

**iBBY**

INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

# 2019 IBBY SELECTION

OF OUTSTANDING BOOKS FOR  
YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



## OUTSTANDING BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES 2019

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IBBY Collection for Young People with  
Disabilities

North York Central Library, Children's  
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*Gronouyot (cat. no. 14)*



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*Natsu ga kita (cat. no. 11)*

*Inner Peace (cat. no. 12)*

*Kono aida ni nani ga atta? (cat. no. 13)*

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*Allra bästa kompisen (cat. no. 2)*



*Professione cocodrillo (cat. no. 16)*

## WELCOME!

Welcome to our annotated catalogue of outstanding books for and about children and teens with disabilities. As a project of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), it was initiated in 1981 to celebrate the UN International Year of Disabled Persons. The aim of this project is to identify and encourage the publication of books specifically designed for young people with disabilities, as well as those in general production that can be enjoyed by all young people, whatever their ability. This permanent collection of over 4,000 items in more than 40 languages is housed at the North York Central Library branch of Toronto Public Library in Canada. Highlights include:

- special formats such as Braille, Picture Communication Symbols, sign language
- one-of-a-kind tactile and textile books
- extensive collection of picture books and novels that promote inclusion and disability awareness

All books submitted for this project are retained and catalogued in the Toronto Public Library (TPL) online catalogue. While the annotations are in English, the books

are in their original languages – for the 2019 selection there are 40 books in 17 different languages from 20 countries.

The IBBY Collection books (1991-2019) are kept as reference for research or reading in the library. Researchers are asked to make an appointment by calling or emailing ahead of time. Inquiries are always welcome; you may:

- view annotated catalogue: [www.ibby.org](http://www.ibby.org) or [www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/ibby](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/ibby)
- ask for reference help by email: [ibby@torontopubliclibrary.ca](mailto:ibby@torontopubliclibrary.ca)
- phone +1-416-395-5630 or visit at 5120 Yonge St. Toronto ON Canada

Building this biennial selection list is the work, often a labour of love, of many people. We thank the members of the IBBY National Sections who helped us select some of the best examples from their countries. They identified the books, read and evaluated them, and then submitted their recommendations for inclusion in this selection.

We would also like to thank the many publishers who have generously provided copies of these books for the collection.

Our deep appreciation goes to the volunteer readers here in Toronto, who received the books with delight, and then proceeded to read and report on each one. We reserve special thanks for Sharon Moynes and Denise Scott, who assisted with the reviewing, evaluating and annotating of the submissions, as well as Bonnie Ing, Yoojin Kwon and the many staff of Toronto Public Library who assisted in the creation of this 2019 catalogue.

Toronto and Basel, February 2019

Leigh Turina  
Lead Librarian, IBBY Collection for Young People with  
Disabilities

Elizabeth Page  
IBBY Executive Director

*El basal del rei Olaf (cat. no. 35)*



# FORWARD

Many people ask about our selection process for this outstanding book project. Late in 2017, we sent a request to all IBBY National Sections, asking them to send us their best examples of books for and about children and teens with disabilities published in their countries within the last four years. We also asked publishers to send in proposals from their newest production.

For the 2019 Selection of Outstanding Books, 169 books were submitted from 26 countries in 24 languages. Then the labour of love started. Once the books arrived in Toronto, they were given to multilingual readers. Many of the readers are staff of the Toronto Public Library, often from children's departments. Where necessary, other readers assisted, such as reviewers for the Ontario Library Association's Forest of Reading programme or from agencies who work with young people with disabilities, such as CNIB, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. Often a book is read by more than one person.

These reviewers submitted written evaluations and often spoke directly with Leigh Turina, the Lead Librarian on the

project, to give their impressions of the books or to ask questions. Other staff members scoured the Internet for book reviews from professional sites and information about authors, illustrators, publishers and groups connected to the publication.

A small group of evaluators then met to review all the collected information and to discuss choices. Often these discussions required that we do more research or get back to the readers before we could make a decision.

IBBY is an international organization and our choices must reflect this wide range of culture. Since IBBY currently has 79 National Sections, we look for a diverse range of languages and examples that reflect this worldwide network. The aim is always to find the best recently published books in each of the three categories. A diverse and varied selection is made to demonstrate what is available, as well as to identify titles that will inspire authors, illustrators and publishers in other countries.

The IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities does

not include every book in the world about disabilities, medical information or specialized equipment. Instead we concentrate on picture books and novels that encourage a child or a teen to step into a reality, which may be quite different than their own.

Times have changed since 1981, when the United Nations decided to highlight The Year of Disabled Persons. One of the main tenets of that year was “full participation and equality”, defined as the right of persons with disabilities to take part fully in the life and development of their societies. We have seen changes in attitudes in many countries since then. Here at the IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities, we see this progress through popular culture, particularly in books for young people. Some of the current trends that we have observed are:

- **Portrayals of Disabilities.** More illustrations in children’s picture books include children with physical disabilities. Where once there was a token child in a wheelchair in a group scene, now we see children with glasses, cochlear implants, hearing aids and other equipment, as well as children and teens with Down syndrome and diverse intellectual disabilities. In addition to these changes,



*Papu e Filo (cat. no. 1)*

more fictional characters with disabilities are included, whether they have main or secondary roles in the plot. The prevalence of these characters reflects their changing role in society. Another exciting development is that they are becoming part of the norm rather than the token exceptions. We have found that books published for the mass market, such as those sold at school book fairs, etc., are now featuring characters with disabilities. While these books may not always be great literature, they are accessible to a growing mainstream audience.

- **Easy to Read Books.** Many European countries publish books that may be read by children, teens or adults with learning, developmental or intellectual disabilities. These books with simplified text are not written for preschoolers, but generally use age appropriate subject/information that is made accessible by font, page layout and simple sentence, paragraph and chapter structure. People with intellectual disabilities have the right to get information that is easy to read and understand. Moreover, these useful standards also simplify information for many other people, such as those learning a second language or people who find it difficult to read.

- **“Disabled”** Also reflecting a shift in our attitudes is the use of the term disability itself. Many countries want to indicate a change in the way society views people with diverse abilities by using a different terminology, such as special needs or differently able. Other groups or individuals advocate for plain speech and not euphemisms. Perhaps a common terminology is not required since countries and cultures, like individuals, are different and benefit from differing approaches.
- **Books Read by Children for Disability Awareness.** While the IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities was established to encourage publication of books for child and teen readers with disabilities, it may be noted that a wider audience of parents, educators and young people are looking for books that portray diversity and a wide range of abilities in our world. And this is the best way forward.



