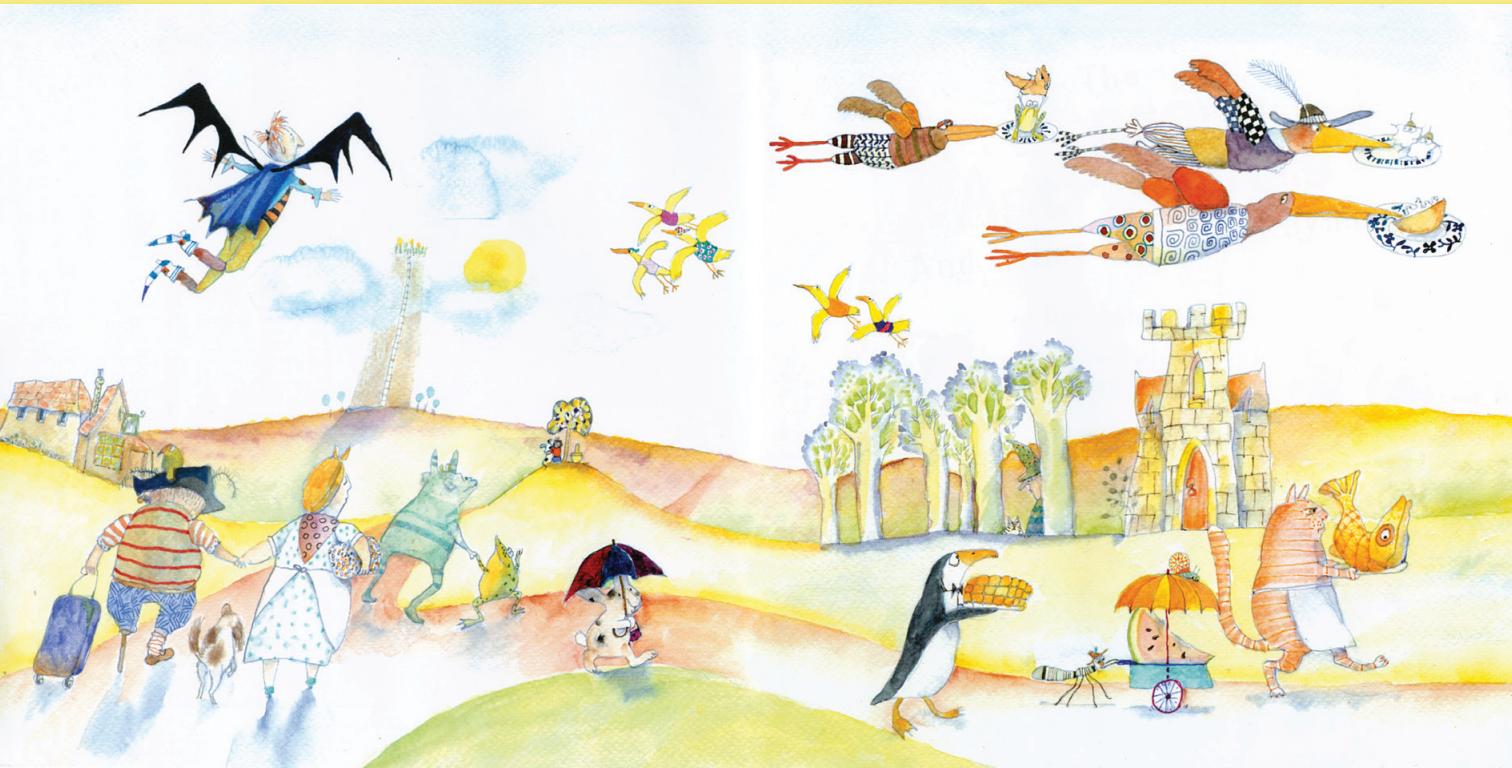


*Celebrating*  
THE 2016  
**NOTABLE  
POETRY LIST**



THE 2016 NOTABLE POETRY LIST includes 19 books published in 2015 to share with children of all ages. These titles demonstrate the diversity of poetry books in terms of topic and format, ranging from a single illustrated poem and 18 anthologies—edited and individually authored collections as well as those focused on specific themes or curricular connections and poetic forms. As with the previous lists, these selections offer not only outstanding poetry but also content and writing connections, along with opportunities to discover familiar and new poets and engaging explorations of language and literature. Use these titles as resources to share delightful poetry with children and young adults during National Poetry Month in April and all year long!

Illustrations ©2015 by Joan Rankin from *The Popcorn Astronauts and Other Biteable Rhymes* written by Deborah Ruddell. Used with permission of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing.

