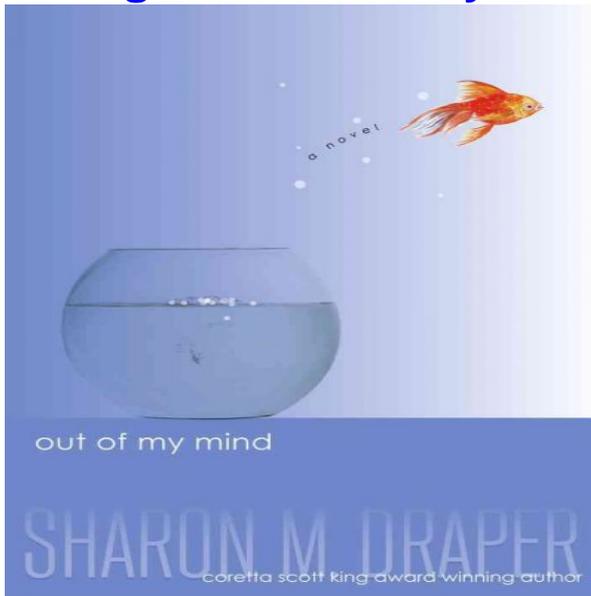


Mary F.'s blog

[Through Another's Eyes](#)



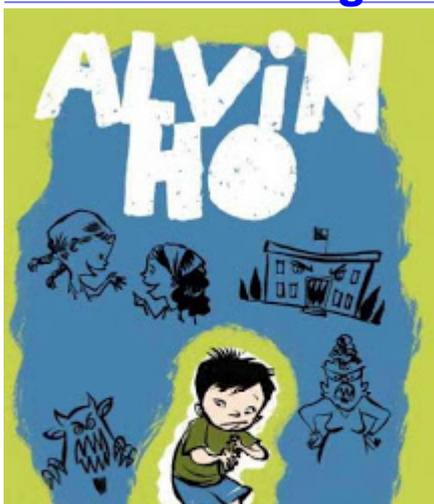
One of the great things about good books is that they can reveal life through another person's eyes. That revelation is especially engaging when the character has some barrier to ordinary self expression. I recently read two fine books that offer fresh perspectives on school and life in general from characters who have trouble communicating with the world. [Read more »](#)

[Oh, the Things You Can Think](#)[Family Relationships](#)[Female Friendships](#)[Mockingbird](#)[Out of my mind](#) : [a novel][Realistic](#)

Posted by Mary F. on Mar 13, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

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[Alvin Ho: Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things](#)



elevators, tunnels, bridges, thunder, substitute teachers, scary movies, shots, and school. Most of all...school. Descended from a long line of Chinese farmer-warriors he loves to run around his house as a noisy superhero called Firecracker Man in a costume his gungung (that's grandfather) made, complete with a spaghetti drainer on his head. School takes too much of his energy so he is only Firecracker Man on weekends and holidays. It takes a lot of energy for Alvin to make it onto the bus and into the school building. Once he is there he can't think, read, smile, sing, or even scream. Worst of all, Alvin can't talk at school. In spite of his mutism, Alvin is determined to make friends with the help of a list of rules suggested by his brother, Calvin.

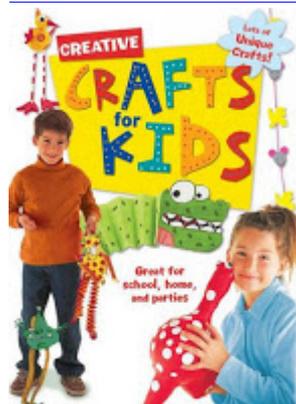
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[Oh, the Thinks You Can ThinkAlvin Ho allergic to girls, school, and other scary thingsFiction](#)

Posted by Mary F. on Jan 27, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

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[Creative Crafts for Kids](#)



When it is too cold to play and you're stuck inside, you might get a little bit of cabin fever. One sure cure for this dreaded, boring condition is to make something fun. The Children's Department has hundreds of books filled with ideas and instructions to help you create colorful crafts.

One great example is [Creative Crafts for Kids](#) published by Reader's Digest Children's Books. Here you will find instructions for making fantastic greeting cards, balloon monsters, floral picture frames, and much more. This book will help you get creative with paper, wire, paint, felt, glitter, and glue. **Creative Crafts for Kids** is right for children in 3rd grade and older, but the library has great craft books for all ages. We also have a wide selection of seasonal craft books to help you and your family celebrate the holidays. So don't suffer from cabin fever...come to the library to find a cure for a boring winter day.