*Paran Ai Ian (cat. no. 30)*



*Giyahan (cat. no. 7)*

## CATEGORY 1: SPECIALIZED FORMATS

**Books using different systems and designs can help to make reading accessible to everyone. These specialized formats include Braille, sign language and non-verbal communication systems.**

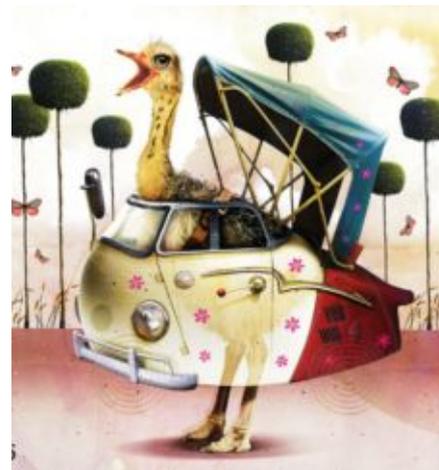
**1** Bridda, Roberta (text and ill.)  
**Papu e Filo** (*Papu and Filo*)  
 Rome, Italy: Fed. Nazionale delle  
 Istituzioni pro Ciechi Onlus  
 2016 [34pp.] no ISBN

In this gently humorous story, two tactile characters, one a cluster of brightly-coloured pompoms and the other a piece of woven red string, find creative ways to bridge their physical differences and play together. The accompanying large print text and Braille, both of which are in English and Italian, provide several ways for

readers to follow this appealing story about friendship. Spiral binding allows the pages to be laid flat and will aid reading of the Braille. Children with vision loss will be able to enjoy this book alongside those who are sighted.

The touchable elements consist of materials that are easy to obtain; they may inspire readers, especially those in a classroom setting, to create other tactile stories of their own. The easy-to-follow narrative with its cheerful ending will be accessible to those with learning or developmental delays.

**2** Bross, Helena (text) Rönns,  
 Christel (ill.)  
**Allra bästa kompisen**  
 (*My very best friend*)  
 Stockholm, Sweden:



*Sparnuotosios raidės: Pasakos reginčiųjų ir Brailio raštu (cat. no. 3)*

Bonnier Carlsen, 2017 [60pp.]  
 ISBN 978-91-638-7522-9

Written by a former primary school teacher who grew up with dyslexia, this book will be of particular interest

to struggling, reluctant and dyslexic readers. It is an easy-to-read story with a short, straightforward narrative and generous helpings of humour. Part of a popular series about the children of Class 1B, this title recounts the relatable story of Melker, a boy who longs for a pet of his own. Lively, colourful illustrations on every page capture the ups and downs of Melker's new life with Bobo, an energetic, lovable puppy who quickly becomes Melker's favourite companion.

Readers with dyslexia will find specific features that enhance the text's readability, including generous line and character spacing, short sentences with variable right hand margins, and lots of white space on every page. This book also comes with a Swedish Sign Language DVD.



*El basal del rei Olaf (cat. no. 35)*

- 3** Da Vinci, Leonardo (text)  
 McDowell, Gail (Italian transl.)  
 Kliostoraityte, Rasa (Lithuanian transl.)  
 Jokuzyte, Egle (Project Creator)  
 Nerecionis, Vilmas (ill.)  
**Sparnuotosios raidės: Pasakos reginčiųjų ir Brailio raštu**  
*(Winged letters: Fairy tales in letters and Braille)*  
 Vilnius, Lithuania: Verslas ar Menas, 2015 [24pp.]  
 ISBN 978-609-95642-1-0

This book, containing four bird tales by Leonardo da Vinci, was specifically designed for children with vision loss and sighted children to enjoy together. The stories have been translated from the original Italian into Lithuanian text with large, bold type as well as Braille. Some of the fanciful collage-style artwork has embossed lines that emphasize interesting details or create partial silhouettes around objects.

All readers will want to run their fingers over the raised illustrations; children with complete vision loss will benefit from the assistance of a sighted person in order to interpret and understand the images.

The sturdy board book format makes turning the pages easier for children who cannot see, as well as anyone who is developing their fine motor skills. An audio book version of the stories is included, along with the Lithuanian Braille alphabet. After reading this book, sighted children will come away with an increased appreciation of what it means to live with vision loss and a basic understanding of how to read Braille.

- 4** Frank, Anne (original text)  
 Coop.Accaparlante Assoc.  
 Arca-Comunità L'Arcobaleneo onlus (adapted text)  
**Il diario di Anna Frank**

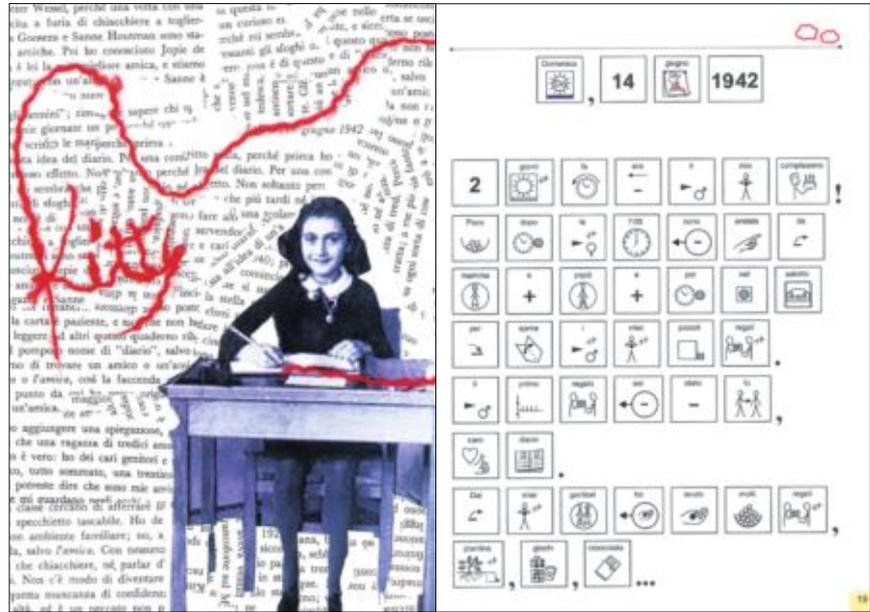
*(The Diary of Anne Frank)*

Molfetta, Bari, Italy:

Ed. La meridiana, 2017 [96pp.]

ISBN 978-88-615-3632-8

Anne Frank's experience of the Holocaust, described in the diary she left behind, continues to be an important entry point into Holocaust education for people around the world. This book is the first translation of the diary into Widgit symbols, a form of picture communication symbols, and brings her words to life for a new audience of readers with intellectual or learning disabilities. This abridged edition contains twenty chapters, each representing a date in Anne's diary. The translators have taken care to keep the simplified Italian text as true to the original wording as possible, so that the impact of Anne's words is still present. Mixed media collage-style artwork provides abstract represen-



*Il diario di Anna Frank (cat. no. 4)*

tations of her feelings and experiences.

Most books that use picture communication symbols are created for young children. However, this book makes it possible for older readers to

read the same mature content as their peers in a format that is accessible to them. People with and without disabilities helped adapt the text into symbols.

- 5** Fuchs, Corinna (text) Velte, Uli and Dolinger, Igor (ill.)  
**Die Bunte Bande: Das gestohlene Fahrrad**  
*(The Variety Gang: The stolen bicycle)*  
 Hamburg, Germany: Carlsen Verlag GmbH, 2018  
 [60pp.] ISBN 978-3-551-06699-2

The adventures of a group of children who work together to replace a friend's stolen bike are recounted three ways: in everyday language, in simplified language, and in Braille. These inclusive features make this book accessible to readers with vision loss or low vision, those who have a learning disability, as well as children without disabilities who are learning to read. The characters are culturally diverse and include a boy in a wheelchair who is an active, enthusiastic participant in the group's activities.



*Die Bunte Bande: Das gestohlene Fahrrad (cat. no. 5)*

This easy-to-read title is the fifth book in a series, but is the first one to combine an inclusive physical format with inclusive content. The text is set in large, uncluttered type and the sturdy, plasticized pages have been designed to withstand heavy use.

