckentrup (UK) <i>Ano mizuumi no ano ie ni okita koto</i> , trans. OCHIAI Keiko; Crayon House
How to Build an Orchestra by Maru Auld & Elisa Paganelli (UK) <i>Okesutora o tsukuro</i> , trans. IWAJO Yoshihito; BL Shuppan
I Know This to Be True: Bryan Stevenson edit. by Geoff Blackwell & Ruth Hobday (US) <i>Buraian Sutibunson</i> , trans. HARADA Masaru; Asunaro Shobo
It Began with a Page by Kyo Maclear & Julie Morstad (US) <i>Hajimari wa masshiro na kami</i> , trans. YAGI Kyoko; Froebel-kan
Pick a Pumpkin by Patricia Toht & Peter Jarvis (UK) <i>Harouin no kabocha o kazaro</i> , trans. NAKAGAWA Chihiro; BL Shuppan
A Planet Full of Plastic by Neal Layton (UK) <i>Purasuchikku sei niwa naritaku nai!</i> , trans. IWAJO Yoshihito; Hisakata Child
Write To Me by Cynthia Grady & Amiko Hirao (US) <i>Watashi ni tegami o kaite</i> , trans. MATSUKAWA Mayumi; Hyoronsha

Japanese Children's Books 2022

JBBY's recommendations for young readers throughout the world

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