

Chapter Books and Novels

For each selected title, we provide the following:

Title in English

Title in Japanese | Author | Illustrator | Publisher | Publication Year | Number of Pages | Cover Size |

ISBN | Target Age | Keywords

Contact details of foreign rights handler (only for the titles for 2026)

Basic Book Description (Last Name of Reviewer)

16



A Little Bit Friends

ちょっとだけともだち

Text/Ill. Chihiro NAKAGAWA

Nora-Shoten Publishers Inc. | 2025 | 55p | 21×16cm | ISBN 978-4-905015-82-6 | Ages:7+

| *Friends, Family, Being yourself*

Contact | sato@norashoten.co.jp attn. Ms. Yukiko SATO/ Editorial Dept./ Nora-shoten

An illustrated story that follows the thoughts of Ippei, who believes he's friendless, on what it means to be a friend. When Ippei sees how many friends his younger sister, parents and grandmother have, he thinks he must be different. It turns out that even his grandfather, who looks like he has no friends either, once had a close friend in Brazil. At an exhibition on Turtles of the World, Ippei runs into a classmate, and they get together to build plastic models. Although the two boys are very different and disagree on many things, Ippei is overjoyed to realize that they are "a little bit" friends. With short text and relatable illustrations, the author depicts the diverse forms that friendship can take. (DOI)

17



Something About You Is Different, Inu-ue (Inu-ue and Kumazawa 7)

いぬうえくとくまざわくん7

なんだかちがういぬうえくん

Text/Ill. Yoko KITAYAMA

Akane Shobo | 2025 | 79p | 21×16cm | ISBN978-4-251-00797-1 | Ages:7+ | *Friends, Dog,*

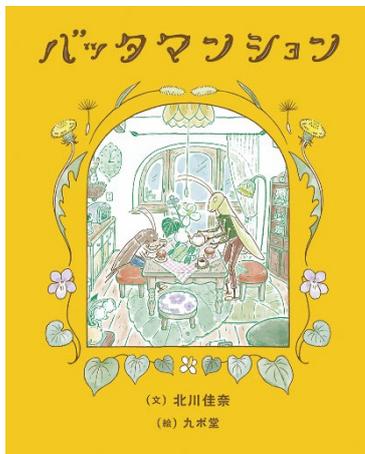
Bear

Contact | solan@tuttle-mori.com attn. Ms. Solan NATSUME/ Tuttle-Mori Agency

When Inu-ue, a serious dog obsessed with cleanliness, and Kumazawa, a relaxed, food-loving bear, are taking a stroll through the woods one day, Kumazawa trips and falls. Inu-ue tells him to wait right there and rushes away. After a while, a large dog appears. He insists that he is Inu-ue but grew up fast so that he could carry his

friend out of the woods. The author's depiction of Kumazawa's bewilderment is very convincing, and the ending, which reveals the mix-up about the big dog, is humorous. This entertaining story portrays a friendship between two very disparate characters, the distinctive traits of which are deftly captured by the author's colorful illustrations. (DOI)

18



Grasshopper Apartments

バッタマンション

Text Kana KITAGAWA | Ill. Kyupodo

AliceKan Ltd. | 2024 | 84p | 19x16cm | ISBN 978-4-7520-1114-9 | Ages:7+ | *Apartment, Insects, Bookstore, Fish mint tea*

Contact | nishida@alicekan.com attn. Ms. Kikue NISHIDA/ Editorial Dept./ AliceKan

A collection of delightful tales about the insect characters residing in an old apartment block known as Grasshopper Apartments. There's the grasshopper who is anxious about the cracks in the wall, a pine beetle who spends money like water, a bashful cabbage butterfly, and a stag beetle who runs a candy shop in the arcade. The landlord, who is also a grasshopper, lives in a sparkling clean apartment and shares fish mint tea with everyone. A praying mantis visits the apartment just to have some of that tea. The diverse personalities of the apartment residents, as well as the local dragonfly bookstore owner, coupled with the beautiful illustrations, make this an engaging read. (KONDO)