Children with low vision can enjoy the simple, colourful illustrations that use black outlines to define people and objects. A guide for parents and teachers is included, along with basic information about Braille.

- 6** Keller, Alice (text) Truttero, Veronica (ill.) **Contro corrente**  
*(Upstream)* Rome, Italy: Sinnos Soc. Coop.2017 [80pp.]  
 ISBN 978-88-7609-362-3

The inspiring story of real-life swimmer and Olympic medallist Gertrude Ederle is viewed through the eyes of Emily, her younger cousin, in this captivating book. Themes to do with overcoming adversity and perseverance are highlighted in both characters' stories. Emily aspires to follow in her cousin's footsteps despite her unsupportive family. Gertrude must overcome the disappointment

of failing to swim across the English Channel before trying again and establishing a women's record that had remained unbroken for decades. A biographical note about Gertrude at the back of the book reveals that Gertrude became deaf when she was older and later opened a swimming school for children who shared her disability.

This book has a heavily illustrated format and uses a special, easy-to-read font for the main text. Both features will improve ease of access for reluctant readers, along with those who have learning disabilities or dyslexia. Speech balloons, graphic novel-style panels, and pleasing, warm-coloured drawings, add to this title's overall appeal.

**7**

Naderi, Samaneh (designer)  
**Giyahan** (*Plants*) Tehran, Iran:  
 Samaneh Naderi, 2017 [20pp.]  
 ISBN 978-622-00-1530-7

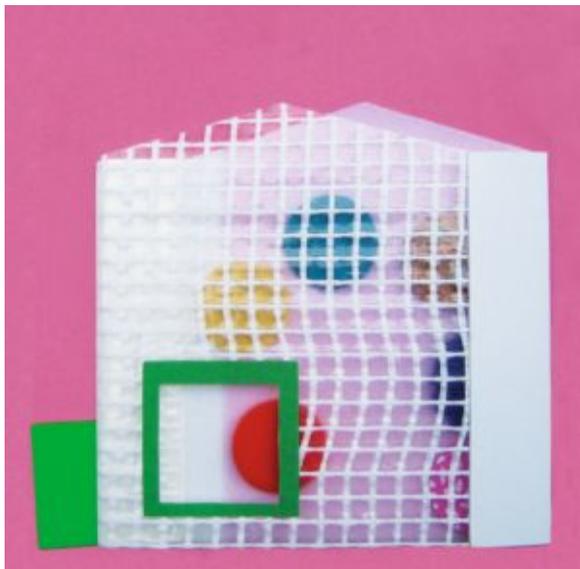


*Contro corrente* (cat. no. 6)

Eight different plants and their edible fruits are highlighted in this handmade book that explores two questions: what are the different parts of a plant and how do plants grow? Readers will find familiar, realistic-looking vegetables here, including corn, peas and celery.

The “soil” each plant grows in is represented by a strip of brown felt that can be pulled back to reveal the plant’s growth underground. Text in English and Persian, along with Braille, make this book accessible to readers both with and without vision loss. Children with developmental delays or learning disabilities will also enjoy handling the colourful fruits on each page.

Carefully-selected textures and materials, such as the purple satin fabric used for the eggplants and the bumpy beads that define the kernels of corn, make this tactile book outstanding. Fine, hand-sewn stitches emphasize the textured ribs on the lettuce leaves and celery stalks; all children will want to touch the vegetables and lift them away from the page so they can feel them on all sides.



*Quatre petits coins de rien du tout (cat. no. 8)*

**8**

Ruillier, Jérôme (text and ill.)

**Quatre petits coins de rien du tout**

*(Four little corners of nothing at all)*

Talant, France: Les Doigts Qui Rêvent,

2017 [17pp.]

ISBN 978-2-36593-070-3



*Mogumogu pakkun (cat. no. 9)*

Little Square, a bright green shape, likes to play with other tactile shapes – the Little Circles. But when he tries to join his circle friends inside a big house, Little Square discovers that he does not fit through its round doorway.

Little Square tries to fold himself up and even considers having his corners cut off so he can go inside. It is only when the friends take a fresh look at the problem that they find the best

solution of all: they must change the shape of the door, not the shape of Little Square, in order for everyone to be together.

Interesting textured surfaces, large print text and Braille make this story about inclusion accessible to readers of all abilities. Durable loop and hook fasteners allow children to remove some of the characters on a page, then try to fit them through the doorway of the house. When the house's wall is lifted away from the page, readers will notice a small, delightful change: the house suddenly becomes three-dimensional!

## 9

Tenohira no Kai (Cloth Book Group)

**Mogumogugu pakkun** (*Open your mouth and chew!*)

Tokyo, Japan: Tenohira no Kai, 2008

[7pp.] [not for sale]

Animals and the foods they eat are the focus of this beautifully-made cloth book. It includes a charming assortment of wild and domestic animals, ranging from a monkey and a cow to a pelican with an oversized throat pouch. Each creature's mouth consists of a working zipper with a large pull tab and a pocket hidden behind the zipper. To find out what a particular animal eats, children undo the zipper,

reach into the pocket and pull out that animal's food. As they use the zippers, children with developmental delays can practise their fine motor skills.

Thoughtfully chosen details, such as the shiny beads that make up water bubbles on the whale's spout, add to the touchable nature of this book. The frog's bits of food – little cloth flies with beady gold eyes and bright orange legs – are especially delightful and will draw smiles from everyone who encounters them. Children with and without disabilities can share this book together. Everyone will enjoy guessing what is hidden inside the mouths of the animals, as well as “feeding” the foods to them.

*Gronouyot (cat. no. 14)*



*Professione coccodrillo (cat. no. 16)*



## CATEGORY 2: UNIVERSAL ACCESS

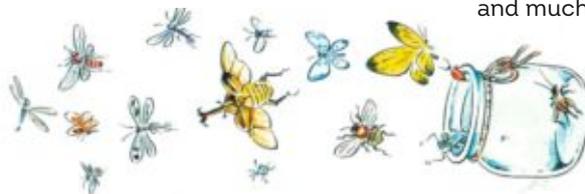
**The books in this section are from the mainstream production. They are understandable to all individuals, in particular to young people with learning, intellectual or developmental disabilities.**

**10** Guerrero, Andrés (text and ill.)  
**El amor es demasiado complicado** (*Love is too complicated*) Madrid, Spain: Loqueleo, 2016 [152pp.] ISBN 978-84-9122-158-6

Fifteen short stories, featuring characters of different ages, genders and abilities, make up this collection organized around the universal theme of love. A range of personal experiences are included and relatable issues to do with equality, respect, inclusion, harassment and gender-based violence are covered.

Created as an Easy Reading title, this book is intended to be enjoyed by as many people as possible.

The stories will be of interest to teens and adults, especially those who have difficulties with reading comprehension and those who have not developed the habit of reading. Sentences are short and all metaphors, double meanings, and acronyms have been eliminated to improve ease of understanding. Readability has also been carefully considered with the choice of typeface and generous use of white space. Line drawings accompany each story; many of them are in a comic-book format with panels that are easy to follow.



