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School News

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Covering the Monrovia Unified School District

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 21

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2018

Welcome to the New School Year!



Welcome New Monrovia Unified School District Employees



Dr. Katherine Thorossian

The Monrovia Unified School District welcomed approximately 5,300 students from transitional kindergarten through grade 12 for the 2018-19 school year. It is wonderful to see our students and teachers return, refreshed from the summer months, and eager to pursue both personal and academic aspirations.

A new school year invites new students, friendships, and faculty to bring in a fresh perspective into our schools. We began the year with a new employee breakfast during which representatives of the entire Monrovia community welcomed all new staff members to the Monrovia Unified School District.

Their considerable skill and experience will enrich the thriving programs in our locally and nationally recognized schools. Moreover, we are filled with anticipation to see how much further they will take our students by the end of the school year.

We continue to bolster our students' learning by providing the tools and resources necessary that will help our students succeed. We hold our students to high academic standards and our school programs are embedded with high-quality curriculum:

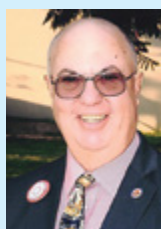
- Robust Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs for every grade level
- Rigorous middle and high school robotics teams that compete nationally and internationally
- Active visual and performing arts programs, highlighted by Wild Rose Elementary School for the Creative Arts, a Grammy Award winning instructor at Santa Fe Computer Science Magnet School, and annual theatre productions at Monrovia High
- Dedicated career pathways in sports medicine, theatre, informational science, math and science, and humanities
- A growing Early College program in partnership with Citrus College
- Championship athletic teams

The Monrovia Unified School District dedicates all its resources to preparing our students. That, after all, is the reason for our existence and the reason for which we are entrusted with the education of your children. We do not take that responsibility lightly and commit to providing our very best so that the next generation of Monrovians matures into ethical, compassionate individuals who contribute to the progress of this rapidly changing world.

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Please drive safely, children are back in school.



Jayne Nickles
Principal

Welcome to Our Community!

After a fun and rejuvenating summer, the Bradoaks community is excited for what the new school year brings! Staff and teachers have been busy getting classrooms ready while our custodial and maintenance crews have worked tirelessly preparing for our students' arrival. Our Bobcat campus is beautiful, both inside and out!

During the first few days of school, students were busy learning the routines and expectations of a new grade level. Many activities of the new school year also focus on building community and developing friendships. Activities such as lifting a cup that is balanced on a loop tied with strings unified third-graders and required them to think critically to find possible solutions.

Witnessing students laugh and share ideas while working together is inspirational. Bobcats, we are off to a great start!



Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Welcome back to another school year! This is always an exciting time for students to reconnect with old friends, make new ones, meet their teachers and get focused on their academic goals. Thank you for including *School News* among your reading choices as we begin our 5th year bringing you the excellence from the classrooms.

Dr. Katherine Thorossian's message on the front page highlights the high-quality curriculum available to Monrovia Unified School District students.

Our next issue is November 7th.

Covering the
MONROVIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Teachers See the
Possibilities

At Oaks Christian School, Mary Kay Altizer applies her passion for the arts and educational technology as she leads the school's performing arts department, including a cutting-edge digital recording and production program.



Oaks Christian School, Advanced Digital Recording Class, Performing Arts Chair, Mary Kay Altizer, M.A. '15

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Canyon Early Learning Center

1000 South Canyon Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2001 • celc.monroviaschools.net



Tom McFadden
Director

Building the Foundation

The Canyon Early Center is starting the 2018–19 school year with over 200 of Monrovia’s most engaging and excited 3- and 4-year-olds. Canyon Early Learning Center started its full-day state preschool program in early August and welcomed the rest of the students on Aug. 15.

Canyon Early Learning Center runs both morning and afternoon three-hour sessions to meet the needs of the community. Canyon Early Learning Center is proud to have three special-day classes to accommodate our special-education students in addition to the general-education classes offered at Canyon Early Learning Center.