19



Our Clean Freak Alien

うちのキチント星人

Text Madoka SATO | Ill. Ikumi NAKATA

Froebel-kan Co.,Ltd. | 2024 | 160p | 21x16cm | ISBN 978-4-577-05296-9 | Ages:9+ | *Differences, Understanding, Family*

Contact | hirose-k@froebel-kan.co.jp attn. Ms. Kaori HIROSE/ IP Business Team/ Froebel-kan

Chika is in the fourth grade of elementary school. One day, a boy named Akito, who has lost his parents and guardian, comes to live at her house. Being an only child, Chika is looking forward to having an older brother, but when they meet, she is not sure what to do because Akito is so particular about cleanliness. At first, Chika is thrown off balance by Akito, whom she calls the "clean freak alien", and she boils with frustration, but gradually the two of them learn to see beyond the differences in their feelings and perspectives to recognize each other's good points and develop a bond of friendship. The process of accepting someone with a very different personality is portrayed realistically through a series of episodes. (SAKUMA)

20



Secret Places in Kosoado Woods Other Stories of Kosoado Woods

こそあどの森の物語

こそあどの森のひみつの場所

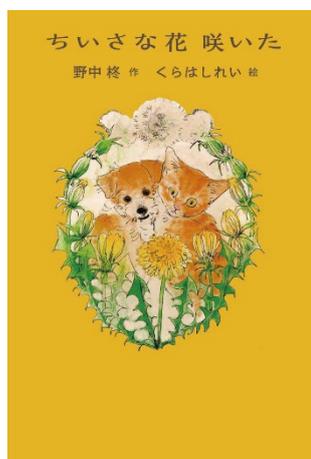
Text/Ill. Jun OKADA

Rironsha | 2024 | 127p | 21×16cm | ISBN978-4-652-20607-2 | Ages:9+ | *Secret, Mystery, Woods*

Contact | rights@rironsha.co.jp

A spinoff of the twelve-volume Stories of Kosoado Woods series, which features a range of eccentric characters living in a fantastical forest. This collection of seven stories relates seven secret episodes, each of which was experienced by just one of the characters and unknown to all the rest. They include Tomato's encounter with a little ogre when she was washing her husband Pott's trousers, the carpenter Geeko's chance meeting with a crow who told him about a riverbank that feels good, and an episode about how the writer Towaie discovered some flowers while searching for his pencil. These stories all convey the abundant richness of Kosoado Woods and are complimented by the author's delightful, lucid illustrations. (OKUYAMA)

21



A Small Flower Blooms

ちいさな花咲いた

Text Hiiragi NONAKA | Ill. Rei KURAHASHI

Kinno Hoshi Sha Co.,Ltd. | 2024 | 176p | 20×14cm | ISBN 978-4-323-05500-8 | Ages:9+ | *Plants, Animals, Seasons, Life*

Contact | foreignrights@kinnohoshi.co.jp attn. Mr. Shigeki NOMURA/ Foreign Rights Manager/ Kinno Hoshi Sha

A little dandelion pushes between the cracks in the paving stones at the end of the arcade where it blooms out of season. The flower is in danger of being trampled on by people passing through. They are almost picked by a little girl, and are drenched by cold rain, yet the plant keeps bravely blooming. Marle, a puppy belonging to the owner of a café, and Misia, a street kitten, befriend it and do everything they can to protect it. But in the end, the snow falls, and the flower turns into seeds that fly into the sky. The puppy Marle observes all these changes with innocent surprise. The animated conversations between the dandelion and its friends help readers sense the circle of life. (OKUYAMA)

22

Railroad Crossing Penguins

ふみきりペンギン

Text/Ill. Yume OKUHARA



Akane Shobo | 2024 | 111p | 22×16cm | ISBN978-4-251-07316-7 | Ages:9+ | *Friends, Mystery, Animals*

