



CK Reporter of the Week
Macy Gardner, Golden

P.T. Barnum's story is told well

In "The Greatest Showman," P.T. Barnum meets his future wife Charity when they are young school kids, but they are separated by having finished school and by their families' differences in wealth.

Then, as the early part of the movie progresses quickly, they grow older and fall in love.

In a fun scene on a New York rooftop between the adult P.T., played by Hugh Jackman, and the beautiful Charity, played by Michelle Williams, they express the hope of what the future will bring with dancing and singing.

They soon have two young daughters, but P.T. loses his job and is no longer able to provide money for Charity and his girls as he promised them.

P.T. must find out how to fix this.

He starts a museum of oddities that fails due to no customers, and now he has to find another way to keep his promise of a good life to his wife and daughters.

He starts a circus filled with unique people -- a little person, a bearded lady and other outcasts -- to draw crowds and sell tickets.

This idea comes from when P.T. was young, homeless, and starving on the streets of New York.

A woman gave him an apple, but her face was deformed, which now makes him think about her in this time of trouble.

The various people who join his circus are not accepted by society because they are different and, for now, he may see them as different, too, and that's a good thing.

There is a very empowering scene in this movie.

It is about halfway through the movie after P.T. starts another show with a famous singer and starts to feel the same fame and power of the rich.

P.T. also starts to become one of the people who think his stars are weird and

dangerous.

Since the characters P.T. recruits are different, people see them as threats.

The audience has wanted to come and see them because they enjoy freak-shows and what they see as crazy people.

But there is a particular group that just hates the cast of circus performers and that group starts a fist fight with them.

The troupe finally sticks up for themselves which makes for a very powerful scene and an important part of the movie.

P.T. has always been the one and only person who see their differences as a good thing. Their own parents didn't even believe in them.

Now P.T. must make a choice: Does his one moment of not believing in the cast change him or does it make for a difficult situation for him to fix?

I recommend this movie to ages 6 and up.

I would say this because the circus performers are quite different appearing and I don't know how younger kids would take the people.

Otherwise, it's a family movie.

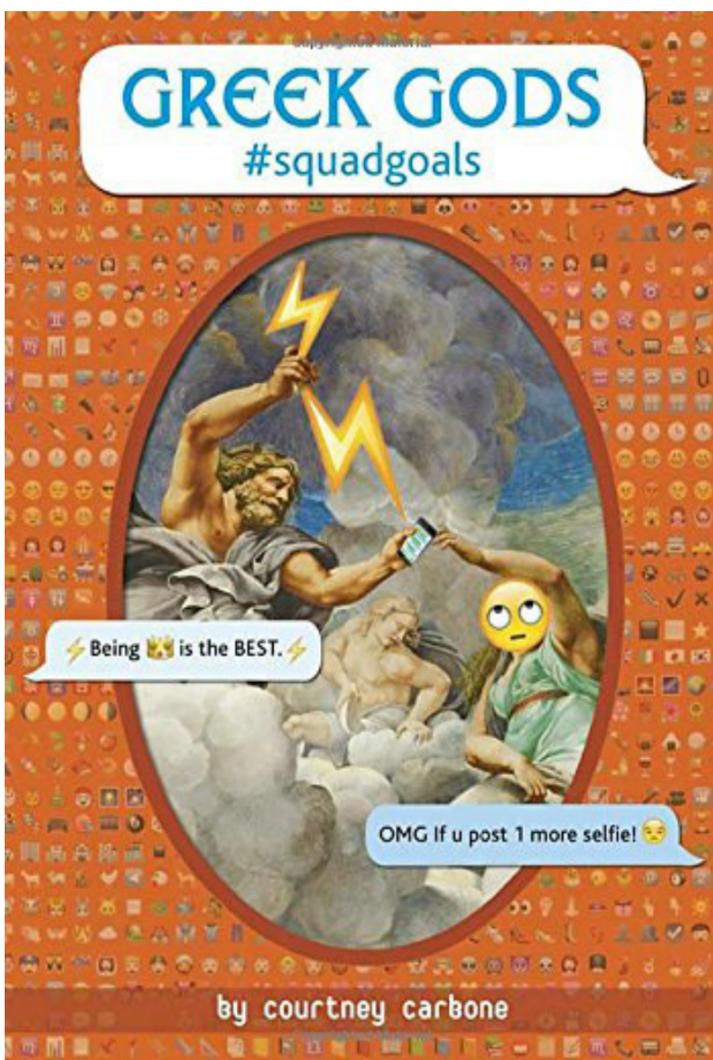
You will especially like this movie if you like musicals because there is a lot of singing and dancing.