The full-day and half-day preschool programs provide a solid foundation for future Monrovia High School Wildcats, class of 2032. During their time at Canyon Early Learning Center, the students will have learning experiences that are curriculum driven and age appropriate in an engaging, safe and friendly learning environment. Canyon Early Learning Center is focused on year two of the implementation of the Creative Curriculum for Preschool.

Canyon Early Learning Center is also looking forward to what should be an amazing year for students, staff and parents at Canyon Early Learning Center.



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Flint Fertig
Principal

Week of Success

Our alternative schools started off the new school year with a bang! The students hit the ground running by fully engaging in our first school-wide All-Write of the year called, “Valley Forge: Would You Have Quit?” By now, most of our high school students are familiar with the Document Based Question Project, but students new to Mountain Park and Canyon Oaks had not seen the power and passion with which our teachers deliver instruction.

The students continued with their own enthusiasm as they grouped-up by shared opinions during their “thrash out.” After they debated their points of view, and tried to persuade their classmates to change sides, they then used their knowledge, experience, outline and “chicken foot” (three-pronged thesis) to write their essays.

The DBQ All-Write was only one component of what we call our “Success Week.” Success Week occurs every nine to 10 weeks as new students arrive at our alternative schools. They take lessons on digital citizenship, career and college planning, personality surveys, school culture, and student expectations. Success Week also gives our students and staff members an opportunity to get to know each other and our school.

With recent legislation that places more accountability for completing a high school diploma in four years, we have increased our district and school-wide initiatives to help students achieve this goal in a timely manner.

Our newest teachers also took the lead to showcase their ability to learn new skills and promote our school’s vision and mission. Having Mr. Randy Medina and Ms. Annette Freitas on campus has really motivated our staff and students to shine in doing what they do best. We wish all of our other MUSD school sites a magnificent new school year!

Clifton *Middle School*

226 South Ivy Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2600 • clifton.monroviaschools.net



Jennifer Jackson
Principal

Canine Therapy!

Clifton is pleased to announce that a canine-therapy program is coming to Clifton this school year in order to provide social/emotional support to students in their academic environment! Research indicates that the presence of dogs alone can have lasting, positive benefits to students, which is precisely why Clifton partnered with the Pasadena Humane Society and SPCA (PHS) to make this possible.

In addition, the presence of dogs naturally provides behavioral supports to students in need and also assists in de-escalating conflicts that students are experiencing. The dogs and their handlers will visit nine classrooms repeatedly on a trial basis before the program is expanded schoolwide. A feature of the program will be the ability to offer animal-care education programs such as schoolwide assemblies and the Kids for Animals Club in collaboration with PHS.

Our animal-loving teacher Jo Porter will advise the club.



Mayflower *Elementary*

210 North Mayflower Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2200 • mayflower.monroviaschools.net



Michele Costarella
Principal

Leading by Example

On behalf of our staff members at Mayflower Elementary School, I want to welcome back all of our students and their families. We look forward to a wonderful year ahead!

The Mayflower Elementary School community is proud of the exemplary academic programs that it offers. These programs have resulted in outstanding academic achievement for our students! Mayflower is also pleased to be a “Code to the Future” school, which provides all of our children with an immersion in computer science targeting soft skills and critical thinking. Mayflower is also recognized by the California Department of Education as a Gold Ribbon School, and is a Title I Academic Achievement Award recipient. We also hold the distinction of being a two-time California Distinguished School!

Our Mayflower staff members believe in working collaboratively with the entire school community to help build a strong partnership between home and campus. Together, we strive to build relationships, strengthen communication, and work to serve all of our students. The work of our supportive PTA exemplifies the commitment that we share to serve our students. This includes tireless fundraising, committed campus beautification, and generous volunteer hours.

I welcome you to visit Mayflower. Come observe the visible learning in our classrooms, and the dedication of our staff members. We encourage everyone to set SAIL every day! Always strive to be your best, and remember, attitude matters! Always display integrity, and lead by example.