Contact | solan@tuttlemori.com attn. Ms. Solan NATSUME/ Tuttle-Mori Agency

Upset at being teased because he's left-handed, Yuto meets five penguins at a railroad crossing. His friend Nanako has promised Ruri to check out a rumor that children playing in the park have been licked by a snake-shaped playground piece. Ruri feels bad about arguing with her and wants to be friends again. Kosuke is hiding in the library because the other kids call him *Fartman*. These and other children encounter various strange phenomena, such as a

lion that appears in the school mirror and wants to learn how to braid his mane, and an owl that predicts the weather by kicking a wooden sandal into the air. As the refreshing story of these encounters unfolds, each character's convoluted feelings are gradually untangled and replaced by mutual respect and friendship. (NOGAMI)

23



A Collection of Japanese Folktales

Peach Boy and Other Stories

The Fights between the Monkey and the Crab and Other Stories

よりぬき日本の昔話

ももたろうほか

さるかにかっせんほか

Retelling Toshio OZAWA

Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers. Inc. | 2025 | 120p each | 18×14cm | ISBN978-4-8340-8822-9/ISBN978-4-8340-8823-6 | Ages:9+ | *Traditional folk tales*

Contact | international-rights@fukuinkan.co.jp attn. Ms. Yoko UESUGI/ Rights & Permissions Dept./ Fukuinkan Shoten



Twenty-four well-known traditional folk tales such as "Peach Boy," "The Sparrow with no Tongue," "The Old Man with a Lump," "Kachi Kachi Mountain," "The March of the Jizo," "The Fights Between the Monkey and the Crab," "The Old Man who made Flowers Bloom," "Little One-Inch," and "Urashima Taro" have been included in a two-volume collection along with illustrations by contemporary artists such as Taeko OSHIMA, Fumiko TAKANO, Tae TAKEGAMI, and Takayuki INO. These retellings fully utilize the distinctive narrative style of folktales to create a pleasant reading experience, while the way the endings directly incorporate the original concluding words of the tales is also charming. The illustrations of

old tools with explanatory text further aid understanding. The stories are selected and compiled from the existing five-volume set "Japanese Folktales." (SAKUMA)

24



I Don't Get It!

わたし、わかんない

Text Joko IWASE | Ill. Komako SAKAI

KODANSHA Ltd. | 2025 | 224p | 20×14cm | ISBN 978-4-06-538952-2 | Ages:9+ | *Parents and children, School, Friends*

Contact | m-kitaoka@kodansha.co.jp attn. Mr. Morio KITAOKA/ International Rights Dept./ Kodansha

Naka is in the fourth year of elementary school. After her parents separated, she started calling them Mother and Father instead of Mum and Dad, and she now lives with her mother, a children's story writer. At school, Naka is nicknamed Miss I-Don't-Get-It, but her mother tells her, "You always think things through carefully, Naka. I'm so proud of you!" After various experiences such as observing a suspicious man with her childhood friend Sen and helping an elderly man living alone who was unable to move after breaking his leg, Naka learns that everyone has moments when they don't understand. The story ends on a high note as Naka tells Mother that she can no longer stand being at her current school and has decided to go and live with Father. (NOGAMI)

25



Cafe Snow Dome

カフェ・スノードーム

Text Mutsumi ISHII | Ill. Sanae SUGIMOTO

Alicekan Ltd. | 2024 | 160p | 20×14cm | ISBN978-4-7520-1119-4 | Ages:11+ | *Cafe, Bookstore, Memory*

Contact | nishida@alicekan.com attn. Ms. Kikue NISHIDA/ Editorial Dept./ Alicekan

Cafe Snow Dome is in an old house entwined with ivy located in a residential neighborhood. It is also the setting for five beautifully illustrated stories about the people who visit. Elementary school pupil Moeka has just quarreled with her little sister; Takashi reminisces about his own high school days; Tsugumi is thinking of her grandmother; a young man is searching for a small dog; and Tamaru, the owner of the café, is a plump, enigmatic woman who claims to remember countless things about all sorts of people and brings good fortune to everyone she meets. Tamaru welcomes visitors to the cafe with delicious tea, drawing the reader into these mysterious and charming tales. (KONDO)

