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2012 Jewish Book Month List for Children and Teens

Preschool – Grade 2

Balsley, Tilda. ***On No, Jonah!*** Illus. by Jago. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, 2012. 32 pp. $17.95. ISBN: 9780761351399. Preschool - gr. 2.

The Bible story of Jonah and the Great Fish (better known as Jonah and the Whale) is retold in rhyme.

Gellman, Ellie. ***Jeremy's Dreidel.*** Illus. by Maria Mola. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, 2012. 32 pp. $17.95. ISBN: 9780761375074. K – gr. 3.

Revised from the 1992 version. When Jeremy joins the dreidel-making workshop at the Jewish Community Center, he uses clay to make a Braille dreidel for his blind father. He tells his friends about visual impairment. His friends plan an inclusive Hanukkah celebration.

Greene, Jacqueline Dembar. ***Speak Up, Tommy!*** Illus. by Deborah Melmon. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, 2012. 32 pp. $17.95. ISBN: 9780761374978. Gr. 1 – 3.

Tommy, who recently moved to America from Israel, is teased because he does not know English well and so does not speak loudly, but when a police officer visits Tommy's class with a police dog that only understands Hebrew, friendship blooms.

Rouss, Sylvia. ***Sammy Spider's New Friend.*** Illus. by Katherine Janus Kahn. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, 2012. 32 pp. $16.95. ISBN: 9780761366638. Preschool – gr. 2.

As the Shapiros prepare to welcome a new family to their neighborhood, Sammy, a young spider who lives in the Shapiro's house, is blown by the wind into the neighbor's yard and entertains little Moti, who speaks to him in Hebrew.

Schram, Peninnah. ***The Apple Tree's Discovery.*** Illus. by Wendy W. Lee. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, 2012. 24 pp. $16.95. ISBN: 9780761351306. Preschool – Gr. 2.

A little apple tree in the middle of a forest of majestic oaks longs to have stars in its branches as the tall oak trees seem to have, but God says that the apple tree should be satisfied with what it has.

Sinykin, Sheri Cooper. ***Zayde Comes to Live.*** Illus. by Kristina Swarner. Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 2012. 32 pp. $16.95. ISBN: 9781561456314. Gr. 1 – 4.

When Rachel's beloved grandfather, Zayde, comes to spend his last days with her family, she worries what will happen when he dies.

Stampler, Ann Redisch. ***The Wooden Sword.*** Illus. By Carol Liddiment. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Company, 2012. 32 pp., $16.99. ISBN: 978-0-8075-9201-4. Gr. 1 – 4.

Impressed by a poor Jewish shoemaker's belief that God will ensure everything turns out as it should, a shah in Kabul, Afghanistan, devises a series of hardships to test the man's faith.

Grades 2 – 4

Hyde, Heidi Smith. ***Emanuel and the Hanukkah Rescue.*** Illus. by Jamel Akib. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, 2012. 32 pp. $17.95. ISBN: 9780761366256. Gr. 2 – 4.

Emanuel's family immigrated to America from Portugal, where they were persecuted for being Jews. Angered that his father is too scared to light the Hanukkiah, Emanuel stows away on a whaling ship. The ship gets lost in a storm and is guided back by the Hanukkah oil lamps of Emmanuel's father and all his neighbors.

McDonough, Yona Zeldis. ***The Cats in the Doll Shop.*** Illus. by Heather Maione. New York: Viking, 2011. $14.99. ISBN: 9780670012794. Gr. 3 – 6.

With World War I raging in Europe, eleven-year-old Anna is thrilled to learn that her cousin Tania is coming from Russia to stay with Anna's family on the lower East Side of New York, and although Tania is shy and withdrawn when she arrives, her love of cats helps her adjust to her new family.

Meyerhoff, Jenny. ***Sami's Sleepaway Summer.*** New York: Scholastic, 2012. 128 pp. $5.99, ISBN: 9780545362672, Pbk. Gr. 2–5.

Samantha "Sami" Bloom is going to a Jewish sleep away camp for the first time. She is nervous about being away from home, trying new food, and doing the super-scary ropes course. The rabbi at the camp teaches Sami that camp is special because of the friendships your form.

Nobleman, Marc Tyler. ***Bill the Boy Wonder: The Secret Co-Creator of Batman.*** Illus. by Ty Templeton. 48 pp. $17.95. Charlesbridge, 2012. ISBN: 9781580892896. Gr. 2 – 5.

A struggling, Jewish writer named Bill Finger helped invent Batman, from concept to costume to character. He dreamed up Batman's haunting origins and his colorful nemeses. He named Gotham. Despite his brilliance, Bill worked in obscurity, his name never appearing on a Batman comic. It was only after his death that fans went to bat for Bill, calling for DC to acknowledge him as co-creator of Batman. Their fight for justice continues to this day.

Rubin, Susan Goldman. ***Jean Laffite: The Pirate Who Saved America.*** Illus. by Jeff Himmelman. New York: Abrams Books, 2012. 48 pp., $18.95, ISBN: 9780810997332, Gr. 3–5.