Monroe *Elementary*

402 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2300 • monroe.monroviaschools.net



Dr. Lily Jarvis
Principal

Operation Recess

This year, the mighty Monroe Elementary School Lions will have the opportunity to participate in Operation Recess. This structured play initiative promotes a sense of identity, belonging, joy and safety while building friendships and strengthening social skills

during recess.

Last year, Monroe piloted Operation Recess, which is run by a parent and sponsored by the Monroe PTA. Over the summer, a national retailer granted Monroe \$2,500 for the purchase of more equipment, including chess boards, giant outdoor games, huge plastic building blocks, an obstacle course, construction activities, crafts, and many more engaging activities.

Kids are expected to show good sportsmanship, give one another compliments, and offer support to their peers while they play. This program has made a positive difference for children who find recess challenging or who need some guidance during unstructured time.

Like every year, we are committed to ensuring that every mighty Monroe Lion feels welcome, happy and safe at school!



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Monrovia *High School*

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Kirk McGinnis
Principal

Happy Birthday, MHS!

Monrovia High School (MHS), Home to Scholars and Champions, celebrates its 125th year of providing quality education for students in Monrovia. The school was founded in 1893 and was originally called Monrovia City School and opened in another location. However, it ultimately found its current home in 1929.

The school building, commonly referred to as MAD, served students from Monrovia, Arcadia and Duarte. Then, in 1957, the other two communities built their own school buildings. Since then, though many upgrades have occurred on the campus, the main building and the façade of Monrovia High School have remained historical hallmarks and bring pride to the foothills.

This year, the MHS student body will join in celebrating 125 years of educational excellence by making the commitment to “Live Life the Wildcat Way” in academics, athletics and the arts. MHS continues to honor the traditions shared by multiple generations while creating cutting-edge, innovative programs that help students prepare for life after high school.