It was a terrific movie and I really enjoyed it. I would give it a four out of five-star rating.



By Sadie Perry,
10, a CK Reporter
from Aurora

Greek mythology treated with respect



If you've ever been interested in Greek mythology but haven't gotten yourself to really read about it, then this might be the right book for you!

"Greek Gods #Squadgoals," by Courtney Carbone, is about Greek myths, but re-written in a form that almost everyone is familiar with: Texting.

Yes, the Greek gods text each other.

It's one of the books in the OMG series, including altered versions of "Hamlet," "A Christmas Carol," and "Romeo and Juliet."

So far, this book is the first to be based on ancient mythology.

The book seems to follow an accurate timeline of Greek mythology, starting out with Gaia, the personification of the Earth, and Uranus, the personification of the sky, and the birth of beings like the Titans, Cyclopes, and later, the gods.

The gods in the book still behave the same way as they did in the original Greek myths, but of course, they're constantly checking their phones, whether to post articles, update their profiles, or just text other gods.

In the Greek myths, the gods often have difficulties that are usually caused by another god: Persephone is kidnapped by Hades, the god of the underworld, and Hera won't let Zeus be around other women.

In this book, when Persephone is kidnapped, she texts her mother, Demeter, who is the goddess of the harvest: "Pls hurry!"

I am getting rly hungry and my options r pretty limited down here. (pensive face emoji)"

Zeus left a dating app open on his phone and Hera finds out about it:

"U left a dating app open this a.m.!!! I still can't believe u tricked me into marrying u. (angry face emoji)"

You get the point.

Some parts in the book can be hard to understand if you're new to Greek mythology, but overall, it's a neat idea: It does a good job showing the gods' emotions and how they feel towards each other during all of the events in the book.

It's very short, with only about 115 pages and hardly any paragraphs, and it only has a few myths in it, but it's still enough to give the reader a basic idea of Greek mythology.

I would recommend this book for anyone ages 12 and up.

Even if you weren't that interested in it before, this book might make you want to start learning more about Greek mythology!



By Nandi Strieker,
11, a CK Reporter
from Antonito



Writing Is Cool!

How Would You Like To Be A Real Reporter?

Find out about all the cool benefits when you apply to be a Colorado Kids reporter at Colorado NIE.com or by emailing dplewka@denverpost.com.

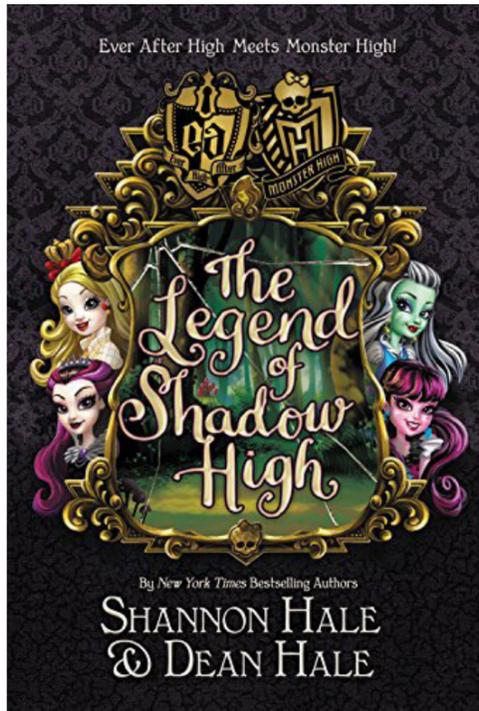
Doing the monster, and fairy tale, mashup

The Legend of Shadow High," by Shannon and Dean Hale, is a lovely tale about two girls from Monster High, Draculaura (*daughter of Dracula*) and Frankie (*daughter of Frankenstein*), who stumble into a different world, where they meet new friends, Apple White and Raven Queen.