**11** Hajiri, Toshikado (text and ill.)  
**Natsu ga kita**  
*(Summer has come)*  
 Tokyo, Japan: Asunaro Shobo, 2017 [32pp.] ISBN 978-4-7515-2830-3

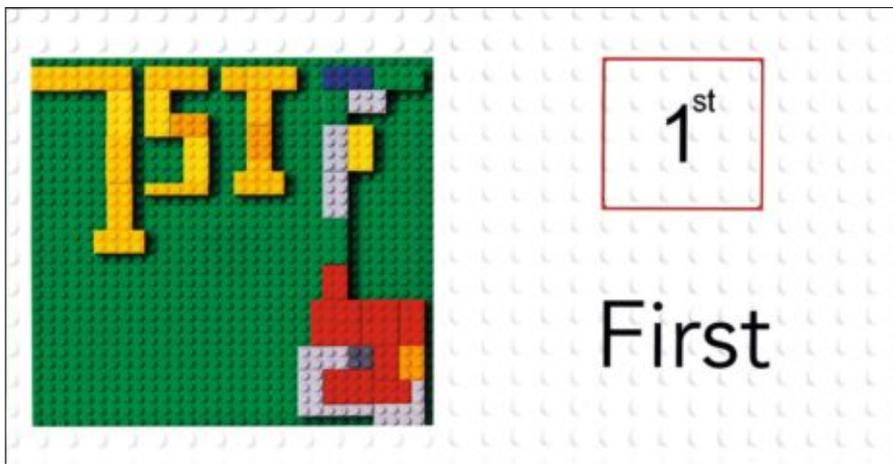
The essence of summertime when one is young and the world feels full of exciting possibilities is captured in this lovely book that is set in a seaside village in Japan. Vivid, double-page illustrations portray the places and situations that the main character, an energetic boy, encounters over the course of a single day. Sensory details in the rhythmic text evoke the blazing heat of the summer sun, the sound of the cicadas, the smell of the ocean and much more.

*Laojie de Tonghua (cat. no. 27)*

With its minimal text and atmospheric setting, this book will be appreciated by children, teens and adults with developmental delays, learning and intellectual disabilities. Those who cannot read Japanese can follow the main character's adventures through the arresting illustrations.

**12** Pupils of Glenveagh School  
**Inner Peace**, Belfast, NI,  
 UK: Glenveagh Publishing,  
 2018 [40pp.]  
 ISBN 978-1-9999852-0-2

This unique book is the result of a collaboration between students at Glenveagh School and the Fighting Words Belfast creative writing programme, both located in Northern Ireland. Glenveagh students, all of whom have severe learning difficulties, participated in a workshop about coping with anxiety, then adapted what they learned in a



*Inner Peace (cat. no. 12)*

book for others to use. Step-by-step instructions lead readers through a straightforward breathing exercise. The text is printed in large, bold type and accompanied by the corresponding picture communication symbols. Interlocking plastic bricks were used to either create the instructions or replicate the picture symbols.

The instructions involve lots of repetition, making them easy to follow during stressful moments. The images are eye-catching and have been created out of a medium that is instantly recognizable to many children. This book will be of practical use to children and teens, whether they have a disability or not.

**13** Sato, Masahiko + EUPHRATES  
**Kono aida ni nani ga atta?**  
*(What happened?)*  
 Tokyo, Japan: Fukuinkan  
 Shoten, 2017 [28pp.]  
 ISBN 978-4-8340-8336-1

This clever picture book invites readers to look at before-and-after pairs of photographs, then answer a simple question, “What happened in between?” After they guess at the missing part of the sequence of events, they turn the page and find additional photos that reveal what actually took place. The “stories” that occur between the two photos in each duo are sometimes easy to discern, as in the case of the woolly sheep shown before and after shearing. Other pairings, such as the one featuring a crowd watching marathon runners, involve unexpected narratives



*Kono aida ni nani ga atta?(cat. no. 13)*

that are more challenging to figure out and can prompt lively discussion.

The strong interactive element of this almost wordless book makes it accessible to many readers, including those with an intellectual disability. The photos are well-composed and

will stand up to repeated viewings. Images include subjects from the natural world, such as a starfish and a tadpole. Their presence will stimulate the readers’ curiosity and may spark additional discussions about animals, nature and the passage of time.

**14** Servant, Stéphane (text)  
Rea, Simone (ill.) **Gronouyot**  
Paris, France: Didier  
jeunesse, 2017 [32pp.]  
ISBN 978-2-278-08202-5

Gronouyot is an unusual young rabbit. Unlike other members of his bunny family, he lacks long ears and has a froglike head. The only word he can say is *Gronouyot* and that becomes his name, as distinctive as everything else about him. Although Gronouyot is warmly embraced by his family, others shun him, leaving Gronouyot overcome by shame. He longs to be like everyone else. A chance sighting of the moon, with its odd “head” and cheerful demeanour despite being alone in the night sky, lifts Gronouyot’s spirits. It also leads him to an important realization: there is a place for everyone in the world, regardless of who they are, and Gronouyot can



*Gronouyot (cat. no. 14)*

choose to celebrate his unique place with joy and pride.

Muted illustrations with interesting textures complement this quietly touching tale. Readers will enjoy lingering over artwork details, including the expressive animal faces, as they

accompany Gronouyot on his journey toward self-acceptance. The uplifting ending is neither instructional nor didactic; it simply encourages readers to contemplate what it means to be different and the importance of treating others with compassion.

**15** Virke, Emma (text and ill.)  
**Klä på Herr H** (*Dress up Mr. H*)  
Stockholm, Sweden: Lilla  
Piratförlaget, 2016 [48pp.]  
ISBN 978-91-88279-14-9

In this interactive book, a man known only as Mr. H asks for the reader’s assistance as he gets dressed before leaving the house. What begins as a straightforward exchange – Mr. H asks for his glasses and the reader finds them – quickly turns humorous when the reader “tries on” Mr. H’s glasses and everything on the page looks out of focus! The silliness



*Klä på Herr H (cat. no. 15)*

continues as the reader gives Mr. H a fly instead of the requested bow tie, then applies Mr. H's removable moustache onto his nose rather than under it. When Mr. H finally heads out the door, readers experience a final comical moment – one that Mr. H is blissfully unaware of.

The brief text and bold, well-defined artwork make this book accessible to many children, including those with intellectual and learning disabilities. Readers will relish their role as mischief makers who add to the story's easy-to-understand humour.

**16** Zoboli, Giovanna (text)  
Di Giorgio, Mariachiara (ill.)  
**Professione coccodrillo**  
(*Professional Crocodile*)  
Milan, Italy: Topipittori, 2017  
[32pp.] ISBN 978-889-852-364-1

What kind of occupation can a crocodile possibly have? To find out the answer to this intriguing question, readers must follow the main character from the time he wakes up in the morning and dresses in a dapper suit to the moment he arrives at his "workplace" and ultimately sheds his clothing! This wordless book, with its vibrant and energetic illustrations

of a bustling cityscape, will appeal to a range of readers, including those who are developmentally delayed. Readers of all ages and abilities will enjoy the humorous exploits of a wild creature with a refined side who coexists peacefully with people.

The progression from one illustrated panel to the next is clearly laid out, making this story easy to follow. Repeated viewings of the artwork will reveal new details, many of them humorous and unexpected. Readers will respond with delight to the ending, which is both inevitable and surprising.