26

Someday I Will

この手はいつか

Text Seiko NAKAYAMA | Ill. Toshimasa YASUMITSU

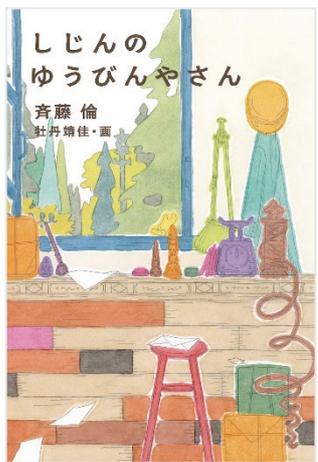
Bunken Shuppan | 2025 | 224p | 20×14cm | ISBN 978-4-580-82669-4 | Ages:11+ | *Pottery, Bullying, Grandfather*

Contact | ha-ikuta@shinko-keirin.co.jp attn. Ms. Haruka IKUTA/ Bunken Shuppan



When Mashio tells off a classmate for being naughty, the boy argues back so he hits him, resulting in his mother being summoned to school. Mashio feels this is unfair and is miserable. His mood hasn't improved by the last day of the first semester, and he ends up suffering from heatstroke. His estranged grandfather, a potter, comes all the way to Fukuoka from the famous pottery town of Hagi to fetch him, and Mashio spends his summer vacation in Hagi away from his mother, trying pottery, walking his grandfather's dog, and becoming friends with a local girl. Learning of the troubled relationship between his grandfather and mother enables Mashio to re-examine his own relationship with his mother. It is inspiring to see how much he grows over the summer. (DOI)

27



The Poet Postmaster

しじんのゆうびんやさん

Text Rin SAITO | Ill. Yasuyoshi BOTAN

Kaisei-sha Publishing Co.,Ltd. | 2024 | 130p | 20×14cm | ISBN 978-4-03-643260-8 |

Ages:11+ | *Post office, Postmaster, Letters, Poems*

Contact | foreign@kaiseisha.co.jp attn. Ms. Yuko NONAKA/ Editorial Dept./ Kaisei-sha

At the small post office in a small town, Gaito works at the counter while Torinosu handles deliveries. One day, Gaito hears that the lighthouse keeper at the cape has never received a letter from anyone, and decides to write to him, giving the poetic letter to Torinosu to deliver.

He sends a second letter to Torinosu's niece, who doesn't attend school, and a third to her mother. Soon, the letters become the talk of the town. Then, Torinosu himself receives the eleventh letter, a poem titled "The Letter Carrier."

Warmth spreads through this story as the postman delivers poetic letters to various people in town. Beautifully illustrated, it leaves a lingering warm afterglow. (KONDO)

28



Throw a White Rainbow

白い虹を投げる

Text Mariko YOSHINO

Gakken Inc. | 2025 | 232p | 20×14cm | ISBN978-4-05-206059-5 | Ages:11+ | *Teams,*

Baseball, Family, Foreign roots

Contact | c-shibata@gakken.co.jp attn. Ms. Chiho SHIBATA/ Global IP Dept./ Gakken

Hao and Yaya are both in the sixth year of elementary school. Hao has just become captain of the baseball team, while Yaya has transferred to a different school and joined a new team.

Though separated, they keep in touch via email messages, and plan to reunite at the

"Catchball Classic" tournament. Hao worries about friends going to join a new local team, and about his younger brother

who has just had an operation on his thigh bone, while Yaya struggles to fit in with her new team as she looks different due to her American father. They both overcome their troubles through ingenuity and good humor. A heartwarming sports story interwoven with the lives of the adults supporting the teams. (OKUYAMA)

29



The Foxes of the Hatsune Family

シノダ!

