



# Now We Are Ten!

A decade of Outstanding International Books

BY BRENDA DALES

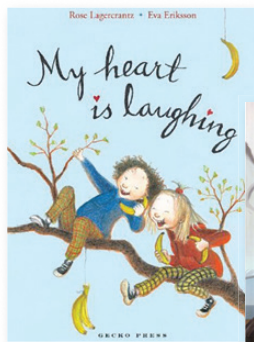
THE UNITED STATES BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (USBBY) marks a distinctive era with the announcement of this 10th Outstanding International Books list. For a decade, USBBY has been recommending international books, or books published in countries other than the United States prior to publication or distribution in the U.S., from an expansive and flourishing world of authors, illustrators, and ideas. The 2015 list heralds 42 books, from pre-K to grade 12. Since the first list in 2006, a total of 396 titles have been recognized from among the approximately 3,000 books submitted by publishers during the 10-year span. While the current committee assiduously assigned appropriate grade levels

to the books on the 2015 list, we invite librarians to consider using these books in critical and creative ways with multiple age groups of readers. We hope you will alert readers to the international origins of the books in order to promote alternate ways of thinking about content. Ultimately, we hope that by highlighting outstanding international literature, readers will demand more of it, and additional countries and areas of the world can be represented on future lists.

To see the previous lists and read more about the honor list of international books for young people, please go to [www.usbby.org/list\\_oibl.html](http://www.usbby.org/list_oibl.html), where you can also access *School Library Journal* articles annotating the lists.

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**Image from *Celia* by Christelle Vallat, illustrated by Stéphanie Augusseau. First published in Belgium under the title *Zélie* by Alice Éditions. First U.S. edition is published by Peter Pauper Press.**



## Pre-K–Gr2

**ARNALDO, Monica.** *Arto's Big Move.* illus. by author. Owlkids. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9781771470667. Canada.

Seven-year-old Arto insists on wearing his winter clothing when he moves from the wonderfully cold North to the sweltering Southwest, as his way of challenging the move. Cool and warm colors in the mixed-media illustrations evoke the cold and hot environments.



**CAMCAM, Princesse.** *Fox's Garden.* illus. by author. (Stories Without Words). Enchanted Lion. Tr \$14.95. ISBN 9781592701674. France.

In this wordless story, the compassion a little boy extends to a fox and her newborn kits is returned in kind. Subdued blue tones depict a cold and weary night, contrasted by a hopeful feeling in the morning light.

**DAVIES, Nicola.** *The Promise.* illus. by Laura Carlin. Candlewick. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9780763666330. UK.

A poignant tale about conservation is told through the eyes of a homeless girl and what she learns about growth—for herself and the world around her. Hope is conveyed through text, as well as illustrations depicting a drab urban environment that is invigorated by green growth.

**DUBUC, Marianne.** *The Lion and the Bird.* tr. from French by Claudia Z. Bedrick. illus. by author. Enchanted Lion. Tr \$17.95. ISBN 9781592701513. Canada.

A picture book filled with metaphorical spaces, soft and calming illustrations, and spare text depicts a solitary lion who discovers a hurt bird unable to migrate with his companions. Lion helps the bird mend throughout winter, but changes in their friendship occur once spring arrives.

**HAUGHTON, Chris.** *Shh! We Have a Plan.* illus. by author. Candlewick. board \$8.99. ISBN 9780763679774; Tr \$15.99. ISBN 9780763672935. UK.

A quartet of shadowy figures attempts to catch a bright bird, with comical results—if only they would listen to the lone, quiet voice of reason among them. Haughton's illustrations composed of blocky and irregular shapes remind readers that aggression begets darkness while freedom perpetuates light.

**KALLUK, Celina.** *Sweetest Kulu.* illus. by Alexandria Neonakis. Inhabit Media. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9781927095775. Canada.

An Inuit mother's concepts for welcoming a new baby are expressed in poetic text. Arctic animals are delicately portrayed, along with messages of the gifts they impart to little Kulu. The author is an Inuit throat singer.