*Laojie de Tonghua (cat. no. 27)*



## CATEGORY 3: PORTRAYALS OF DISABILITY

**This section includes general books that depict people with disabilities in picture books, fiction and nonfiction titles.**

- 17** Al Diraawi, Najwa (text)  
Naddaf, Lina (ill.)  
**Boulbol laysa kakol albalabel**  
(*A bird like no other: A special skylark*) Beirut, Lebanon:  
Dar al-Hadaek Group, 2017 [23pp.]  
ISBN 978-614-439-103-7

In this charming picture book, all the birds are getting ready for a singing competition. One little skylark is hesitant to take part because he stutters. Although it might be easiest to have someone else sing in his place or simply avoid the competition all together, the skylark ultimately decides to face the challenge of performing in public. With practice

and determination, he sings so well that he is rewarded with high honours.

This easy-to-follow story is enhanced by warm-hued artwork with patterned details. The expressive face of the skylark clearly conveys his range of emotions, as he moves from feelings of inadequacy and discouragement to pride in his accomplishments. Themes to do with perseverance, facing difficult situations and not being defined by the expectations of others underlie this quietly uplifting story.

- 18** Altieri, Fabrizio (text)  
**Ridere come gli uomini**  
(*Laugh like men*)  
Milan, Italy: Edizioni Piemme S.p.A, 2018 [208pp.]  
ISBN 978-88-566-6284-9

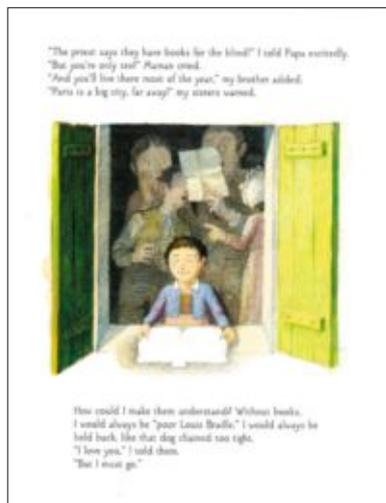


*Boulbol laysa kakol albalabel (cat. no. 17)*

The ugliness of war is presented in a new and unexpected light in this distinctive novel. The narration alternates between a dog trained to attack by a brutal Nazi soldier and people who are on the run from German soldiers.

One of those people is Donata, a girl with Down syndrome. Her disability sets her apart as someone who is different and therefore to be eliminated if she is caught by the Nazis. A chance encounter between the dog and Donata leads to a surprising development. Donata is not only unafraid of the dog, but understanding and accepting of it. Her kindness toward the creature, which has faced grave mistreatment of its own, is a small point of light during a bleak and tumultuous time.

Older teen readers who are unfamiliar with the persecution of people with disabilities during World War II will learn much about their appalling treatment. The difficult subject matter will stay with readers long after they have reached the end of this gripping story.



*Six Dots: A Story of Young Louis Braille*  
(cat. no. 20)

**19** Beese, Ava, Lilli, and Nick (text)  
Marti, Romina (ill.), Jordan,  
James (phot.)  
**Proud to Be Deaf: Discover My  
Community and My Language**  
London, UK: Wayland, Hachette  
Children's Group, 2017 [48pp.]  
ISBN 978-1-5263-0218-2

Seven-year-old Ava enjoys being with her friends, doing gymnastics and walking her dogs. She also happens to be deaf – and she is proud of it. This book, jointly written by Ava and her parents who are also deaf, highlights Ava's happy and contented world. Short segments of text and colour photographs cover her daily life, her use of British Sign Language (BSL) and her rewarding connections to members of the deaf community. Illustrations of over 100 BSL signs round out this look at respecting others for who they are.

A recurring short sidebar, titled "Deaf Achiever," profiles the remarkable achievements of deaf people in the fields of athletics, conservation, education and entertainment. Ava and her parents also ably demonstrate that deafness should not be viewed as a limitation.

As they point out, “Our deafness makes us unique, and means we get to be part of a wonderful community.”

**20** Bryant, Jen (text)  
Kulikov, Boris (ill.)  
**Six Dots: A Story of Young Louis Braille**  
New York, NY, USA: Alfred A. Knopf,  
Random House Children’s Books  
2016 [36pp.]  
ISBN 978-0-449-81337-9

The inspiring life of Louis Braille, the inventor of the tactile system for reading and writing used by blind people everywhere, is chronicled here. Born over 200 years ago in France, Louis went blind when he was a boy. As he grew older, he realized that he would need to be well-read and educated in order to succeed in life. Determined not to be held back by the lack of reading material



*Not So Different: What You Really Want to Ask About Having a Disability (cat. no. 21)*

available to those who were blind, Louis developed his namesake invention when he was just fifteen years old.

Unlike other biographies about Louis Braille’s life, this one uses an intimate first-person perspective to capture

what it felt to be like Louis and experience everything as he did. The mixed media illustrations are effective in depicting Louis’s quiet drive and determination. Dark backgrounds and scratchy-looking images on some pages offer striking representations of Louis’s lack of vision, as well as what he thought and imagined.

**21** Burcaw, Shane (text)  
Carr, Matt (phot.)  
**Not So Different: What You Really Want to Ask About Having a Disability**  
New York, NY, USA: Roaring  
Brook Press, 2017 [40pp.]  
ISBN 978-1-62-672771-7

The youthful author of this book, Shane Burcaw, was born with Spinal Muscular Atrophy. Now in his twenties, his body is small and getting weaker. People often “stare and wonder” when

they see Shane, so he wanted to answer their most common questions, including: Why is your head so much bigger than the rest of your body? How does your chair work? How do you play with your friends? The questions, in black-and-white speech balloons, stand out against the lively colour photographs of Shane. These images display his mischievous side and show him actively engaged with others. His upbeat but candid answers are informative and easy-to-understand.

Reading this book will help readers of all ages see past the generalized physical challenges of a disability to a specific individual who is living with it. The comic nature of some scenes by photojournalist Matt Carr, including one showing Shane after he has flipped out of his wheelchair while playing soccer, underscore Shane's enthusiastic, high-energy approach to life.

**22** Docuk, Dar'ya (text)  
**Golos** (*Voice*)  
 Moscow, Russia: Samokat,  
 2017 [192pp.]  
 ISBN 978-5-91759-492-7

After teenager Sasha witnesses a terrorist attack in the Moscow subway, her promising life is upended. She develops post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and experiences debilitating panic attacks. Sasha must also contend with friends and family, who either do not understand what she is going through or, in the case of her father, do not believe her disorder is real. To escape her difficulties, Sasha goes to Kaliningrad to visit her grandmother. There, she finally finds the emotional support she needs.

Members of a book club for teens also offer her solace and the chance to talk about the meaning of life and one's purpose in it. As Sasha slowly

opens up to the other teens about her experiences, she discovers that she is not alone. Others have pain and tragedies in their lives and, like her, they must find ways to carry on.

Sasha's experience with PTSD is presented realistically; the author does not offer trite solutions to her disabling mental health issues. The courage Sasha shows in confronting her deepest fears and finding solidarity with others suggests promising times lie ahead.

