(Books published in 2006)

Apples and oranges … and lychees and loquats—how can one compare?
That’s the challenge when a team of NSTA’s best science educators attempt to
select the best of each year’s science trade books.

It’s been 34 years since NSTA joined forces with the Children’s Book
Council to select the best trade books each year. Publishers submit
hundreds of books for evaluation, and the judges have a daunting task.
First, they need to determine if the books are truly “trade books” that
would normally be found in a bookstore, and they must always
represent the best of the National Science Education Standards.

The committee must compare the books to a set of standards that have
been refined each year since the competition began. The committee
looks for accuracy, good graphics, developmental appropriateness,
and readability. Often, the final choice comes down to that hard-to-
define characteristic that hooks the reader and fascinates.

How to use this list? Many teachers refer it to their media
professionals and to their students’ parents. Some use it to make
purchases. And sometimes, teachers grab copies for their own reading
pleasure. Above all, these books are meant to be enjoyed!

About the Annotations

In addition to standard publishing information, the annotations indicate the following:
1. Titles marked with 🌟 are Selectors’ Choices—books that individual panel members responded to with particular enthusiasm.
3. The prices are current as of January 2007.
4. The notation Paper ed. (F) indicates that a paperback edition is forthcoming and whether the publisher is different from the hardcover edition.
5. Reading levels [P = Primary (K–2); E = Elementary (3–5); I = Intermediate (6–8); A = Advanced (9–12)] are provided by the reviewers. They are intended as guidelines and are not meant to limit the potential use of titles.
6. The reviewer’s initials follow each description (see Members of the Book Selection Panel listed below).
7. The most relevant National Science Content Standards are indicated by Roman numerals (see below).

National Science Content Standards

I Unifying Concepts and Processes
II Science as Inquiry
III Physical Science Perspectives
IV Life Science
V Earth and Space Science
VI Science and Technology
VII Science in Personal and Social
VIII History and Nature of Science

Archaeology, Anthropology, and Paleontology


**Biography**

**Barnum Brown: Dinosaur Hunter.** Written and illustrated by David Sheldon. Walker Books for Young Readers. 32pp. Trade ISBN 0-8027-9602-8, $16.95; Library ISBN 0-8027-9603-6, $17.85. (E) This is the story of the greatest “dinosaur hunter” of the 20th century—Barnum Brown. Through this depiction of Brown’s life, the reader is given a glimpse of how early 20th-century paleontologists went about the hard work of uncovering the remains of organisms that lived millions of years ago. CRB (VIII, VII)

**Marie Curie: The Woman Who Changed the Course of Science.** Philip Steele. Illustrated with prints and photographs. National Geographic Children’s Books. 64pp. Trade ISBN 0-7922-5387-6, $17.95; Library ISBN 0-7922-5388-4, $27.90. (A) This fascinating biography depicts the remarkable life of Marie Curie, the first woman to win a Nobel prize. Through timelines, photographs, and compelling text, the author documents both Curie’s struggles in her dangerous research into radioactivity and her determination to make lasting contributions to society. Bibliography, Glossary, Index. PJC (III, VII, VIII)


Earth and Space Science

Big Alaska: Journey Across America’s Most Amazing State. 

Diving to a Deep-Sea Volcano (Scientists in the Field). Kenneth Mallory. Illustrated with photographs. Houghton Mifflin Company. 64pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-618-33205-2, $17. (I) This book is a thrilling explanation and has incredible photographs of the exploration of deep-sea thermal vents. While describing the deep-sea diving submarine Alvin, this book is filled with adventure, great deep-sea science discovery, and an explanation of chemosynthetic ecosystems. This fascinating story ends with questions for further deep-sea exploration. Acknowledgments, Glossary, Suggestions for Further Reading, Index. DTC (V, VI, II)

Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon. 
Catherine Thimmesh. Illustrated with photographs. Houghton Mifflin Company. 80pp. Trade ISBN 978-0618-50757-3, $19.95. (I) Apollo 11, the first Moon landing, is a story that many people made happen. Team Moon recounts the story of the hundreds of people—such as technicians, software developers, seamstresses, contractors, managers, and many more—who worked on every detail to make this mission successful. Using quotes from NASA transcripts, National Archives materials, and NASA photos, the book is about the dedication of a team that worked together. NASA Photos and Transcripts, List of Apollo Missions and Their Symbolic Patch, Glossary, Sources, Chapter Notes, Index. NJP (V)

Environment and Ecology

0-9773795-1-5, $16.95; Paperback ISBN 0-9773795-0-7, $9.95. (P) This beautifully illustrated book explores the incredible diversity of life found in an endangered environment—the rain forest. The food web of the tropical rain forest is presented through lyrical text and naturalist paintings. Plants and animals are linked in a chain of life that will be evident to young readers. Author’s Note. PJC (IV, VII)