**LAGERCRANTZ, Rose.** *My Heart Is Laughing.* tr. from Swedish by Julia Marshall. illus. by Eva Eriksson. Gecko. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9781877579523; ebk. \$9.99. ISBN 9781927271216. Sweden.

In this chapter book for young readers and continuation of *My Happy Life* (Gecko, 2014), Dani misses her friend Ella, who has moved away, and during a lunchroom incident she squirts sauce on her two enemies. Line drawings add charm and characterization.

**LUXBACHER, Irene.** *Mr. Frank.* illus. by author. Groundwood/House of Anansi. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9781554984350. Canada.

After years of making “very special clothes” for “very special people,” Mr. Frank, a tailor, is creating his final outfit for someone of supreme significance. Graphite and mixed-media illustrations include collage effects to highlight the history of Mr. Frank's fashion career.

**UEGAKI, Chieri.** *Hana Hashimoto, Sixth Violin.* illus. by Qin Leng. Kids Can. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9781894786331; ebk. \$9.99. ISBN 9781771382687. Canada.

Even though Hana practiced her violin, it is clear to everyone that she's not ready for the talent show. Perhaps it is a question of perspective? Illustrations of the “notes” emanating from Hana's violin add to her amazing but unusual performance.



**VALLAT, Christelle.** *Celia.* illus. by Stéphanie Augusseau. Peter Pauper. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9781441315366. Belgium.

Celia takes the seeds of troubles of all who come to see her and turns them into balloons, cookies, cupcakes, and apples, until one day a young boy loses his seed and thus remains unhappy. Colors against textured shades of gray accentuate Celia's transformation of the troubles.





**VAN HOUT, Mies.** *Surprise.* illus. by author. Lemniscaat. Tr \$17.95. ISBN 9781935954347. The Netherlands.

Eleven verbs (“hoping,” “expecting,” “cherishing”) are paired with 11 dazzling illustrations of adult birds with their chicks, exemplifying the parallel journeys of parenthood and childhood and culminating in a 12th illustration with two words: “letting go.”

### GRADES 3-5



**ADDERSON, Caroline.** *Norman, Speak!* illus. by Qin Leng. Groundwood/House of Anansi. Tr \$17.95. ISBN 9781554983223. Canada.

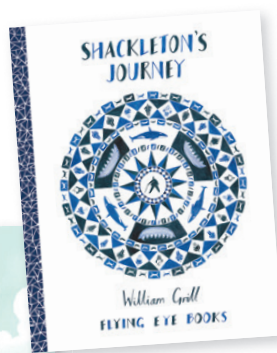
In this picture book, Norman, a shelter dog, wags his tail in a “hula dance of happiness,” but it is clear to his new family that he isn’t very smart, since he doesn’t respond to doggy things. That is, until the day his family realizes that Norman understands Chinese.

**COLE, Tom Clohosey.** *Wall.* illus. by author. Candlewick/Templar. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9780763675608. UK.

The Wall separates a father from the rest of his family members, who remain trapped in East Berlin. The young son is determined to reunite the family where life is rumored to be better. Powerful illustrations complement the text in showing how families are affected by political decisions.

**GRILL, William.** *Shackleton's Journey.* illus. by author. Nobrow/Flying Eye. Tr \$24. ISBN 9781909263109. UK.

Small drawings of people, dogs, the ship, equipment, and other details add to the narrative, while emphasizing the vastness of the unknown in this introduction to the amazing and true story of Ernest Shackleton’s Antarctic explorations. Readers are invited to learn more about the Age of Exploration.

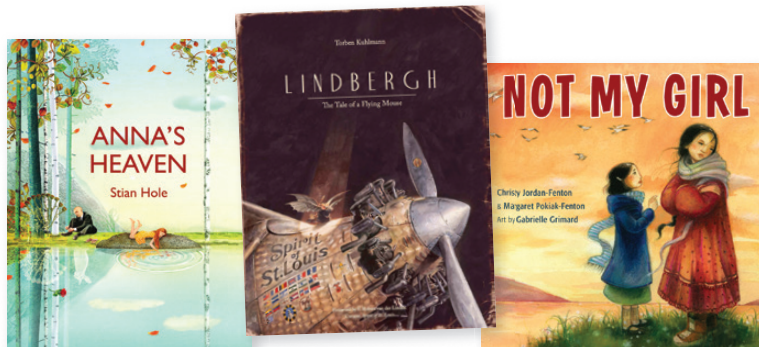


ISBN 9780802854414. Norway.