# THE 2016 NOTABLE POETRY LIST



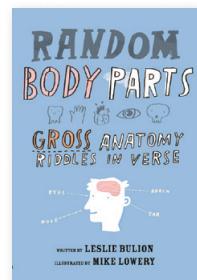
**It is never too early to spark an interest** in and love of poetry,

and reading aloud is the best way to begin, especially with collections targeted to the early years such as *Lullaby & Kisses Sweet, Over the Hills and Far Away: A Treasury of Nursery Rhymes*, and *Out and About: A First Book of Poems*. With so many choices in these collections, it is easy to read a poem each day and to find favorites to share again and again as a means of reinforcing oral language and engaging listeners through physical responses and choral reading techniques.

Poetry collections with thematic connections reinforce the curriculum and integrate literature throughout the content areas. Science connections are the most common in this year's Notable Poetry List and can be narrow in terms of actual content, as in *Sail Away*, a collection

**BULION, Leslie.** *Random Body Parts: Gross Anatomy Riddles in Verse.* illus. by Mike Lowery. Peachtree. Tr 14.95. ISBN 9781561457373.

Gr 3 Up—Twenty poems humorously illuminate human anatomy with titles such as “Sonnet Number Four” (a Shakespearean parody explaining how our four-chambered heart works) and “Wherefore Art Thou, Alveoli” (lungs, of course). Nonfiction notes give the facts behind each riddle while computer graphics enhance the science and fun. Back matter includes a medical glossary, a funky but accurate anatomy chart, and poetry notes that explain how Shakespeare’s work inspires each riddle.



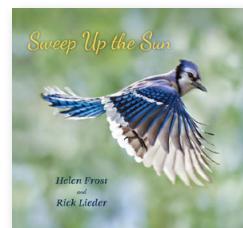
**ENGLE, Margarita.** *Orangutanka: A Story in Poems.* illus. by Renée Kurilla. Holt. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780805098396.

PreS-Gr 2—A string of cleverly linked tanka poems tells the story of a family of orangutans living in an animal sanctuary in Borneo. After the forest rangers present the family with a fruity feast, the “towering green trees/shiver, sway, rattle, and shake/when orangutans/clamber toward colorful mounds/of bananas and mangoes.” The comical and endearing digitally colored pencil and ink illustrations surround Engle’s lively verse. The book concludes with an invitation to dance “like a happy orangutan.”



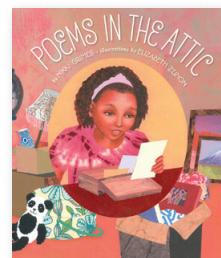
**FROST, Helen.** *Sweep Up the Sun.* photos. by Rick Lieder. Candlewick. Tr \$15.99. ISBN 978073669041.

K-Gr 3—*Sweep Up the Sun* combines Frost’s lyrical poem with stunning photographs to showcase 11 different birds from chickadees to woodpeckers. Readers will soar with the birds and the beauty of the language. Endnotes offer thumbnails with basic information about each avian species.



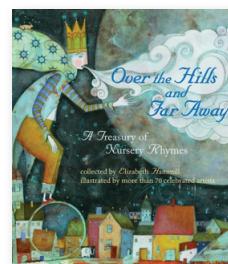
**GRIMES, Nikki.** *Poems in the Attic.* illus. by Elizabeth Zunon. Lee & Low. Tr \$19.95. ISBN 9781620140277.

Gr 1-4—In her grandmother’s attic, a young girl discovers her mother’s girlhood poems, which reflect a childhood in a U.S. Air Force family and the many geographic relocations she made. The mother’s poems in tanka format appear in italics opposite the young girl’s free verse poems, revealing a touching dual perspective. Endnotes describe each poem format as well as information about U.S. Air Force bases around the world.



**HAMMILL, Elizabeth, ed.** *Over the Hills and Far Away: A Treasury of Nursery Rhymes.* Candlewick. Tr \$21.99. ISBN 9780763677299.