[Oh, the Thinks You Can ThinkArts & CraftsCreative crafts for kids](#)

Posted by Mary F. on Dec 14, 2011 [Add new comment](#)

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[Early Literacy at The Learn and Play Space](#)



If you know a child who is 7 years old or younger, the Learn and Play Space in the Children's Department at your Monroe County Public Library is the perfect place to visit. Children and their adult caregivers may explore several learning stations that were designed to help build early literacy skills. Children grow vocabulary when they work puzzles and play with puppets. Imaginary play in the store and the kitchen builds narrative skills which help children make meaning of words when they begin to read. The letter wall is a great place to learn the names of the letters and to practice the sounds the letters make. The writing center is stocked with cards, paper, envelopes, and markers so children can write books, mail letters, and draw pictures. Trained supervisors are available during most open hours to guide learning experiences, play games, and provide craft materials. There is even a dedicated space that is reserved for infants who are not walking and their caregivers exclusively. This engaging space has been made possible by support from the Smithville Charitable Foundation and the Friends of the Monroe County Public Library. Paper supplies for the writing center are received from the Reuse Center at the District.

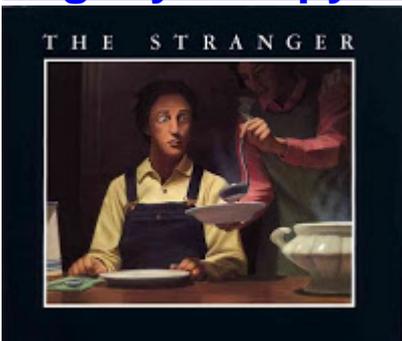
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[Oh, the Things You Can Think Early Literacy](#)

Posted by Mary F. on Nov 18, 2011 [Add new comment](#)

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[Slightly Creepy Stories for Fall](#)



The nights are growing chilly and the leaves are starting to turn. All of the apple and pumpkin books have been checked out at least once and soon the Halloween shelves will be bare. If you are looking for something slightly creepy to fit the season, you may have to dig a little deeper. We have two booklists to help you suss out books that will give you the shivers. Preschool and early elementary book lovers will enjoy selections from [The Not-Too-Scary Stories](#) booklist. Older readers who have a high tolerance for terror should look for the [Horror](#) display and booklist.

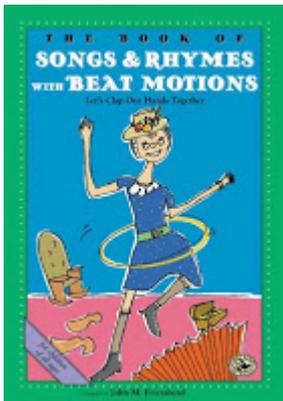
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[Oh, the Thinks You Can Think](#)[Fiction](#)[The garden of Abdul Gasazi](#)[The stranger](#)[The widow's broom](#)

Posted by Mary F. on Oct 6, 2011 [Add new comment](#)

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[The Book of Songs & Rhymes with Beat Motions](#)

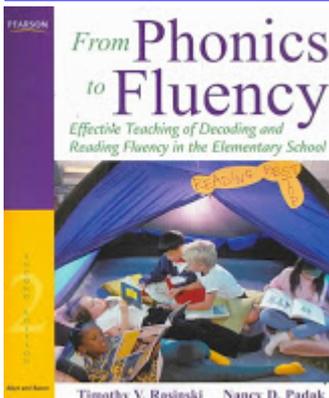


Singing is one of the best activities children and caregivers can enjoy together. Singing promotes a love of music in young children and helps build early literacy skills by breaking words down into small pieces. The library is a great source of wonderful songs for early childhood in books, CDs, Books on CD, and DVDs. A particularly good source of engaging songs for preschool and young school-aged children are the materials by Dr. John Feierabend. Look for his books in the Parent-Teacher Resource Room. Adults who spend time with small children will love [The Book of Songs & Rhymes with Beat Motions](#). Here you will find songs, rhymes, and games that encourage moving with the beat. These rhymes and songs have been passed along for generations and are full of magic and imagination. You will also find CDs of songs collected by Dr. Feierabend in the Children's Audio-Visual collection. [Oh, the Thinks You Can Think](#)[Nonfiction](#)[Songs](#)[The book of songs & rhymes with beat motions : keeping the beat](#)

Posted by Mary F. on Sep 8, 2011 [Add new comment](#)

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[From Phonics to Fluency](#)



I recently attended a fascinating seminar on reading sponsored by

the Monroe County Community School Corporation. The presenter was Dr. Timothy Rasinski, a professor at Kent State University who authored [From Phonics to Fluency: Effective Teaching of Decoding and Reading Fluency in the Elementary School](#). The topic of the seminar was fluency in reading. While some school systems equate fluency with reading speed, Dr. Rasinski described it as a bridge between reading mechanics and comprehension. Children need to achieve accuracy in the surface or mechanical level of reading which includes phonics, spelling, and vocabulary to progress to the deep level where they make meaning. The link between the two is fluency. Fluent reading involves automaticity, or dealing with the mechanics of reading without stumbling and struggling. Fluency also requires prosody, the ability to read aloud or silently with proper phrasing and expression. Dr. Rasinski shared several methods that teachers and parents can use to help students improve their fluency. I was thrilled to hear that we public librarians have been promoting and supporting these activities at MCPL for years. His presentation focused on singing, poetry, and reader's theater.