**Health and Science**

**The Facts About Cocaine (Drugs).** Suzanne LeVert. Illustrated with prints and photographs. Benchmark Books/ Marshall Cavendish Children’s Books. 112pp. Library ISBN 0-7614-1973-X, $37.95. (I, A) This is an important book for both parents and teenagers. It shows the dangers of cocaine use to the individual and its damaging effects on society. It also describes how cocaine distribution is being combated and how people can be rehabilitated with treatment and self-help groups. Glossary, Further Information, Index. CDC (IV, VII)


**Life Science**

**Butterfly Eyes and Other Secrets of the Meadow.** Joyce Sidman. Illustrated by Beth Krommes. Houghton Mifflin Company. 48pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-618-56313-5, $16. (P) By pairing poetry riddles and factual information, this beautifully illustrated book reveals secrets of life in the meadow. Beginning with creatures that awake with the Sun and ending with those that feed in the twilight, readers are taken on an enlightening tour of the living wonders found in fields. Glossary. PJC (IV)

5995-9, $16.95. (I, A) Viruses, diseases, and an emerging epidemic … this text starts with a fictional story of a possible flu outbreak in the United States and then medical reporter Denise Grady leads readers on a somewhat terrifying journey of emerging diseases. To gain a better understanding of these deadly viruses, the author gives in-depth coverage of Marburg fever, avian flu-H5N1, HIV/AIDS, West Nile, and SARS. Source Notes, Further Reading, Internet Resources, Acknowledgments, Picture Credits, Index. HDRC (IV, VII, VIII, II)

**Double Helix: The Quest to Uncover the Structure of DNA (National Geographic Science Quest).**

**Horses.** Seymour Simon. Illustrated with photographs. HarperCollins Children’s Books. 32pp. Trade IBSN 0-06-028945-7, $16.89. (E) This book has beautiful photographs on every page along with a descriptive story of how the horse has become an integral part of the human world. Seymour Simon describes for us in detail the horse’s history, its life cycle, and its place in the world today. This would be a wonderful book for any child who wants a horse of his or her own. Author’s Note. HDRC (IV, VII)

**Influenza: The Next Pandemic?** Connie Goldsmith. Illustrated with prints and photographs. Lerner Publishing Group. 112pp. Trade ISBN 0-7613-9457-5, $27.93. (A) Viruses are much simpler than bacteria. This book details the difference between viruses and bacteria and describes the composition of a virus and its search for a host. The author creates a seamless blend of history and science to tell about the impact of the flu on generations before us, the possible impact of another pandemic, how to prevent the flu, and how to care for patients. Vignettes interspersed throughout make this important book real for readers. Alternative Opinions, Glossary, Resources, Source Notes, Selected Bibliography, Index. NJP (IV, VII)

**Oh, Rats! The Story of Rats and People.** Albert Marrin. Illustrated by C.B. Mordan. Dutton Children’s Books/Penguin Young Readers Group. 48pp. Trade ISBN 0-525-47762-4, $16.99. (E) This unusual subject makes for a most intriguing book! By combining science, history, culture, and folklore, the author introduces us to the fascinating world of rats. Necessary to medical breakthroughs, helpful in wartime, carrier of diseases, and tasty delicacy—all of these describe this marvel of nature and true survivor. Bibliography, More Books to Read. PJC (IV)

**Parasites: Latching On to a Free Lunch.** Paul Fleisher. Illustrated with photographs. Lerner Publishing Group. 112pp. Trade ISBN 0-8225-3415-0, $29.27. (A) This incredible book discusses parasites of all kinds. Beautifully illustrated and detailed, this book discusses parasites that thrive on fungi, plants, worms, protists, insects, and vertebrates. The book ends with a discussion of the reasons there are so many parasites, the evolution of parasites, and the war against parasites. List of Major Human Parasites, Glossary, Selected Bibliography, Further Reading and Websites, Index. DTC (IV, VII, VIII)
Rain Forest (Kingfisher Voyages). Jinny Johnson with Nalini Nadkarni. Illustrated with photographs. Kingfisher/Houghton Mifflin Company. 60pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-7534-5904-1, $15.95. (E) Join Nalini Nadkarni as she studies different rain forests from the ground level to the top of the canopy. Through this journey, you will learn some of the techniques she uses to gain information about the flora and fauna of these regions as well as meet some of its human inhabitants. Author’s Note, Index, Glossary. CRB (IV, VIII, VII)

Skunks (Wildlife Series). Adrienne Mason. Illustrated by Nancy Gray Ogle. Kids Can Press. 32pp. Trade ISBN 1-55337-733-8, $10.95; Paperback ISBN 1-55337-734-6, $6.95. (E) This beautifully illustrated and informative book identifies the different types of skunks found throughout the world and the four that are native to North America. In addition, the book provides information about skunk habitats, how they protect themselves, what they eat, and how they learn. Index. CRB (IV)