Plymouth *Elementary*

1300 Boley St., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2400 • plymouth.monroviaschools.net



Dr. Greg Gero
Principal

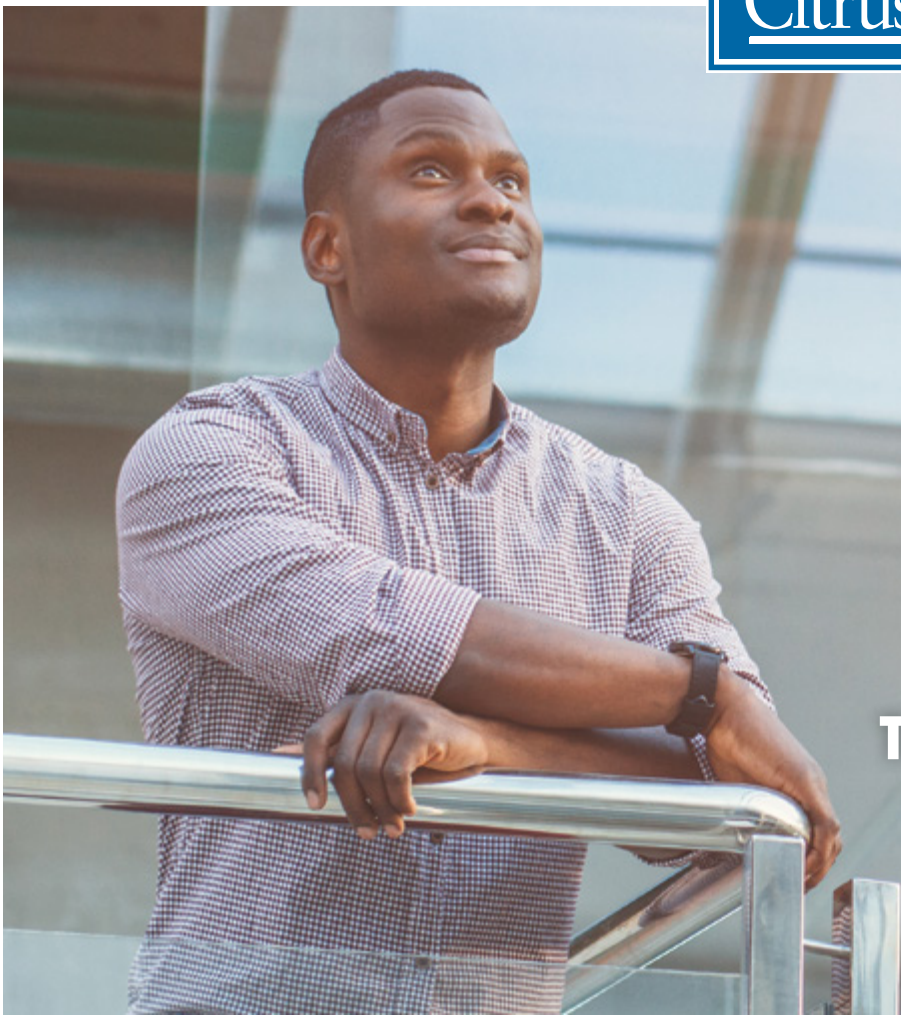
Cotsen Teachers

Seven of our teachers have been accepted into a two-year program dedicated to developing excellent teaching in elementary schools. The program, run by the Cotsen Foundation, provides teachers with exceptional professional development and the opportunity to collaborate with a network of teachers who participate in the Cotsen program. Cotsen also provides mentors, selected from our teaching staff, to support and promote the growth of our teachers.

Plymouth already has amazing teachers! Our partnership with Cotsen promises to strengthen our culture of teaching excellence, help us to reach higher levels of teaching expertise, and increase our impact on student learning and achievement. The Cotsen Foundation envisions that “every child experiences the magical touch of excellent teachers.” Plymouth is honored to contribute to this powerful vision!



Our fabulous Cotsen team: Lisa Dols, Elizabeth Garcia, Sheena Rehaume, Ashley Carroll (Mentor), Karen Jarrett, Susana Reveles, and Shannon Varner.



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Dr. Geoff Zamarripa
Principal

We Believe in Cougar Pride

This year, Santa Fe has adopted the theme of “Pride” to help guide our school’s vision for a great year of learning, growth, and ever-increasing student outcomes and opportunities!

Developed by our staff members, this positive belief in our students was identified as a cornerstone of our vision to provide a quality educational experience for all. One of the ways in which we are supporting this goal is by implementing the world-renowned Olweus Anti-Bullying program.

This program is designed to educate students about the dangers of bullying; and how we, as a community, can discuss, learn about, and support each other to improve our school culture and understand the effects of unwanted behaviors. We are also implementing monthly school-wide initiatives to teach our students the value of our Cougar Code: Be Ready, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible.

We believe in the worth of every Cougar Scholar, as well as their ability to learn and grow both socially and academically.



Dr. Leslie Miller
Principal

Beary Exciting News

The Wild Rose School Bears ask you to join us in warm congratulations to Mrs. Rebecca Alarcon, our K-2 SAI teacher.

Mrs. Alarcon has been a teacher at Wild Rose for 10 years. As a special education teacher, Mrs. Alarcon’s caring nature and personal philosophy where everyone can achieve are qualities that make her an outstanding educator. In September, the Los Angeles County Office of Education will also recognize Mrs. Alarcon for her dedication and hard work. Well done, Mrs. Alarcon!



In other exciting news, Wild Rose will soon be undergoing a big new change, as we are becoming the designated arts school in Monrovia!

At Wild Rose, the arts are integrated into and throughout the school day, and beyond. We are looking forward to our presentation to the community about this exciting new change, and the programs that we will be offering to our students.