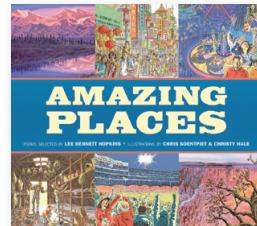
PreS-Gr 2—This collection of 150 nursery rhymes from around the world has been carefully grouped and then illustrated by 77 outstanding contemporary illustrators. Each page turn offers a verbal and visual delight. Readers will enjoy comparing the many versions of similar nursery rhymes. For instance, one spread features “Little Miss Muffet” variations from Australia, England, Jamaica, and the United States with images by four illustrators.



of poems with a common theme of water in its many forms or in *Out and About: A First Book of Poems* with poems grouped by their images of the four seasons. Such poetry books can be used to introduce a topic and theme-related vocabulary, build interest for a topic, or generate background knowledge and discussion. However, the science connection is greatly enhanced in books that join poetry with nonfiction facts either inserted on the same page as the poems, as in *Random Body Parts: Gross Anatomy Riddles in Verse*, or as endnotes to supplement the poetry, as in *Sweep Up the Sun and The Maine Coon's Haiku and Other Poems for Cat Lovers*, that provide nonfiction facts about birds and cats respectively. So, poems can be integrated throughout daily study in language arts to consider lyrical language, wordplay, and more and nonfiction facts in science and to lead children to understand the importance of research and accurate background information in order to write poetry. When a science-themed poetry collection such as *Flutter and Hum: Animal Poems/Aleteo y zumbido/poemas de animales* does not provide nonfiction facts, children can conduct independent or group research to create their own information tidbits. In the case of lengthy and wide-

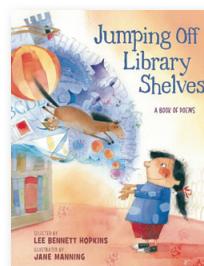
**HOPKINS, Lee Bennett**, ed. *Amazing Places*. illus. by Chris Soentpiet & Christy Hale. Lee & Low. Tr \$18.95. ISBN 9781600606533.

**Gr 1-4**—This beautifully illustrated collection of poems gathered by the renowned anthologist pays homage to beloved landmarks across the United States. The book features a wide range of poets and offers a multicultural and multigenerational celebration of places of historical and cultural significance. The variety of voices and locations makes this collection exceptional. Readers will listen to a campfire crackle in Denali National Park, share clam chowder with a young girl and her grandfather at Fenway Park, hear a lighthouse’s perspective on storms, and enjoy a tree’s description of the Grand Canyon.



**HOPKINS, Lee Bennett**, ed. *Jumping off Library Shelves*. illus. by Jane Manning. Boyds Mills/WordSong. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 9781590789247.

**K Up**—Readers are treated to the wonders of a library as they enjoy the collection of 15 poems gathered by Hopkins. Accompanied by whimsical gouache and pencil full-page illustrations, the selections allow readers to experience the “sweet kingdom of story” in Nikki Grimes’ s“Refuge” and “the quiet weight of words,” as Deborah Ruddell writes of nouns and verbs in “Dictionary Dare.” Hopkins reminds us of childhood story hours when “words/leap from pages” and we reconnect with “friends like Frog and Toad” (“Storyteller”).



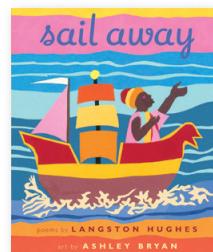
**HOPKINS, Lee Bennett**, ed. *Lullaby & Kisses Sweet*. illus. by Alyssa Nasser. Abrams Appleseed. Board. \$15.95. ISBN 9781419710377.

**PreS-Gr 1**—A baby shower must! Hopkins selected 30 short, rhyming poems and arranged them in five short chapters to include poems about a baby’s firsts—a first tooth, a first step, and a first haircut—and poems about family, play, and food. This board book has brightly illustrated pages with simple animal characters.



**HUGHES, Langston**. *Sail Away*. illus. by Ashley Bryan. S. & S./Atheneum. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9781481430852.

**K-Gr 3**—Bryan selected 15 of Hughes’s poems that feature water in some way. The classic “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” is included alongside lesser-known and more lighthearted poems such as “Catch,” about a romance between a human and a mermaid. This thematic collection captures myriad interpretations of the importance and role of the sea. Bryan’s brightly colored collage illustrations complement the poems with embellishments of sky, flowers, children, and even mermaids. The words will delight young readers, and the art will capture their imaginations.



**HUGHES, Shirley**. *Out and About: A First Book of Poems*. illus. by Shirley Hughes. Candlewick. Tr \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0763676445.

**PreS-K**—This collection of 18 poems, adorned with Hughes’s signature watercolor and pen illustrations, takes readers skipping through the four seasons with Katie and her baby brother.



ranging collections such as *Book of Nature Poetry*, groups can discuss why it would be difficult to include facts or endnotes about the topic of every poem and, instead, can browse the table of contents and poems to find a favorite to research further.

