

Grades K-2

Corr, Christopher. ***Deep in the Woods***. New York: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-84780-726-7.

\*Original publication Great Britain: Little, Brown, and Company, 2015.

**Summary:** Readers of Alvin Tresselt's or Jan Brett's version of *The Mitten* will make text-to-text connections with Corr's whimsical tale of colorful woodland animals who find community deep in the woods. When there is not enough room for an eager bear, a disastrous accident causes the animals to lose their beloved home. The satisfying conclusion sparks conversation about making things right when accidents happen, being the one left out, and finding room for others in our communities.

**Curricular use:** restorative justice for young children, kindness, inclusion

**Audience:** With pops of neon color, the intricately detailed illustrations in this book will be mesmerizing to young readers from preschool to second grade. Young children will identify with the feelings of both Bear, as the character being left out, and the woodland animals as the ones who lose their joyous family home.

Riley Guertin, Annemarie. ***How the Finch Got His Colors***. Sanger, California: Familius LLC, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-94554-777-5.

**Summary:** The Great Bird, ruler of the bird kingdom, bestowes colors upon all the birds in the realm who had not yet been touched with the colors brought by a rainbow that appeared on the eleventh day of earth's existence. The Gouldian

finch, still the color of stone, is summoned by Great Bird. Because of Gouldian's patience, he is rewarded with the best gift of all- every color of the rainbow.

**Curricular use:** In the back of this book, factual information about the Gouldian finch can be found. This text may be useful when modeling connections between fictional tales and nonfiction information. Teachers who are reading Iowa Goldfinch Award collections to their students may use this text to introduce the concept of a finch while comparing and contrasting the Goldfinch with the Gouldian finch. Other connections: Australia, grassland animals, Just So Stories.

**Audience:** The colorful, glossy illustrations in this text will be appealing for younger children.

### Grades 3-4

Hernandez, Jaime. ***The Dragon Slayer***. New York: TOON Books, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-943145-28-7

**Summary:** The folklore of Latin America is reimagined and presented in a graphic novel format. Three tales (*The Dragon Slayer*, *Martina Martinez and Perez the Mouse*, and *Tup and the Ants*) give decades old lore a more present day feeling. Each tale involves humans and animal characters facing nonsensical problems. In the words of one of my students, "This book is strange, but interesting. I like the strange."

**Curricular use:** This book has a wonderful introductory article by that describes the oral tradition and life-framing power of folklore and fairy tales. In the back, the history of the three tales included in this volume are presented through artifacts. The additional information takes the book beyond the singular function of most graphic novels and would be excellent sections to read to or with children while exploring the folklore and fairy tale genres, oral tradition, or Latin American

culture. This book joins the trend of reconfiguring previously written classics and tales into graphic novel formats.

**Audience:** Reluctant readers, graphic novel readers

Phipps, Selwyn. *The Magical Unicorn Society*. New York: Feiwel and Friends, 2019.  
ISBN: 978-1-250-20619-0.

**Summary:** If your students are like my students, they can't get their hands on enough unicorn books! *The Magical Unicorn Society* is the encyclopedia of everything unicorn and it will satisfy the curiosities and feed the fantasies of your unicorn lovers. It contains maps of unicorn migration, a field guide for collecting unicorn food in various terrains, unicorn symbology throughout history, a guide to unicorn tracking, and plenty of unicorn lore. The colorful illustrations and attention to detail gives the book an overall mystical quality. Sure, it will never sit on the shelf for very long!

**Curricular use:** OGR genres, mythology, poetry,

**Audience:** Fantasy, Mythology, Fairy Tale, and Science Fiction readers- or kids who just love unicorns!

## Grades 5-6

Murrow, Vita. *Power to the Princess: 15 favorite fairy tales retold with girl power*. Minneapolis, MN: Lincoln Books, an imprint of Quatro, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-78603-203-4.

**Summary:** Fifteen familiar fairy tale princesses are showcased in twisty rewrites that feature themes of self-image, confidence, LGBTQ, friendship, advocacy, disability, and environmentalism. The visual presentation of *Power to the Princess*

signals that this book is special. It is the type of book that readers will pick up off the shelf because of the ornate cover. While the text is a little dense, the stories are only 2-5 pages and enough illustrations are included to keep the reader engaged. Once they catch on to the hip new lives of familiar characters, princesses of all ages will be devouring this book.

**Curricular use:** Social and emotional themes, gender themes, twisted fairy tales

**Audience:** Written at a higher reading level- though younger students may enjoy this book as a read aloud.

Soundar, Chitra. ***Mangoes, Mischief, and Tales of Friendship: Stories from India.***

Somerville, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 2019. ISBN 978-1-5362-0067-6.

**Summary:** This anthology contains two books previously published in the United Kingdom under the titles *A Dollop of Ghee and a Pot of Wisdom* and *A Jar of Pickles and a Pinch of Justice*. It contains eight original tales inspired by traditional trickster tales from India. Prince Veera and Suku are best friends. Together, the boys hold court for King Bheema and hear the concerns of his subjects. Case by case, they are presented with riddle like dilemmas they must solve. For example, when a man sells his well to a neighbor, but does not disclose that the sale excludes the water inside the well, Prince Veera and Suku have to pass judgement. The tales and illustrations are rich with the flavor of India and the compact size makes it an ideal book to curl up with for some independent reading time.

**Curricular use:** Trickster tales, India, Indian Culture

**Audience:** This book would make an equally good read aloud for 3-6th graders. The ICPL has ordered the audiobook version.