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Consider Every Point of View



Lucy Davis

Murder on the Orient Express
By Agatha Christie

Detective Hercule Poirot boards an unexpectedly full train from Syria to Paris with colleague M. Bouc. On board, passengers from different walks of life travel the world. The journey was scheduled to last three days, but when the train gets caught in a snowdrift and a passenger is murdered, Poirot launches an immediate investigation.



Every traveler's story comes out of the shadows — with motives to match. It's up to Hercule, M. Bouc, and the train's doctor to solve the case of the Murder on the Orient Express. Will they catch the killer before anyone else is hurt?

I enjoyed this book for many reasons. It's witty, suspenseful, and teaches the reader to examine the case closely and consider every point of view. Christie is becoming a favorite author of mine! Five out of five bookworms.

P.S. you might want to use a French-to-English translator, as French is a common language throughout the story.

Lucy is a 7th grade student. When she isn't immersed in a book, she loves musical theater, ballet, and singing. She enjoys stretching her imagination by writing short stories of her own. Lucy will rate the books 1 to 5 bookworms with 5 being the best.

Richard's Book Review

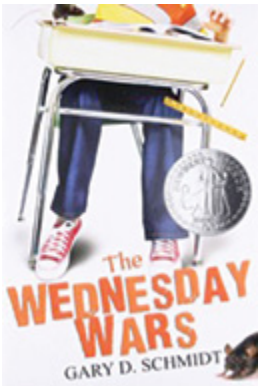
Perservance



Richard J.

The Wednesday Wars
By Gary D. Schmidt

This book is about the boy named Holling Hoodhood in 1976. Throughout the year Holling deals with many difficult situations. He is the only kid in his middle school who isn't Jewish or Catholic, which means that during Religious Studies he has to stay in English Class, do classroom chores and study Shakespeare. It is 1976 and everybody is struggling with the fear of the Vietnam War. Holling had a rough year, which happens to all of us, but in the end he got through and won the respect of his teacher, family, and classmates.



I like that the story is set in a different time period. It's interesting to read about how people lived back then. The story is about perseverance and growing up under difficult circumstances. It's funny, but serious. I give it 5 out of 5, with 5 being the best.

Richard J. is a 4th grader. Richard likes math, playing sports, physical activities like bike-riding, swimming, diving and running. He is a hard-working student who enjoys reading, seeing and leaning new things and spending time with his family and friends.



Milestones and Firsts Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.
When you have completed the word search,
one word will be left and that word you email to:
Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com
(Please put Monrovia in the subject line)

Entries must be received by **October 15, 2018**
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
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- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
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| GRADUATION | TRAVEL ALONE |
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| DATE | BALLOON RIDE |
| LOVE | BOAT |
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| MARRIAGE | FIRST TOOTH |
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| HOUSE | |

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D	W	A	C	S	N	H	G	E	U	D	F	X	W	F
E	D	I	R	N	O	O	L	L	A	B	C	V	X	F

Congratulations to
Ashley Choi and Ethan Flores
Winners of the May Word Search Contest!

I Am Your Food



Kate Karp

When you were young, you were probably told to not play with your food. Surely, however, no one told you not to talk to it.



Well, here's your chance! Gunnar Madsen, a Grammy-nominated artist and cofounder of the prolific, oddball acappella group The Bobs, has set out a surreal buffet of brain food. High schoolers, middle-schoolers and certainly adults, will chow down on *I Am Your Food*. Some of it may be too rich for young children, but they'll love the music and will likely run around the house yodeling "Diet of woooooorrrmmms!"

Everything's turned on its ear, and sometimes, it's an ear of corn. The CD starts, appropriately enough, with breakfast. The rollicking "10,000 Pancakes" is about finally getting enough to eat; conversely, it'll whet your appetite for the rest of the tunes. "Egg Salad in the Sun" is ripped from every overblown ballad by the psychedelic group The Doors and has a sense of droll menace—you *don't* want to eat that egg salad, nor do you want to consume the moldy crud in "Shelf Life." And do be aware that "Fast Food" has more than one connotation!