初音一族のキツネたち

Text Yoko TOMIYASU | Ill. Kenya OBA

Kaisei-sha Publishing Co.,Ltd. | 2024 | 278p | 20×14cm | ISBN978-4-03-644120-4 |

Ages:11+ | *Foxes, Fantasy, Relatives, Marriage*

Contact | foreign@kaiseisha.co.jp attn. Ms. Yuko NONAKA/ Editorial Dept./ Kaisei-sha

Yui, Takumi, and Moe are the children of a fox mother and a human father. One day, their mother's brother, Uncle Yashamaru, arrives at their home and tells them that some of his girlfriend Mitsuba's relatives consider it problematic that he has human relatives. The three children are indignant. Then three elders from Mitsuba's family disguised as humans turn up at their house to investigate, boasting that they are the distinguished Hatsune clan who have guarded and passed down the Hatsune drum since the Heian period. The interactions between the distinctive characters from the fox world and Yui and her siblings are delightful, while the mystery-solving elements keep the reader hooked. One in a series about the same family. (DOI)

30



Who's Been Naughty This Year?

ワルイコいねが

Text Mikie ANDO | Ill. Nonoko SATO

KODANSHA Ltd. | 2024 | 192p | 20×14cm | ISBN978-4-06-536020-0 | Ages:11+ |

Namahage, Changing schools, Death

Contact | m-kitaoka@kodansha.co.jp attn. Mr. Morio KITAOKA/ International Rights Dept./ Kodansha

Sixth-grade Mimi lacks confidence and cannot voice her own opinions, as she does not want to be disliked. Transfer student Akito goes to the opposite extreme, saying whatever she thinks without reading the room, which makes others deride her. Mimi and Akito get along well at first, but then Mimi learns that Akito has taken an interest in elders' deaths, and has been going to funerals of people she does not even know. This story of polar-opposite personalities unfolds against the backdrop of Akita prefecture, with its annual tradition of Namahage "ogres" looking for naughty children. It grows clear that Akito harbors bittersweet memories of her grandfather who has died. Superb psychological descriptions make one want to read this book in one sitting. (SAKUMA)

31



Warm Hands – The Story of Nanohana Osteopathic Clinic

あたたかな手

なののはな整骨院物語

Text Kyoko HAMANO

Kaisei-sha Publishing Co.,Ltd. | 2025 | 206p | 19×13cm | ISBN 978-4-03-727490-0 |

Ages:13+ | *Osteopathy, Relationships*

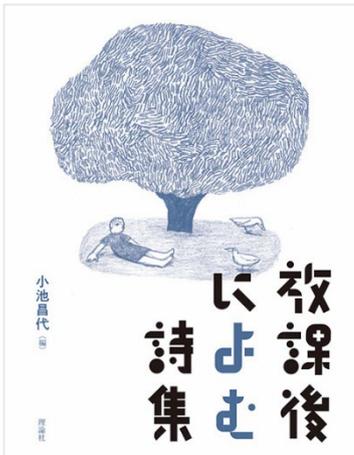
Contact | foreign@kaiseisha.co.jp attn. Ms. Yuko NONAKA/ Editorial Dept./ Kaisei-sha

Narrator Haruya NISHIDA has just taken his job as a judo therapist in an osteopathic clinic.

He encounters patients who are living through difficult circumstances, including children. A

girl named Seira is weathering abuse from her mother. A boy named Ryota is the ace of his baseball team, but he carries the weight of elbow pain and high expectations from his father. Mio struggles to share worries with her parents, who gave their all to care for her older sister who died from illness. As Haruya works to treat these children effectively, he begins to see the meaning in his chosen vocation. This story helps readers to feel the warmth in human interactions, even as it takes up various problems children face today. (SAKUMA)

32



Poems for After School

放課後によむ詩集

Edit./Text Masayo KOIKE

Rironsha | 2024 | 144p | 17×13cm | ISBN978-4-652-20636-2 | Ages:13+ | *Poetry, Poetry*

anthology, Solitude, After school

Contact | rights@rironsha.co.jp

"Reading a poem written out of one person's solitude may require the reader to seek solitude too." "The only job of poems is to be poems; they have always had no purpose."