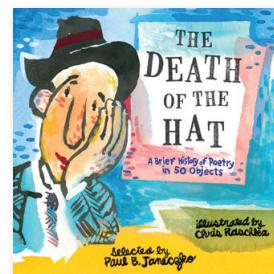
Five collections feature social studies. Both Grimes's *Poems in the Attic* and Hopkins's *Amazing Places* present poetry about different geographic locations with the latter offering endnotes with nonfiction facts about each landmark. The collections intersect with poems showcasing the same place, Washington, DC, or the same states but different sites. Children can extend the geography focus by using the U.S. map in the endpapers of Hopkins's book and creating poems for more amazing places in states that were not featured.

The Notable Poetry List provides opportunities to compare and contrast different types or formats of poetry. For instance, two books feature nursery rhymes. In *Over the Hills and Far Away* versions of similar nursery rhymes from different parts of the world can be compared, while the parodies of nursery rhymes in *A Pirate's Mother Goose* can be contrasted with more traditional versions in the other book. Several books feature specific poetry formats such as haiku or tanka including *Won Ton and Chopstick: A Cat and Dog Tale Told in*

They go out and about while being showered by the falling blossoms of a flowering spring tree, splashing at the summer seaside, watching the rain fall on the city streets in the fall, and walking in the snow in winter. Hughes has included additional illustrations in hopes that readers will add their own poems.

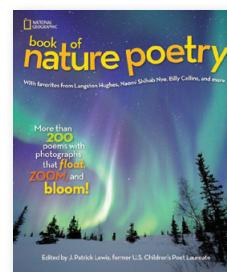
**JANECZKO, Paul B., ed. *The Death of the Hat: A Brief History of Poetry in 50 Objects*.** illus. by Chris Raschka. Candlewick. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780763669638.

**Gr 3-8**—Readers can explore this unique assortment of poems using a variety of lenses. On the surface, it is a collection of poems about objects, accompanied by Raschka's evocative watercolor illustrations. But the volume is so much more than that. It is also a history of (mostly Western) poetry from the early Middle Ages through contemporary times, providing readers with a sampler of poets, poems, and styles sure to whet an appetite for more.



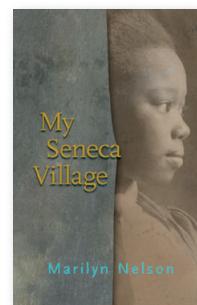
**LEWIS, J. Patrick, ed. *Book of Nature Poetry*.** National Geographic. Tr \$24.99. ISBN 9781426320941.

**K-Gr 6**—The stunning full-color photographs coupled with the voices of 133 poets invite young listeners and readers to celebrate the splendor and mystery of nature. Divided into 10 sections, this incredible collection of more than 200 poems features an assortment of poetry forms and styles written by both classic and contemporary poets. The selections vary from humorous to profound—each abounding with wonderful vocabulary and wordplay. Teachers will appreciate the recommended resources on poetry forms.



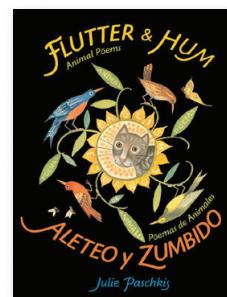
**NELSON, Marilyn. *My Seneca Village*.** Namelos. Tr \$12.95. ISBN 78-1608981977.

**Gr 6 Up**—Nelson uses poetry to tell the story of a settlement of free African Americans who lived and worked alongside Irish and German immigrants in the space that would become Central Park. Thirty-some citizens of this community are introduced through background information and featured poems. As the narrative unfolds, characters' lives intersect and relationships across the community are shown. "The Shakespeare Riot" describes the 1834 disturbance that occurred because of a production of *Richard III* with all-black actors and demonstrates how the book blends history and poetry to show a community's spirit. Nelson ends with a historical note and reflections on the poetic forms used.



**PASCHKIS, Julie. *Flutter and Hum: Animal Poems/Aleteo y zumbido: poemas de animales*.** illus. by Julie Paschkis. Holt. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9781627791038.

**K-Gr 4**—Bilingual poems in English and Spanish introduce 12 animals. The different language versions of the poems are on opposite pages nestled amid gouache illustrations highlighting additional descriptive terms in both languages. An author's note explains Paschkis's process for writing the poems first in Spanish and then translating them to English.



**ROSEN, Michael J. *The Maine Coon's Haiku and Other Poems for Cat Lovers*.** illus. by Lee White. Candlewick. Tr \$17.99. ISBN

*Haiku and Orangutanka: A Story in Poems.* Coupling the poems with the authors' introductions to each format serves as a resource to encourage children to write their own poems in that format. In addition, both of these books are stories in poems. After sharing each book and discussing how the poems unfold to tell a story, children can work individually or in groups to create their own story through poetry.