There's food for thought and emotion, too. "What If..." and "Lunch Is in a Paper Bag" are metaphors of love and friendship; the latter is about finding differences and similarities among us. Of course, we don't have to eat the same things to get along, but communication with edibles is practically mandatory. Just watch out for those worms.

Kate Karp is an editor for *School News Roll Call* and a freelance writer and editor.

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Entries must be received by October 15, 2018
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
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- CARROTS
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- CELERY
- MANGO
- CABBAGE
- POTATOES
- BANANAS
- KOHLRABI
- TOMATOES
- PLUMS
- ONIONS
- KIWI
- BROCCOLI
- PEPPERS
- GRAPES
- ORANGES
- BERRIES
- LEMONS
- CHERRIES



Surprising Twists



Bailey

Princess Academy by Shannon Hale left me craving for more. It's the perfect combination of adventure, princesses, friendship, and even a little romance!

When the people of Mount Eskel receive message from the lowlanders saying their prince is looking for a princess and all young girls will be sent to an academy, everyone is in shock, especially Miri. Without a choice, Miri, her friends, and a strange lowlander girl named Britta, set off to the academy, only to find themselves with a horrible tutor and homesick. Now, the pressure is on to be the best of the academy and marry the prince. Will Miri find out that even though she's small for her age, her voice is big? Will she stand up for what's right?

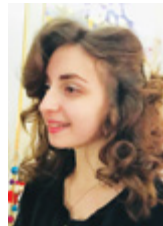
I couldn't put this book down! Shannon Hale always describes the moment just right and the twists were surprising! I give this book 5 out of 5 stars. Don't forget to read the rest of the series!

Bailey is a 7th grader who loves being with her friends and reading. When she isn't doing these things, she's dancing ballet or lyrical.



Christina's Book Review

Non-Stop Action



Christina J.

Alex Rider: Skeleton Key

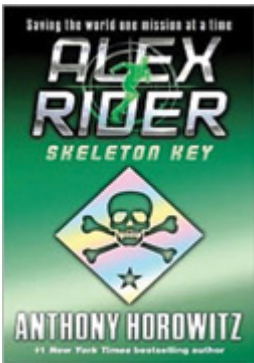
By Anthony Horowitz

The Alex Rider series is always jam-packed with extreme action and intense situations that make it hard to put the book away until the very end. Reading this book series is like watching an action movie, and Skeleton Key is no exception.

Alex Rider is a 14-year old orphan and a young spy for an organization known as M16, on a mission to save the world. There are many plots in this book, like Chinese gangs drugging athletes for their purposes. The ending is very dramatic and leaves you feeling sorry for the characters.

I liked this book because it has non-stop action and the hero is a young boy, who is an unwilling participant that did what he had to do to save the world. All the characters are interesting. I give this book 5 out of 5, with 5 being the best.

Christina J. is an 9th grader. Christina is an avid reader, who enjoys a good book about some great adventure, mystery or action. She is a hard-working student and a young author herself. In 5th grade she wrote a book Melody's Stories: I Am a Spy Now, published by Studenttreasures Publishing (PIN #3582798).



Book Review By Katrina

A Riveting Story



Katrina D.

Something New; Tales From a Makeshift Bride by Lucy Knisley is a graphic novel describing Lucy's experiences in love and marriage. Lucy's love life has its ups and downs just like anyone else. But when the love of her life, John, proposes, they leap headfirst into the whirlwind of preparing a wedding. From guest lists to dresses to catering and vows, Lucy gives the reader an honest depiction of the chaos and joys that comes with preparing a wedding. She also takes time to expand on the fears, hopes and worries that come with crossing the threshold of marriage that is quite relatable. The author keeps the story alive with a colorful art style and the story riveting with her trials to create a wedding out of society's expectations. Breaking through the 'weddings are easy' stereotype of books, I'd recommend this story to anyone and everyone. Katrina rates this book five out of five crescent moons.