Turtle Crossing. Written and illustrated by Rick Chrustowski. Henry Holt and Company. 32pp. Trade ISBN 0-8050-7498-8, $16.95. (P) The life cycle of a painted turtle is the focus of this well-written and nicely illustrated book. The story begins with turtles scrambling out of their nest and progresses to them laying their own eggs five years later. A description of the environment in which the turtles live and the obstacles they encounter make this book one that helps young readers understand painted turtles and their journey to a nesting site. Narrative of Facts. NJP (IV)
What Stinks? Marilyn Singer. Illustrated with photographs. Darby Creek Publishing. 64pp. Trade ISBN 1-58196-035-2, $17.95. Paper ed. (F). (I) From excrement to insects, plants, and fungi, this book explores the offensive smells of numerous organisms. It discusses where these “stinky” organisms come from and why they have offensive odors (at least to humans). This great book will expand students’ curiosity and teach them the science behind the stink. Vocabulary, Author Acknowledgments, Bibliography, Internet Resources, Glossary, Index. DTC (IV, VII, II)


Physical Science


Science-Related Careers

The North Pole Was Here: Puzzles and Perils at the Top of the World. Andrew C. Revkin. Illustrated with photographs. Kingfisher/Houghton Mifflin Company. 128pp. Trade ISBN 978-0-7534-5993-5, $15.95. (I) A reporter writes about his stories of personal adventure, polar exploration, and the controversy about whether Peary or Cook actually reached the North Pole first. He also discusses scientific research conducted on the ice by present-day scientists and the consequences for Earth’s future of the melting sea ice. Source Notes, Further Reading, Internet Resources, Picture Credits, Index, Metric Conversion Chart. LS (VIII, VI, V)

80pp. Trade ISBN 978-0618-49641-9, $18. (I) This book is an incredible description of how people continue to learn about animals in the natural world. It highlights environmental appreciation, the excitement and challenges of scientific discovery, and collaborative conservation efforts. Lisa Dabek, scientific leader of the research team, is an excellent example of women in science. Resources, Index, Author’s Note, Photographer’s Note. PLB (VIII, VII, IV)

**Science Detectives: How Scientists Solved Six Real-Life Mysteries.** Editors of YES Magazine. Illustrated by Rose Cowles. Kids Can Press. 48pp. Trade ISBN 1-55337-994-2, $15.95; Paperback ISBN 1-55337-995-0, $8.95. (P, E) Emphasizing that science is often about solving mysteries, this book presents scientists using scientific methodology and logic to unravel puzzles as diverse as a typhoid outbreak, a crashed plane, and the nature of DNA. Augmenting the text are hands-on activities and sidebars with related solved mysteries and facts. Index. CVM (II, VII, VIII)

**Members of the Book Selection Panel**

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**Heather Curton** (HDRC)
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About the Books and the Selection Process

The books that appear in this annotated bibliography selected as Outstanding Science Trade Books were published in 2006. They are intended primarily for kindergarten through 12th grade. They were selected by members of a book review panel appointed by the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and assembled in cooperation with the Children’s Book Council (CBC). NSTA and CBC have cooperated on this bibliographic project since 1973.

The panel looks at both content and presentation. Selection is based generally on the following criteria:

• The book has substantial science content.
• Information is clear, accurate, and up-to-date.
• Theories and facts are clearly distinguished.
• Facts are not oversimplified to the point that the information is misleading.
• Generalizations are supported by facts, and significant facts are not omitted.
• Books are free of gender, ethnic, and socioeconomic bias.

The panel also uses rigorous selection guidelines relating to the presentation of material, including the following: logical presentation and a clear sequence of ideas; appropriate content level for the intended audience; compatible text and illustrations; illustrations that are accurate representations in size, color, and scale; appropriate trim size and format of the book for the subject and audience; and well-organized layout that advances the text. The panel also gives attention to the quality of binding, paper, reproduction, and the appropriateness of typeface. Each panel member reads all the books, but annotations reflect only the appraisal of the individual panelist whose initials appear at the end of each entry.

Publishers’ names appear in abbreviated form; complete names and addresses are available from the Children’s Book Council and in standard reference works such as Children’s Books in Print. CBC’s Member List is available at [www.cbcbooks.org/about/members.html](http://www.cbcbooks.org/about/members.html).
Titles are arranged by subject category. Although some titles are appropriate for more than one category, the books have been placed where their usefulness in science education appears greatest. Panelists have also indicated the National Science Content Standards (see explanation above) to which the books relate. Where more than one standard is listed, the most applicable standard is given first.

**About CBC and NSTA**

The Children’s Book Council (CBC) is a nonprofit trade organization that encourages the use and enjoyment of books and related literacy materials for young people. The official sponsor of Children’s Book Week, the CBC supports reading-encouragement programs both independently and with other national and international organizations. The CBC’s members are U.S. publishers and packagers of trade books for children and young adults and producers of book-related materials for young people. For more information, see [www.cbcbooks.org](http://www.cbcbooks.org).

The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) is an organization of science education professionals and has as its purpose the stimulation, improvement, and coordination of science teaching and learning. For further information on NSTA membership and services, call 800-722-NSTA.