**23** Gold, Jennifer (text)  
**On the Spectrum**  
 Toronto, Canada: Second  
 Story Press, 2017 [322pp.]  
 ISBN 978-1-77260-042-1

Sixteen-year-old Clara is reluctant to admit she has orthorexia: an unhealthy obsession with healthy eating. She does not think there is anything wrong with

her, but to escape her mother's overbearing interest in her life, as well as a social media disaster, she agrees to spend the summer in Paris with her father and his new partner. There, she helps take care of Alastair, her young half-brother who is on the autism spectrum. As they explore the city together, Clara gets to know Alastair. Over time, she comes to see him as a whole person, not someone who has "something wrong with him." Clara's relationship with Alastair helps her understand what it means to accept others – and accept herself.

Alastair, who always speaks the truth about what he sees, is a refreshing and appealing character. The development of the bond between Alastair and Clara is believable. Readers will be inspired to think about what is and is not "normal" as they join these characters in their explorations.



*Mríaa, Marai, María (cat. no. 24)*

**24** Granara, Clara M. (text)  
Sanfelippo, Ana (ill.)  
**Mríaa, Marai, María**  
Buenos Aires, Argentina:  
Quipu, 2015 [36pp.]  
ISBN 978-987-504-133-2

What does it mean to be someone with dyslexia? How do words look to

someone who has reading difficulties? This engaging book provides answers to these and other questions beginning with its title, which reworks the name "María" as someone with dyslexia might read it. Two children, a boy and a girl, discuss the misunderstandings that can arise when words are incorrectly decoded. Bright, playful illustrations accompany the text.

They show letters, words and sentences, as they would appear to someone who has difficulties decoding print.

Its highly visual approach and conversational text make this book easily accessible to both younger and older children. All readers will come away with a better understanding of dyslexia by the time they reach the last page.

**25** Green, Shari (text)

**Macy McMillan and the Rainbow Goddess**

Toronto, Canada: Pajama Press, 2017

[240pp.] ISBN 978-1-77278-033-8

This free-verse novel opens a window into the challenges faced by a deaf young person while navigating a hearing world. Macy went deaf when she was little. Now a sixth grader, she faces fresh challenges: a new home where she will live with her new stepdad and stepsisters, and a new school with a different sign language interpreter. After Macy's mother insists that Macy help their elderly neighbour, Iris, pack her books for a move to assisted living, Macy's world brightens. Iris does not know sign language, yet Macy discovers that she and Iris are kindred spirits – two book lovers going through unsettling times. As they share

notes, cookies and favourite books, Iris and Macy find ways to face their futures with bravery and grace.

Different typefaces are used to highlight the ways Macy communicates with others. Words conveyed through sign language are in bold type, while the written notes that Macy and Iris share are in italics. The first person narrative, shown in a "regular" typeface, gives the reader important access to Macy's emotions and impressions of everything around her.

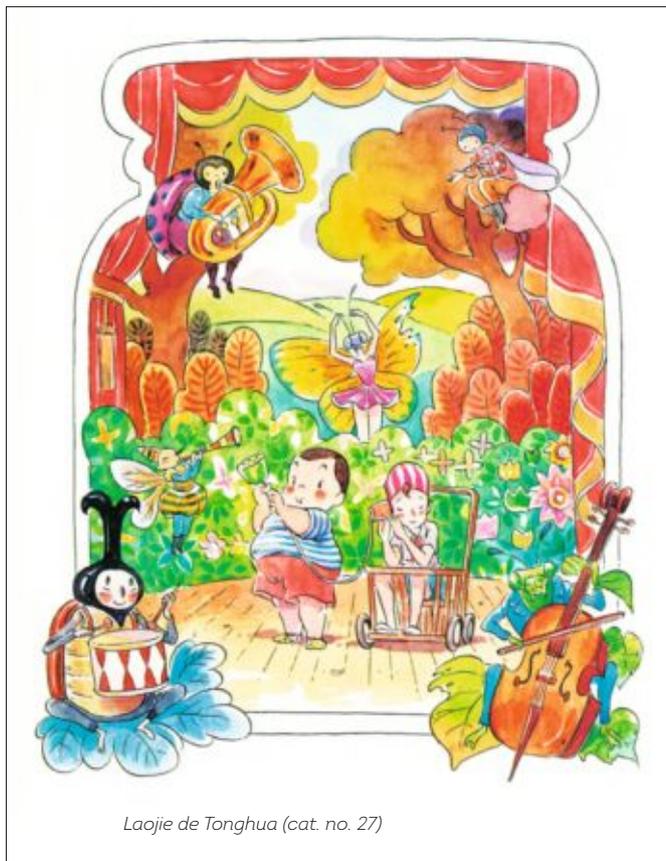
**26** Heurtier, Annelise (text)

**Envole-moi** (*Fly me*)

Paris, France: Casterman, 2017

[261pp.] ISBN 978-2-203-12221-5

This first-person novel, told from the perspective of a teenage boy, offers up a refreshing look at a youthful romance. Fifteen-year-old Swann recounts his experiences when he falls deeply in love for the first time. The subject of his affection is Joanna, a paraplegic teenage girl who refuses to be pigeon holed by anyone's expectations. Although Swann questions whether love between them is truly possible, given the constraints of Joanna's disability, both characters ultimately acknowledge the depth of their heartfelt connection.



Joanna's disability is neither the sole focus of the story nor an added-on complication, but a reality that the main characters must grapple with in their relationship. The tensions that arise are believable and questions to do with intimacy are treated with candour and care. This wonderfully written, touching story about first love will find a place with teen readers everywhere.

## 27 Jun, Nie (text and ill.) **Laojie de Tonghua**

*(The fairy tale in hutong: My Beijing)*

Beijing, China: Postwave; Beijing United Publishing,  
[120pp.] ISBN 978-7-5502-8721-1

Small everyday pleasures and grand, fantastical adventures are both within reach of the characters in these stories set in a hutong in Beijing. This is where Yu'er, a girl with an unspecified physical disability, lives simply but contentedly with her devoted grandfather. In the first tale, Yu'er aspires to swim in the Special Olympics despite the fact she does not have a pool to practise in. The homemade contraption her grandfather devises opens one way for Yu'er to fulfil her dream and also win the admiration of the neighbourhood children. Other stories include a delightful trip that Yu'er takes to a bug paradise with a mysterious boy, and a



*Natsu ga kita (cat. no. 11)*

time-bending encounter between Yu'er and her grandmother.

The comic book format, which features sunny ink-and-water-colour illustrations, allows readers to move easily between reality and fantasy along with Yu'er. Children will be drawn to the spunky determination of this character and her ability to find wonder in everything around her.

## 28 Kelly, Erin Entrada (text)

### **Hello, Universe**

New York, NY, USA: Greenwillow,

HarperCollins, 2018 [320pp.] ISBN 978-0-06-241415-1

This absorbing adventure story is told through the alternating perspectives of four sixth-grade underdogs: Kaori, a self-proclaimed psychic; Chet, a bully; Virgil, nicknamed Turtle because of his fearful nature, and clever Valencia, who is deaf. Like Virgil, Valencia is a regular target of Chet's bullying; she has also been rejected by some friends who found her deafness a hindrance when playing together. After Chet torments Virgil with notable cruelty, Virgil ends up trapped in an abandoned well in the forest. It is only after the strong and resourceful girls, Valencia and Kaori, combine forces that they are able to find and rescue Virgil in time – resulting in friendships that enrich all of them.

Readers will see up close what being deaf is like for someone in Valencia's particular situation: someone who uses hearing aids, can read lips, but who does not know sign language. The caring relationships that Valencia finally establishes are important reminders to readers that true friends are accepting of differences in others.