Finally, it is important to draw children's attention to the peritext (front and back matter) as well as the poems. Author's notes, resource and reference lists, endpaper illustrations, and endnotes support the poems, and children can compare and contrast books with and without these resources and discuss what such features add to a book's enjoyment and understanding and, perhaps, even create their own extensions for books without these elements.

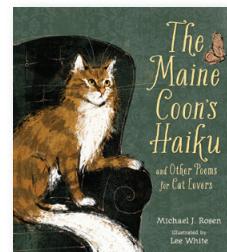
—Nancy L. Hadaway

**National Council of Teachers of English Excellence in Poetry for Children Award Committee:**

Nancy L. Hadaway, Arlington, TX (chair); Darcy Bradley, Medical Lake, Washington; Kathryn Button, Lubbock, TX; Lesley Colabucci, Millersville, PA; Mary Lee Hahn, Columbus, OH; Amy Ludwig VanDerwater, Holland, NY; Terrell A. Young, Provo, UT

9780763664923.

**Gr 1-4**—Rosen captures 20 well-loved breeds in spot-on haiku: a British Shorthair “plants mud-daisies” on a car hood, and an Abyssinian is “curled up on your book.” Each cat leaps from the page by way of carefully chosen images and metaphors as White’s soulful illustrations deepen readers’ appreciation of all things feline. Alternating between indoor and outdoor scenes, Rosen captures a variety of cat lives, and final pages offer interesting facts about highlighted breeds.



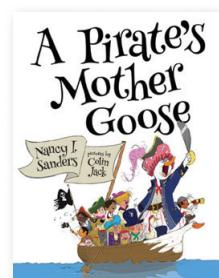
**RUDELL, Deborah. *The Popcorn Astronauts and Other Biteable Rhymes.*** illus. by Joan Rankin. S. & S./Margaret K. McElderry Bks. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9781442465558.

**PreS-Gr 3**—In this delicious collection of 21 poems traveling through the seasons of food, Ruddell fills readers’ mouths and minds with tasty images and sounds. From the Strawberry Queen in her beaded red dress to a swim in Watermelon Lake (complete with a “pale green shore” and “small black boats”) to peaches in their “flannelpajamaty skin,” Ruddell shares the joy of food and language. Rankin’s playful illustrations complete the menu.



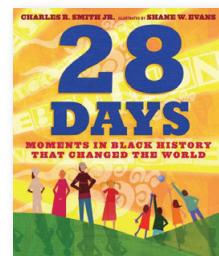
**SANDERS, Nancy I. *A Pirate's Mother Goose.*** illus. by Colin Jack. Albert Whitman. Tr \$16.99. ISBN 9780807565599.

**PreS-Gr 6**—This collection of pirate-themed Mother Goose parodies will be doubly delightful for readers who are familiar with traditional rhymes *and* who love all things pirate. Eye patches, peg legs, and buccaneers abound in new versions of “Little Jack Horner,” “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep,” and 20 other well-known rhymes. This is the perfect book for Talk Like a Pirate Day: “Ye Can Talk Like Pirates Talk” (“London Bridge Is Falling Down”) gives an eight-verse pirate-talk tutorial.



**SMITH, Charles L., Jr. *28 Days: Moments in Black History That Changed the World.*** illus. by Shane W. Evans. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter Bks. Tr \$18.99. ISBN 9781596438200.

**Gr 3 Up**—Using a variety of forms, 28 poems commemorate significant people and events important throughout black history. Helpful nonfiction notes accompany each poem. This oversize picture book, illustrated in vibrant oil and digital collages, starts with Crispus Attucks in 1770 and ends with Barack Obama. A 29th poem on the last page invites readers to make a difference. The first of seven stanzas asks: “What will today bring/what will today be/will today be the day/you make history?”



**WARDLAW, Lee. *Won Ton and Chopstick: A Cat and Dog Tale Told in Haiku.*** illus. by Eugene Yelchin. Holt. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9780905099874.

**PreS-Gr 3**—This humorous sequel to *Won Ton: A Cat Tale Told in Haiku* explores, from Won Ton’s perspective, what happens when a puppy joins the household. The unhappy feline tries to teach the newcomer the rules. “Hey, Pest! Heed my hiss!/My blankie. My bowl. My boy!/Trespassers bitten.” In a satisfying ending, Won Ton discovers that she and the puppy can be friends. Yelchin’s soft-colored, spare gouache illustrations capture the growing harmony between a persnickety cat and hapless puppy.