Katrina is an 11th grader who loves to sketch, read and write. She either wants to publish her own novels, work in animation or become a biologist (or maybe all three!). Katrina will rate her book reviews from 1 to 5 crescent moons.

Isabella's Book Review

Tests Your Imagination

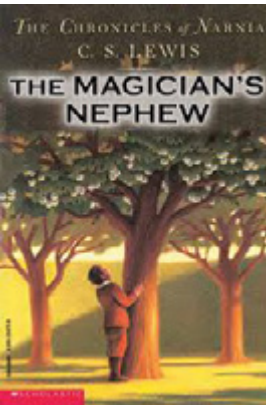


Isabella A.

The Magician's Nephew by C.S Lewis is about Polly, Digory, and Andrew. Andrew makes gold rings that take you to other worlds, and green ones that bring you back. Polly touches the gold one and Digory follows. On their way back, they encounter a witch who destroys her world and hitch-hikes back with them. In London, Andrew becomes her slave and the witch causes chaos. They get the witch into what they thought was her world, only to find the world is becoming Narnia. Narnia has talking animals and the witch flees north. The lion in charge gives the cabbie man and his wife a special job, while Digory and Polly search for a cure for Digory's mother. What will become of Narnia and the outsiders?

I rate this book 5 stars a because of the excitement and how it makes the reader (no matter how old) use their imagination.

Isabella is a 6th grader who loves to read, write, volleyball and plans on becoming an author of children's books. She rates books 1-5 stars with 5 being the best.



Want to be a student columnist for *School News* reviewing your favorite books? Ask your parent to email Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com for guidelines and deadlines. We publish 36 *School News* publications and your reviews will be syndicated in as many as space allows.



Parental Controls for Young Kids Online



Some very basic parental controls are a good idea, are simple to set, and will put you at ease. These can be as basic as using safe search on Google or installing a basic content filter on your web browser. If you're supervising your young kids while they're online, this is probably all you need; more complex controls can sometimes get in kids' way by blocking harmless content.

To figure out whether you need more robust parental controls, consider how much time your kids spend online, how much supervision you can provide while they're online, how technically savvy they are, and whether they have a history of searching for age-inappropriate stuff.

If you decide you want extra controls, research the different parental controls in the marketplace, many of which require a monthly subscription. These include filters that are constantly updated and include screen-time-management features. Some parental controls also offer entertaining, useful, and educational features for kids, making the controls feel more like a fun tool than a lockbox. Many parental-control products also will send you updates on what's been searched generally, whether certain terms were searched (such as "drugs"), and how much time your kid spent doing what.

The downside to parental controls -- other than cost -- is that they can provide a false sense of security. Determined kids can defeat them, and the filters are often *too* good, blocking out plenty of harmless stuff.

Your ultimate goal is to raise kids who use the Internet safely and responsibly and think critically about their actions, but a little technical assistance can help. And, as your kids get older, you'll need to dial down the restrictions to help them develop their own sense of responsibility.

Common Sense Media is an independent nonprofit organization offering unbiased ratings and trusted advice to help families make smart media and technology choices. Check out our ratings and recommendations at www.common sense media.org



The Art Below Your Feet

By D.H. Coop

During the 1950s and 1960s, "stop and smell the roses" was a popular saying, which had more meaning than just taking the time to smell a rose. It meant that life is full of wonderful little things that should be enjoyed.



One of those things is right below your feet, if you take the time to look down. It is the manhole covers you see in sidewalks and streets. Their circular shape is perfect for the simple reason that it is the only geometric shape that will not fall into itself.

Some manhole covers are imprinted with a word to identify the type of manhole that is hidden beneath. Others have designs that share a location, while still others are used to display art. So, next time you are walking, take the time to stop and look down. You may see more than just a circular metal plate covering a hole. It may open your eyes to a whole world of possibilities!



D.H.Coop is a retired fire/paramedic and retired teacher having taught IB and AP World History 30 years. He continues to substitute, tutor and consult.
www.HistoryDepot.com

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