So says the editor who chose and introduces these 31 poems. Written by life-filled poets

including Michio MADDO, Kenji MIYAZAWA, Chuya NAKAHARA, Noriko IBARAKI, E. E. CUMMINGS, and Wislawa SZYMBORSKA, the selected poems come issue many times and places, and they are accompanied by the editor's words. The back of the book provides profiles of the poets including episodes from their teenage years, as well as a guide to their published works. This anthology makes for wonderful close reading during alone time. (KONDO)

33

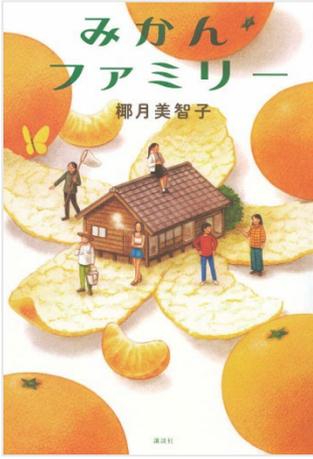
Unripe Family

みかんファミリー

Text Michiko NAZUKI

KODANSHA Ltd. | 2024 | 256p | 20×14cm | ISBN 978-4-06-536492-5 | Ages:13+ | *Family, Friendship, Traditional houses,*

Women



Contact | m-kitaoka@kodansha.co.jp attn. Mr. Morio KITAOKA/ International Rights Dept./ Kodansha

Middle-school student Mikoto has been living with her divorced mother and her grandmother. Suddenly, they find themselves sharing a traditional Japanese-style house with Mikoto's mother's friend from her own middle school years, Akemi—and her daughter Yuna and granddaughter Nonoka, who is Mikoto's age. At first, Mikoto struggles to adjust to smartphone-obsessed Yuna and biology club eccentric Nonoka. But as the six females divide up the chores and cook, clean, and garden, solving various problems together, their hard edges soften. Worries persist, from Mikoto's grandmother's traffic accident to Yuna leaving

home suddenly, to Mikoto's mother getting sick. But even this unfinished, "unripe" group manages to come together as a family of six, who complement each other and even plant sweet mikan orange trees together. Their story radiates warmth. (OKUYAMA)

34



Halo-Halo

ハロハロ

Text Ayako KOMATSU | Ill. Aimi IWAI

KODANSHA Ltd. | 2024 | 190p | 20×14cm | ISBN978-4-06-537068-1 | Ages:13+ |

Philippines, Sweets, Friendship

Contact | m-kitaoka@kodansha.co.jp attn. Mr. Morio KITAOKA/ International Rights Dept./ Kodansha

Due to illness, Nonoka started high school a week late and has no friends yet. While she was still bedridden, Nonoka took English conversation lessons remotely at her mother's

suggestion. Nonoka developed a crush on her teacher from the Philippines and still harbors an interest in Filipino culture. Nonoka eventually comes to know Fuu, a classmate who has a Japanese father and Filipina mother. One day, Nonoka enjoys eating the dessert halo-halo in Fuu's home. Nonoka and Fuu end up joining the cooking club together and selling halo-halo at a regional festival. This book vividly shows Nonoka's growing interest in the Philippine culture and the way it helps shape a friendship. (DOI)

35

Youngtimers' Counseling Corner

ヤングタイマーズのお悩み相談室

Text Hirochika ISHIKAWA | Ill. Kento IIDA

Kumon Shuppan | 2024 | 200p | 20×14cm | ISBN 978-4-7743-3793-7 | Ages:13+ | *Radio, Worries, Middle school students*

Contact | takagi@kumonshuppan.com Ms. Shizu TAKAGI/ Kumon Shuppan

This collection of six stories portrays a radio show called the Youngtimers' Counseling Corner, where an actor and



musician who love vintage cars converse about their listeners' worries. In addition, the stories portray middle school students who listen to the show. In every story, the hosts of the show discuss a worry sent in by one of their listeners, and the listener begins to see things in a new light. The concerns from listeners include friendship issues, identity crises, and frustration toward society at large. The radio personalities' humor and warmth bring out how each worry is serious to the person dealing with it, and no serious concern has one right answer. (DOI)