Anna’s father helps her ponder many questions while they are preparing to go to the funeral for Anna’s mother. Hole’s unique collage and photoshopped illustrations (including the end papers) reflect emotional aspects of death and grieving.

**JORDAN-FENTON, Christy & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton.** *Not My Girl.* illus. by Gabrielle Grimard. Annick. lib. ed. \$21.95. ISBN 9781554516254; pap. \$9.95. ISBN 9781554516247. Canada.

In this picture book version of *A Stranger*



at Home (sequel to *When I Was Eight*), 10-year-old Margaret returns from boarding school to her Inuit family and finds differing cultural expectations mean that she is unrecognizable as the girl she was before.

**KUHLMANN, Torben.** *Lindbergh: The Tale of a Flying Mouse.* tr. from German by Susan Levesque. illus. by author. NorthSouth. Tr \$15.95. ISBN 9780735841673. Germany.

A brilliant German mouse determined to escape the terrifying mousetraps that are wiping out legions of other mice builds a flying machine to ferry him to safety in America. The intricate illustrations enhance a sobering allegory of escaping genocide.

**LANDMANN, Bimba.** *In Search of the Little Prince: The Story of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.* tr. from Italian. illus. by author. Eerdmans. Tr \$17. ISBN 9780802854353. Italy.

Dreamlike images reflect and expand this richly imagined, poetic introduction to Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, and capture the daring and creative life of this aviator and author of *The Little Prince*.

**MILLARD, Glenda.** *Once a Shepherd.* illus. by Phil Lesnie. Candlewick. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9780763674588. Australia.

Tom Shepherd leaves his wife, young child, and idyllic life of tending sheep to



serve in the Great War, and he never returns. This heartbreaking story conveys the tragic reality of war in a way that is accessible to young children.

**SCHMIDT, Annie M.G.** *A Pond Full of Ink.* tr. from Dutch by David Colmer. illus. by Sieb Posthuma. Eerdmans. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9780802854339. The Netherlands. Twelve quirky poems offer unique perspectives on the world, such as otters spending the day biking and a child admitting a preference for behaving badly. Imaginative reflection is encouraged, as each poem is illustrated and there are several double-page spreads with illustration only.

**SMITH, David J.** *If...: A Mind-Bending New Way of Looking at Big Ideas and Numbers.* illus. by Steve Adams. Kids Can. Tr \$18.95. ISBN 9781554535958. Canada. Complex concepts are made comprehensible by using comparisons to familiar objects. For example, all water on Earth is compared to 100 glasses; 97 would contain salt water, while three would contain fresh water. The varied content addresses larger concepts such as sustainability, stewardship, and global engagement and understanding.

**TAN, Shaun.** *Rules of Summer.* illus. by author. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine. Tr \$18.99. ISBN 9780545639125. Australia. Two brothers wander, hide, and explore in a surreal summer playground. While the older boy states the rules, beginning with “Never...,” the younger one proves only too willing to push boundaries. An impressive homage to endless possibilities, the unbreakable bonds of brotherhood, and another celebration of Tan’s signature fantastical creatures.

**VAN LEEUWEN, Joke.** *The Day My Father Became a Bush.* tr. from Dutch by Bill Nagelkerke.

illus. by author. Gecko. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9781877579486. The Netherlands. With the war getting closer, Toda’s father becomes a soldier and dresses in camouflage to look like a bush. There is no fighting across the border where Toda’s mother lives, and Gran arranges a journey for Toda to find her. Line drawings enhance this chapter book.