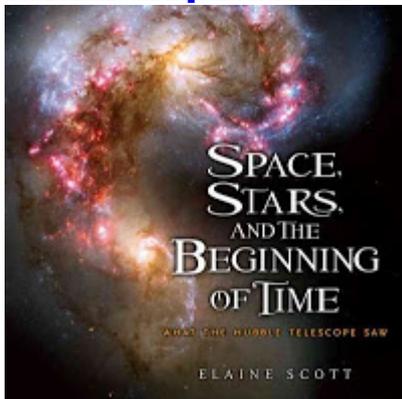
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[Oh, the Things You Can Think From phonics to fluency : effective teaching of decoding and reading fluency in the elementary school](#)Reading

Posted by Mary F. on Aug 3, 2011 [Add new comment](#)

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[Space, Stars, and the Beginning of Time: What the Hubble Telescope Saw](#)



I have never been one to watch the stars and find constellations. I could pick out the Big and Little Dippers, find the North Star and a couple of planets but that was about it. One night my neighbor knocked on my door and invited me outside to see the International Space Station pass overhead on its earthly orbit. On another evening, he taught me how to see the moons around Jupiter with my binoculars. Then I turned them on the full moon and saw the mountains and craters in a clarity I had never dreamed of before. I didn't know how much I could see with ordinary binoculars. Now I am a fan of the sky and I am fascinated by what astronomers are

learning about the origin of the universe through telescopes.

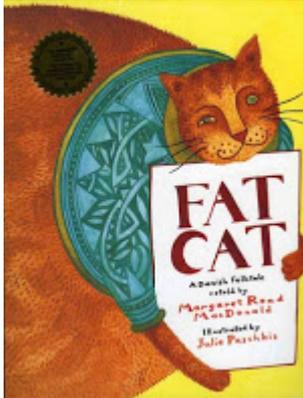
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[Oh, the Thinks You Can ThinkScience & NatureSpace, stars, and the beginning of time : what the Hubble telescope saw](#)

Posted by Mary F. on Jul 1, 2011 [Add new comment](#)



[Fat Cat: A Danish Folktale](#)



School is almost out and the summer reading program has begun. Our theme this year is One World Many Stories: Get Reading, Get Moving. Reading folktales is the perfect way to explore this exciting theme and one of the best folktale collectors is Margaret Read MacDonald.

Dr. MacDonald lived in Bloomington many years ago when she studied for her Ph.D. in folklore at Indiana University. She lives and works in Washington state today where she is a librarian, storyteller, and author of dozens of books. Some of her books are collections that are perfect for beginning storytellers. Teachers, parents, and kids who want to learn how to tell stories will love [The Storyteller's Start-Up Book](#). These stories are easy to learn and Dr. MacDonald gives great advice on how to present them. [When the Lights Go Out: Twenty Scary Tales to Tell](#) is a fun collection of shivery stories that are great to share around a summer campfire.

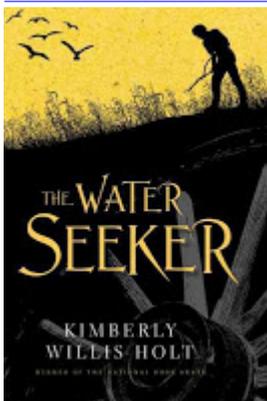
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[Oh, the Thinks You Can ThinkFat cat : a Danish folktaleFolklore](#)

Posted by Mary F. on Jun 2, 2011 [Add new comment](#)



[The Water Seeker](#)



"What would you do if you knew you had a special gift - a sixth sense -

that was passed down from one generation to the next? A gift that could help people in times of need, but one your father often saw as a trap. Would you use that gift?" [The Water Seeker](#) by Kimberly Willis Holt is the story of Amos Kincaid, a boy who could find water where it lay beneath the land, unseen by ordinary eyes.

After his mother dies in childbirth, Amos is raised by a succession of women who are each symbols of the American West: a missionary, a rough farm worker, a new bride, and his father's second wife, an Otoe Indian woman. Each of them contributes something unique to the boy's upbringing under the watchful presence of his mother's spirit. The boy is also shaped by the rough men of the wilderness: his father Jake, a reluctant dowser and trapper, and the Blocks, a family of boys as close as brothers to Amos. All come together in the vast wilderness of America sharing tragedy and triumph as Amos grows into manhood on a perilous journey along the Oregon Trail.

Recommended for readers in grades 5-8

[Oh, the Things You Can Think Fiction](#)[The water seeker](#)

Posted by Mary F. on Apr 25, 2011 [Add new comment](#)

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