## 29 Kim, Hye-On (text) Shin, Seul-Gi (ill.)

**Baram-eul Gareuda** (*Cut the air*)

Seoul, Republic of Korea:

Samtoh, 2017 [104pp.] ISBN 978-89-464-1929-2

This collection of three short stories looks at people with disabilities from different perspectives. In the first story, readers meet Chan Woo, a boy with cerebral palsy who is overprotected by his mother. After making friends with an outspoken classmate, Chan Woo is inspired to experience life more fully, even though he gets hurt along the way. Other stories feature a girl who must take on the difficult role of looking after her autistic brother and a teacher who learns to soften his scary demeanour so that a student with autism will feel at ease. Pastel-toned illustrations emphasize the characters' emotions and depict the challenging situations they find themselves in.

There is much here for readers, especially those without disabilities, to reflect on. These stories will encourage them to relate to people with disabilities and others around them, with empathy and sensitivity.

*Paran Ai Ian* (cat. no. 30)



**30** Lee, So-Young (text and ill.)  
**Paran Ai Ian**  
*(Ian, the blue boy)*  
 Seoul, Republic of Korea:  
 Sigong Junior, 2017 [48pp.]  
 ISBN 978-89-527-8593-0

In this thought-provoking picture book, a boy named Ian is born with an unusual feature, a big blue spot that covers his face. His loving parents tell him that all people have their own unique colours and sometimes those colours are noticeable. Ian takes pride in his distinctive feature. But over time, his pride grows into a distorted sense of possessiveness and he insists that everything blue belongs to him. This leads to alienation from his classmates. It is only after Ian meets Long, a girl with red cheeks and hair, that he changes his attitude and accepts other colours into his life. As Ian and Long explore a vibrant world

together, his classmates join in and also add more colour.

Colour is used effectively to represent individual differences and demonstrate what happens when differences are bridged. Blue is the sole colour in the line drawings until Ian meets Long. Their growing friendship leads to a combining of colours and the welcome addition of purple and other shades on the pages.

**31** Lilmoose, Dorte (text)  
**Anomalia** (*Anomaly*)  
 Copenhagen, Denmark:  
 Gyldendal, 2017 [171pp.]  
 ISBN 978-870-22-3376-6

Saga, a Danish teenage girl, does not have an easy life. She lives with her parents and brother, Jacob, who is also a teenager. Saga is younger than Jacob but she has had to take on the

role of an older sibling because Jacob has severe autism. His behaviour is often difficult: he is non-verbal, gets easily upset and can be physically aggressive. In spite of the constant accommodations she must make with Jacob, Saga is still able to view her brother positively. As her story unfolds, she moves from irritation and exasperation to a deeper understanding of Jacob's condition and what it takes to be a family.

This gritty novel offers teen readers an authentic look at someone with a profound disability and the impact of this disability on family members. The intense subject matter, with its frank dialogue, never overwhelms the narrative. Saga's friendship with a kindly neighbour adds important moments of humour and warmth, as do some of the interactions Saga has with Jacob.

- 32** Livin, Mark (text) Velychev,  
Yevhen (ill.)  
**Riki ta Dorogy** (*Riki and Ways*)  
Kharkiv, Ukraine: Vivat, 2017  
[144pp.] ISBN 978-966-942-225-5

The world of Matviy, who has Asperger syndrome, is like a plate that has broken into small, sharp pieces. He is dealing with the death of his mother, a new life with his grandmother and classmates who mock his strange behaviour. In an attempt to make sense of things and find better ways of relating to others Matviy escapes to the forest. While there, he encounters a mysterious talking dog that he confides in, sharing his fears and hopes. In exchange, the dog offers Matviy life lessons in a series of stories, Matviy grows in his understanding of others and finds new ways to carry on after he leaves the forest.



*Riki ta Dorogy* (cat. no. 32)

This book will be of benefit to those who do not have Asperger syndrome, but want to learn more about it. Older children and younger teen readers will appreciate the relatively short text, unusual animal character and appealing artwork.

- 33** Lucas, Rachael (text)  
**The State of Grace**  
London, UK: Pan Macmillan,  
2017 [288pp.]  
ISBN 978-1-5098-3955-1

Some of Grace's top concerns are kissing cute boys, making friends and dealing with her parents' strained relationship. And, as a teenager with autism, she also worries about remembering to act "human." This humorous and honest novel, written in Grace's first person voice, reveals the ups and downs of her daily life, from the challenges of "speaking human as a second language" to the joy Grace gets from riding her beloved horse and making her best friend laugh.

Grace's struggles with sensory overstimulation and interpreting social cues are written with an authenticity that comes from the author's own

experiences as an autistic person. Teens who do not have autism will gain insight into what it is like to navigate social situations without all the information that they might pick up on. Grace's self-awareness and sense of humour are part of her fully-realized character; she is someone readers will care about and root for.

### 34 Nielsen, Susin (text) **Optimists Die First**

London, UK: Andersen Press Ltd, 2017  
[259pp.] ISBN 978-1-78344-507-3

How should one face life after going through a personal tragedy – with pessimism or optimism? In this absorbing novel, two teens form different answers to this question. Petula struggles with guilt and grief after her sister dies. The only way forward, Petula believes, is to be a pessimist, always assuming the worst might happen again and always being vigilant for dangers. After she develops a severe anxiety disorder, Petula finds herself in an art class for teens with trauma. Jacob, also known as “Bionic Man,” is there too. He has chosen to handle his own devastating history, which involved the amputation of his arm, by projecting boundless optimism. As Petula draws close to

Jacob, she learns his past is not as he described. Instead of responding with her customary pessimism, she chooses hope – and suddenly another way of facing loss comes into view.

With its fast-paced storyline, short chapters and relatable characters, this story will find a place with teens everywhere. Petula's wry, insightful narration shines a spotlight on the challenges of coping with life-changing events and their consequences.

### 35 Pavón, Mar (text) Girón, Maria (ill.) **El basal del rei Olaf** (*The puddle of Olaf*)

Sant Feliu de Guíxols, Spain: Tramuntana Editorial,  
2018 [40pp.] ISBN 978-84-16578-67-2

Cosy, soft-edged illustrations depict the affectionate relationships of Olaf, a young boy with Down syndrome. This tale does not focus on bullying, being perceived as odd or other negative experiences of life with a disability. Rather, it emphasizes that all people, no matter who they are, want the same things: to give and receive love, and experience caring connections with others.

Em dic Olaf i sóc un nen, malgrat que  
de vegades em sembla que em fonic  
com un ninot de neu.



Although Olaf shares his name with a fictional snowman, he is not at all like a creature made of snow. Readers will discover that Olaf is simply a boy who likes to jump in puddles, celebrate birthdays and do the same things that other children do.

Olaf's disability will not be apparent to many readers and this, the creators of the book seem to say, is the very best way for everyone to view him. The highly realistic and expressive faces of all the characters, including Olaf's grandparents, underscore the kindness and positivity that runs throughout this story.