**WALSER, David,** retel. *The Glass Mountain: Tales from Poland.* illus. by Jan Pieńkowski. Candlewick. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780763673208. UK.

Eight culturally noteworthy Polish folk and fairy tales are retold, some of which may seem familiar to children in the U.S. Colorful and energetic cut-paper illustrations add an additional dimension, and fascinating information about Pieńkowski’s childhood in Poland during World War I enhances the cultural relevance of both the text and illustrations.

**WALTERS, Eric.** *Hope Springs.* illus. by Eugénie Fernandes. Tundra. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9781770495302. Canada.

Boniface tries to help bring water from the spring to the orphanage, but there isn’t enough water for everyone who needs it. Background information about the true story behind this story of drought in Kenya is appended at the end of this picture book.

## GRADES 6–8

**ABIRACHED, Zeina.** *I Remember Beirut.* tr. from French by Edward Gauvin. illus. by author. Lerner/Graphic Universe. RTE \$29.27; ISBN 9781467738224; pap. \$9.95. ISBN 9781467744584; ebk. \$9.99. ISBN 9781467772815. France.

Drawing from her own childhood recollections in this graphic novel, the author/illustrator presents both the dangers and the everyday inconveniences from the conflict between Christians and Muslims in Beirut in the 1980s. Companion book to the author’s earlier *A Game for Swallows* (Lerner, 2012).

**BASSOFF, Leah & Laura DeLuca.** *Lost Girl Found.* Groundwood/House of Anansi. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9781554984169; ebk.

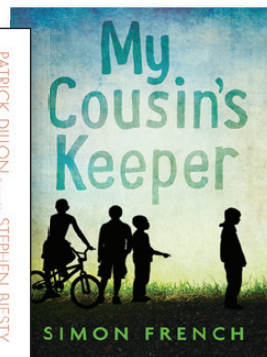
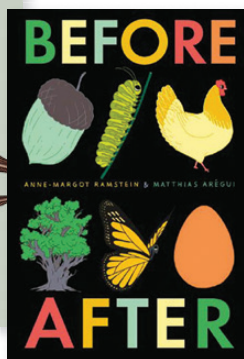
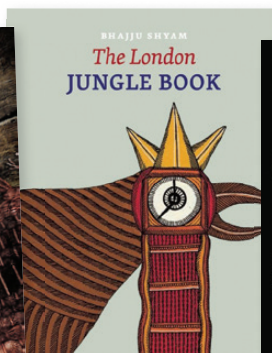
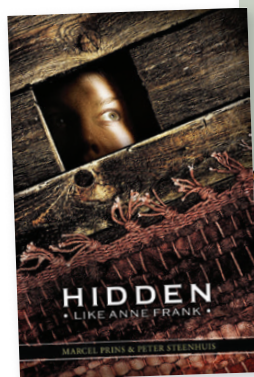
\$14.95. ISBN 9781554984183. Canada. Education spells hope for Poni, a smart, resilient Sudanese girl, but her dreams are crushed after violence strikes her village. She flees to a refugee camp in Kakuma, Kenya, and her desire for a better life prompts her to seize the one chance she has for a brighter future.

**BOYNE, John.** *Stay Where You Are & Then Leave.* illus. by Oliver Jeffers. Holt. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9781627790314; pap. \$7.99. ISBN 9781250062864; ebk. \$9.99. ISBN 9781627790321. UK.

As World War I rages on, Alfie Summerfield learns the truth about his father’s whereabouts and plots to bring him home from the hospital where he is being treated for shell shock. The author’s description of



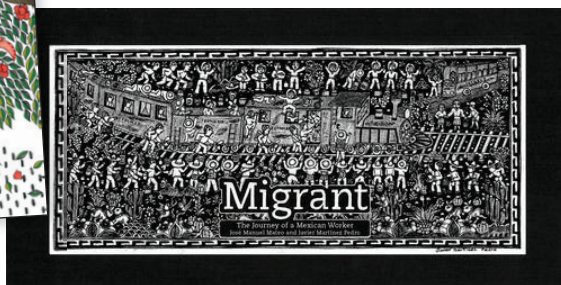
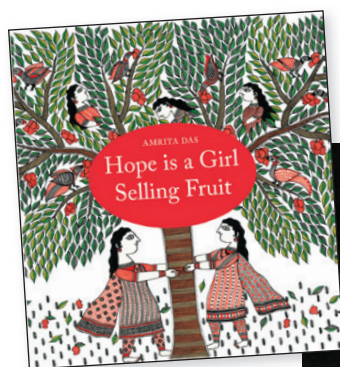




the effects of war on soldiers and civilians highlights the reactions to early pacifists and conscientious objectors.

