

# Butler Children's Literature Center recommends children's books for holiday gifts

The Butler Children's Literature Center at Dominican University has released a list of books written for children and young adults suitable for giving as holiday gifts to young people.

The list was compiled by Thom Barthelmess, curator of the center, and Janice Del Negro, assistant professor in Dominican's Graduate School of Library and Information Science, author and master storyteller.

"We have recommended these books as gifts because they are all current, in print and readily available, making them easy last-minute gifts. But more importantly, each of these books, whether recent releases or timeless classics, have a quality that will make reading them a memorable experience for young people," Barthelmess said.

The list includes recommendations based on grade level of the reader, from preschool through grade 9, and a variety of genres, from picture books to Christmas seasonal stories and thrillers for young teens.

## Preschool

*Tubby* by Leslie Patricelli

Leslie Patricelli has a slew terrific board books for babies to her name, and quite honestly it's hard to go wrong with any of them. *Tubby* features her trademark button-nosed boisterous bundle getting ready for bathtime. Bubbles of fun.

*Orange Pear Apple Bear* by Emily Gravett

With four little words this deceptively sophisticated picture book has endless fun, playing around with word order and illustration. Toddlers will delight at the warm, affectionate paintings while their adults appreciate the subtle humor.

*The Animals' Christmas Carol* by Helen Ward

Based on a 13th Century French carol, rhyming verse and glorious gold-tinged paintings recall how a series of animals paid tribute to the Christ Child in the manger.

## Gr. K-3

*We Are In a Book* by Mo Willems

Elephant and Piggie are back, and funnier than ever. Willems' deft characterizations, simple language, and hysterical situations will appeal to just-beginning and practiced new readers alike.

*Press Here* by Hervé Tullet

This deceptively complex riff on interactive media sets forth a series of irresistible commands (press the yellow dot, shake the book, clap twice) and transmogrifies accordingly. Sit back and watch the fun.

*The Night Before Christmas Pop-Up* by Clement Moore, illustrated by Robert Sabuda

Sabuda's intricate, glorious pop-up extravaganza brings the familiar verses to life in swirls of three-dimensional holiday fun.

## Gr. 4-6

*Wonderstruck* by Brian Selznick

After you run out to see the film *Hugo*, based on the Caldecott-Award winning *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, pick up *Wonderstruck*, Selznick's "follow-up" replete with all of the poignant charm and magic you might expect.

*A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, illustrated by Quentin Blake

There are many editions of Dickens' classic Christmas tale available, and Blake's saucy, ebullient illustrations elevate this one to something especially memorable.

*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* by Barbara Robinson

When the Herdmans, the worst family in the history of the world, infiltrate the Christmas Pageant, everyone learns something new about the real magic of the season.

## Gr. 7-9

*Stormbreaker: The Graphic Novel* adapted by Antony Johnston, illustrated by Kanako Damerum and Yuzuru Takasaki

Anthony Horowitz's popular thriller about young Alex Rider (something of a James Bond, Jr.) gets the manga treatment and bustles with kinetic graphics and speedy storytelling. Hold on tight.

*The Christmas Story* by The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The King James version of the Christmas story is elegantly illustrated with gorgeous, gold-accented reproductions from the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

*The Scorpio Races* by Maggie Stiefvater

Fans of The Hunger Games trilogy will thrill at this heart-stopping, romantic fantasy where two teens competing in an annual, deadly water horse race become dangerously entwined.