**36** Ram, Praba and Preuitt, Sheela (text)  
Ranade, Shilpa (ill.)  
**Thukpa for All**  
Chennai, India: Karadi Tales Company Pvt. Ltd.,  
2018 [48pp.] ISBN 978-81-9338-898-3

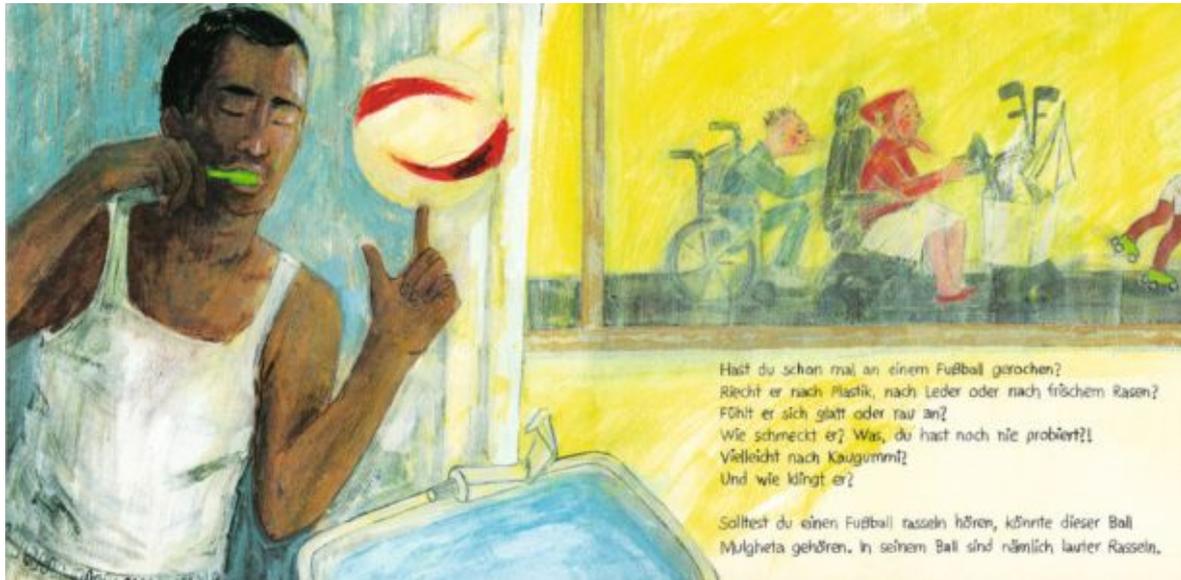
In a Ladakh community in India, a boy named Tsering is going to visit his Abi, or grandmother. He cannot wait to taste her delicious noodle soup known as thukpa. Along the way, he meets friends and relatives and invites them to come too. But after everyone arrives, the lights go out and the

house is plunged into darkness. For Tsering, who is blind, this is not a problem. Rather, it is an opportunity to help out as only he can, using his well-developed senses of touch and smell. As Tsering says to Abi while they cook together, "Lights on or off doesn't matter to me."

This English-language picture book provides a delectable look at using one's senses to experience the world. As readers follow Tsering on his independent journey to his grandmother's house, they might be unaware he has vision loss. Tsering's most important attributes are centred on his love of food and his close-knit relationships with others.

**37** Shaw, Liane (text)  
**Caterpillars Can't Swim**  
Toronto, Canada: Second Story Press,  
2017 [256pp.] ISBN 978-1-77260-053-7

Ryan is a teen with cerebral palsy who uses a wheelchair to get around. He is also a strong swimmer who finds solace being around water. That is why he is by the river early one morning when a classmate, Jack, deliberately walks into the water and does not resurface. Ryan saves Jack's life, but what unfolds is not a story about heroism, but one



*Mulgheta. Ein Tag im Leben eines blinden Fußballspielers (cat. no. 38)*

focused on ordinary friendship. After that fateful day, the teens gradually bond over their shared experience of being seen as different in their small town: Ryan for his disability and Jack, who is gay, for his sexual orientation. Through much trial and error, they learn what it means to be a good friend and how to give and receive emotional support.

This novel, written by a former special education teacher, offers a positive portrayal of male friendship. Both characters behave in ways that are realistic: they say the wrong things, they hurt each other, but they also learn and try to do better the next time. Ryan's disability is a well-integrated part of his fully-realized character.

**38** Thoma, Patricia (text and ill.)  
**Mulgheta. Ein Tag im Leben eines blinden Fußballspielers**  
*(Mulgheta. A day in the life of a blind footballer)*  
 Berlin, Germany: Jacoby & Stuart 2017 [32pp.]  
 ISBN 978-3-946593-41-6

A young girl takes readers through the daily routines of real-life athlete Mulgheta Russom, one of the best blind football players in Germany. He fled war-torn Eritrea as a child and lost his eyesight as the result of a car accident when he was 20 years old. A series of questions posed by the narrator provide opportunities for Mulgheta to demonstrate how he navigates the world as a blind person and the accessibility devices he uses. These devices include a modified football that makes a sound. Mulgheta is frequently shown engaged with others: running with a



*Ce n'est pas toi que j'attendais (cat. no. 39)*

guide person, working as a trainer and masseur at a fitness centre, and listening to a football match with friends.

Readers who cannot understand the German text will be able to discern the key aspects of Mulgheta's life by "reading" the vivid illustrations in this

inspiring picture book. The artwork features a diverse group of people, some with visible disabilities. Endnotes include additional details about blind football, Braille and the accessibility devices mentioned in the story.

**39** Toulmé, Fabien (text and ill.)  
**Ce n'est pas toi que j'attendais**  
*(It wasn't you I was expecting)*  
 Paris, France: Delcourt, 2014  
 [243pp.] ISBN 978-2-7560-3550-5

This graphic novel will be of particular interest to adults. Written and illustrated by comic book artist Fabien Toulmé, it is based on his experiences after his daughter, Julia, was born. When Julia was diagnosed with Down syndrome, Fabien was forced to confront his own negative attitudes toward people with disabilities. At first, his sense of disappointment with Julia ran so deep that he found it

difficult to bond with her. But as he spent time with Julia, learned about Down syndrome and found support with others, his attitude gradually softened. Ultimately, he embraced who Julia was. Fabien's winding journey from rejection and detachment to love and connection will spark an empathetic response from readers,

Fabien tells his story with both candour and touches of humour. The subdued palette of colours in the artwork is effective at underscoring his darker emotions. The use of comic book-style panels keeps this story moving briskly along, while the loose line drawings complement the upbeat, cheerful tone that is also a central part of his tale.

**40** Van Geystelen, Judit (text)  
Nina, Ung (phot.)  
**Leaksmee min ach rot ning  
lot ban tae...**

*(Leaksmee cannot run and jump, yet...)*

Phnom Penh, Cambodia:  
Sipar, 2017 [32pp.]  
ISBN 978-9224340-07-2

This dual-language, easy-to-read book describes the world of Leaksmee, a girl from Cambodia who has a physical disability. Although it is not easy for Leaksmee to walk, talk, or control her movements, she always finds ways to have fun with her friends and little sisters. The text, in both Khmer and English, is accompanied by candid colour photos set on bold blue and green backgrounds. These images show Leaksmee cheerfully engaged with others while using a walking frame or wearing her leg braces.

Beginning readers will enjoy reading about Leaksmee and the relatable things she likes to do. Basic information about her disability is conveyed with



*Mriaa, Marai, Maria (cat. no. 24)*

clarity and presented in a matter-of-fact and non-judgmental way. This book is part of the "First Stories" series, intended to showcase contemporary children in familiar settings.



*Allra bästa kompisen (cat. no. 2)*

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