**DAS, Amrita.** *Hope Is a Girl Selling Fruit.* tr. from Hindi by Gita Wolf & Susheela Varadarajan. illus. by author. Tara. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9789383145027. India.

Recalling a childhood memory of a train journey when she saw a girl who owned her own cart for selling fruit, Das uses the Mithila style of Indian folk art to relate her discovery of the possibilities for personal and financial freedom for poor girls in India.



**DILLON, Patrick.** *The Story of Buildings: From the Pyramids to the Sydney Opera House and Beyond.* illus. by Stephen Biesty. Candlewick. Tr \$19.99. ISBN 9780763669904. UK.

This illustrative and detailed volume of intricate drawings and cross-sections of numerous structures—from simple houses to mosques and churches to skyscrapers—takes readers on an architectural journey to some of the most famous buildings in the world along with lesser-known information about their construction and histories.

**FRENCH, Simon.** *My Cousin's Keeper.* Candlewick. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9780763662790; ebk.

\$16.99. ISBN 9780763666743. Australia. Kieran realizes that being popular means fitting in, a concept that would not describe his cousin Bon, who creates fanciful tales and is bullied. Kieran must decide if he wants to be popular at the expense of doing what's right.

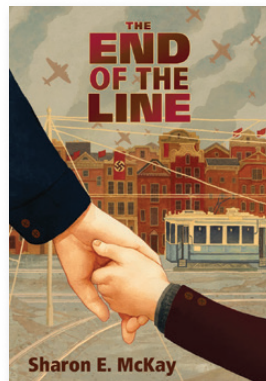
**MATEO, José Manuel.** *Migrant: The Journey of a Mexican Worker.* tr. from Spanish by Emmy Smith Ready. illus. by Javier Martínez Pedro. Abrams. Tr \$17.95. ISBN 9781419709579. Mexico.

Inspired by the ancient Mesoamerican codex format, this bilingual and astonishing piece of art masquerading as a book literally unfolds to depict a Mexican family's dangerous immigration journey. The tiny

figures populating the document starkly contrast with the enormous challenges of survival, border crossing, and hopeful reunion in an unwelcoming new country.

**MCKAY, Sharon E.** *The End of the Line.* Annick. Tr \$21.95. ISBN 9781554516599. Canada.

Two brothers who are tram workers in Holland find their lives changed the day a young girl's mother is taken from their tram by the Nazis and they become caregivers. Based on a



true story from the Holocaust, the book highlights the good in everyday people.

**PRINS, Marcel & Peter Henk Steenhuis.** *Hidden Like Anne Frank: Fourteen True Stories of Survival.* tr. from Dutch by Laura Watkinson. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9780545543620; The Netherlands.

In their own voices, elderly Jewish men and women describe their lives in the Netherlands before, during, and after the war and how they posed as Christians, crawled into hiding spaces, or otherwise were secreted away. Photos of the survivors as children and now are included.

**RAMSTEIN, Anne-Margot & Matthias Arégui.** *Before After.* illus. by authors. Candlewick. Tr \$19.99. ISBN 9780763676216. UK.

Illustrations on the verso and recto of each opening can be connected to create “before” and “after” sequences. For example, an illustration of a slingshot precedes an image of a broken window. Instances of humor and surprise that people of all ages can appreciate appear in this wordless concept book.

**SHYAM, Bhajju** with Gita Wolf & Sirish Rao. *The London Jungle Book.* illus. by author. Tara. Tr \$19.95. ISBN 9788192317120. India.