An illustrated biography that tells the story of Jean Laffite the Jewish pirate who helped the Americans win the battle of New Orleans against the British in 1815. From numerous sources, including Laffite's journal, Rubin distilled various facts (and legends) to write an engrossing and fast-paced account of Laffite's life.

Rubin describes Laffite's Sephardic background and early education as the youngest of eight children growing up in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Features an extensive bibliography, list of historical sites, and an adequate index.

Grades 5 - 8

Dublin, Anne. ***The Baby Experiment****.* Toronto: Dundurn, 2012. 152 pp. $9.99. ISBN: 9781459701359, Gr. 5–8.

Set in Germany in 1703, Johanna hides her Jewish identity to get a job in an orphanage. After experiencing the cruelty of the baby experiment, where lack of nurturing leads to infant deaths, her strongly held Jewish values impel her to take a huge risk. She runs away from the orphanage, taking a baby with her. Johanna's suspenseful story captures the harshness of the times: disease, poverty, crime, and rampant anti-Semitism. Her escape takes her, after many harrowing events, to Amsterdam, thanks to the kindness of strangers whom she meets during her flight.

Gleitzman, Morris. ***Now.*** New York: Henry Holt, 2012.192 pp. $16.99. ISBN: 9780805093780. Gr. 7 – 10.

The final book of the trilogy that began with *Once* and continued with *Then.* Felix is a grandfather. He has achieved much in his life and is widely admired in the community. He has mostly buried the painful memories of his childhood, but they resurface when his granddaughter Zelda comes to stay with him. Together they face an event that helps them achieve salvation from the past, but also brings the possibility of destruction.

Greene, Jacqueline Dembar. ***The Crystal Ball: A Rebecca Mystery.*** (American Girl Mysteries). Illus. by Sergio Giovine. Middleton, WI: American Girl, 2012. 151 pp. $6.95. ISBN: 9781593699499. Gr. 2 – 5.

Rebecca Rubin is Jewish immigrant who lives in the lower East Side. She is interested in show business, so she attends a performance of Harry Houdini. After the show, Rebecca decides to learn magic tricks. When a robbery occurs in her building, she uses the magic to solve a robbery in her building.

Rosenthal, Betsey R. ***Looking for Me*****.** Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2012. 176 pp. $15.99, ISBN: 9780547610849. Gr. 5-8.

In 1936 Baltimore, Edith, an eleven-year-old Jewish girl, one of twelve siblings, tries to find her place in her overcrowded family. Luckily for Edith, Miss Connelly, her teacher, takes a special interest in the lost girl, gently guiding her to discover her true gifts and value. Ms. Connelly encourages her to go to college to be a teacher—an amazing dream for a poor, Jewish Depression-era family. Written in verse.

Sanders, Shelly. ***Rachel's Secret.*** Toronto: Second Story Press, 2012. 248 pp. $12.95. ISBN: 9781926920375. Gr. 6 – 9.

Rachel is a fourteen-year-old Jewish girl who lives in Kishinev, Russia in 1903. She witnesses a murder of her Christian friend by his uncle and cousin. She knows that no government official will believe a Jewish girl. The local newspaper blames the Jewish people for the murder. This propaganda fuels a pogrom on Easter.

Schubert, Leda. ***Monsieur Marceau***. Illus, by Gâerard DuBois. New York: Roaring Book Press, 2012. 40 pp. $17.99. ISBN: 9781596435292. Gr. 5 – 8.

Born in France, Marcel Marceau was 16 when WWII broke out. He changed his last name to hide his Jewish identity and worked with the French underground. After the war, he studied mime and created his signature character, Bip. Quotes from Marceau connect the silence of those who returned from concentration camps (where his father had died) with his own choice of silence on stage. An afterword offers a more detailed account of Marceau's life and suggests activities for children who would like to try mime.

Yelchin, Eugene. ***Breaking Stalin's Nose.*** New York: Henry Holt, 2011. 160 pp. $15.99. ISBN: 9780805092165. Gr. 4 – 8.

In the Stalinist era of the Soviet Union, ten-year-old Sasha idolizes his father, a devoted Communist, but when police take his father away and leave Sasha homeless, he is forced to examine his own perceptions, values, and beliefs.

Cookbooks for All Ages

Groner, Judye. ***Maccabee Meals: Food and Fun for Hanukkah.*** Illus. by Ursula Roma. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, 2012. 64 pp. $8.95. ISBN: 9780761351443. Pbk. K – Gr. 6.

A reprint of the *Hanukkah* cookbook ***Miracle Meals*** (1987). Candle blessings, the story of Hanukkah and dreidel games are included.

Harkham, Rachel and Thomas, Doni Zasloff. ***Get cooking! A Jewish American Family Cookbook and Rockin' Mama Doni Celebration.*** Photography by Dan Engongoro and Andres Valenzuela. Springfield, New Jersey: Behrman House, 2012. 128 pp. $19.95. ISBN: 9780874419481.

Singer/songwriter Mama Doni teamed up with food writer Rachel Harkham to add modern flair to classic Jewish fare. An audio CD accompanies the cook book.