Indian tribal artist Shyam explains his cultural perceptions from a trip to London when he was invited to paint murals in an Indian restaurant. The book is illustrated with Shyam's detailed and patterned Gond painting style, and several images have brief explanations.



## GRADES 9–12

**BASS, Karen.** *Graffiti Knight*. Pajama Pr. pap. \$14.95. ISBN 9781927485538. Canada. Wilm is 16 years old and living in Soviet occupied East Germany after World War II. He is struggling with a family in crisis and the effects of war and occupation. A highly charged historical fiction adventure about friendship, family, and the people who affect your life.

**CHARLEYBOY, Lisa & Mary Beth Leatherdale,** eds. *Dreaming in Indian: Contemporary Native American Voices*. Annick. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9781554516872. Canada.

Poetry, art, essays, and photography disrupt the stereotypical representations of North American Indian peoples. Approximately 50 contributors from multiple tribes represent the diversity of the North American Indian experiences and cultures. The book reveals both the horrors and strengths of growing up indigenous.

**MAIER, Corinne.** *Marx: An Illustrated Biography*. illus. by Anne Simon. Nobrow. Tr

\$15.95. ISBN 9781907704833. UK.

The graphic novel format of this biography of Karl Marx allows readers to be privy to his thoughts as well as interactions with his family, German socialist Friedrich Engels, and others. A basic introduction to Marx and his political philosophies.

**SARN, Amelie.** *I Love I Hate I Miss My Sister*. tr. from French by Y. Maudet. Random/Delacorte. lib. ed. \$18.99. ISBN 9780375991288; Tr \$15.99. ISBN 9780385743761; ebk. \$9.99. ISBN 9780385370202. France.

Two Muslim sisters in France couldn't be more different. Shohane follows the traditional Muslim ways, but Djelila prefers modern garb and lifestyle, tragically resulting in a Muslim boy punishing her. Based on an actual event, the book raises questions about the rights of women.

**SHRAYA, Vivek.** *God Loves Hair*. illus. by Juliana Neufeld. Arsenal Pulp. Tr \$18.95. ISBN 9781551525433. Canada.

From exploration and experimentation to recognition and acceptance, Shraya's young

protagonist confronts race, ethnicity, sexuality, and religion in his coming-of-age-journey spanning Canada and India. Dedicated to "the boy who was almost lost," these 21 stories connect to create an indelible portrait.



**ZAIL, Suzy.** *Playing for the Commandant*. Candlewick. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9780763664039; ebk. \$16.99. ISBN 9780763666736. Australia.

Before her family was relocated to Auschwitz-Birkenau, Hanna dreamed of a career as a pianist. When she is selected to play the piano at the commandant's house, she thinks she is safe, but confusing emotions and situations arise when the commandant's son takes notice of her.

### Members of the 2015 USBBY

#### Outstanding International Books

Committee: Brenda Dales (Chair), Oxford, OH; Laretta Henderson, Brown Deer, WI; Terry Hong, Park City, UT; Holly Johnson, Cincinnati, OH; Mona Kerby, Westminster, MD; Ed Sullivan, Oak Ridge, TN; Barbara Ward, Pullman, WA; Bobbie Xuereb, San Diego, CA; Terrell Young, Provo, UT.

The Outstanding International Books (OIB) list has been an annual list since 2006. Books are selected by a committee appointed from the membership of USBBY, the United States section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). Over 380 books published or released in the United States in 2014 were examined in the compilation of the 2015 list, representing exceptional literature from France, the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, Italy, New Zealand, Mexico, India, Australia, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Belgium, and Sweden. The list promotes the best of children's literature from other countries, introduces young people to outstanding authors and illustrators from other countries, and helps children and young people in the U.S. to see the world from other points of view. The list also promotes literature that is accessible to children and young people in the U.S., provides or addresses topics that may be missing from children's and young adult literature in the U.S., and promotes books that may exhibit distinct cultural flavor. For additional information and to access all OIB lists, please visit [www.usbby.org](http://www.usbby.org).