(T)hey combine characters from two different, but very fun series: "Ever After High" with the sons and daughters of fairy tale characters and "Monster High" with monsters, into one spectacular story.

They learn that the evil queen has escaped her mirror prison once again and is planning to find the treacherous Shadow High to rule it, which leads the characters into an exciting adventure with a great, exciting story line.

If the readers didn't know anything about the books "Monster High" or "Ever After High," then it would probably be quite confusing in the beginning, but they would



understand it after a while.

I think the book "The Legend Of Shadow High" was a total success, because I like the way they combine characters from two different, but very fun series, "Ever After High" with the sons and daughters of fairy tale characters and "Monster High" with monsters, into one spectacular story with a great plot twist.

Scary characters and fairytale characters are together, wrapped up in one beautiful present with a lovely bow to tie it all up.

And this story has a very interesting resolution to go with it.

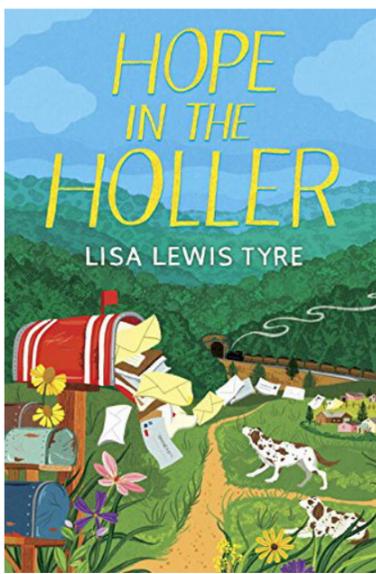
Another thing that I liked about this book is that it lets you make choices that affect the plot line by sending you to a different page to continue the narrative.

This is a cool way to interact with the story.



By Lily Warneke, 9, a CK Reporter from Golden

Novel offers message of hope in hard times



"Hope in The Holler," by Lisa Lewis Tyre, is a surprising book with a even more surprising story line.

Before Wavy's mother dies, she gives her daughter a list of papers to help her enjoy life and, the most noticed one says, "Be Brave, Wavy B. you've got as much right to a good life as anyone else, so find it!"

And when Wavy is sent to live with her aunts in the Appalachian hometown where her mother grew up, she thinks it will be a completely new adventure where she gets to see where her own mother came from.

Little does she know that things here are anything but normal, with commanding aunts around, crazy neighbors and far much more, so that Wavy wants nothing more than to escape this hectic life.

With the help of one of her aunts, Wavy just might have the chance to leave and escape the fate of having her aunts become her permanent guardians, and to be able to find

where she belongs in the world.

I think this book is good and I would recommend it to fifth graders or strong fourth grade readers and up.

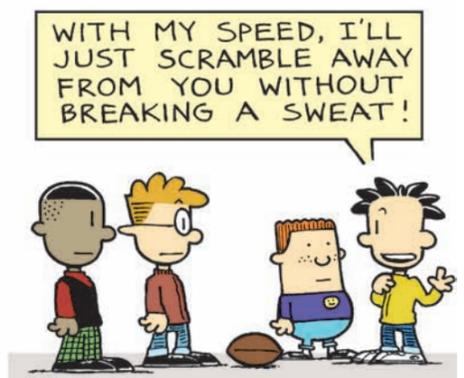
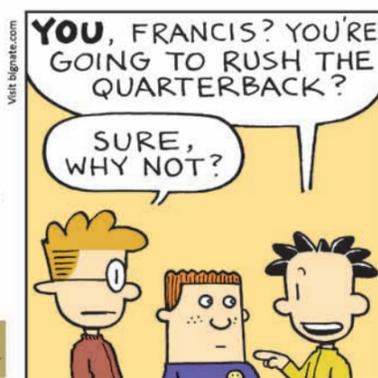
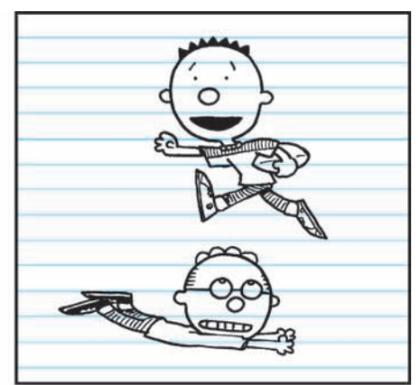
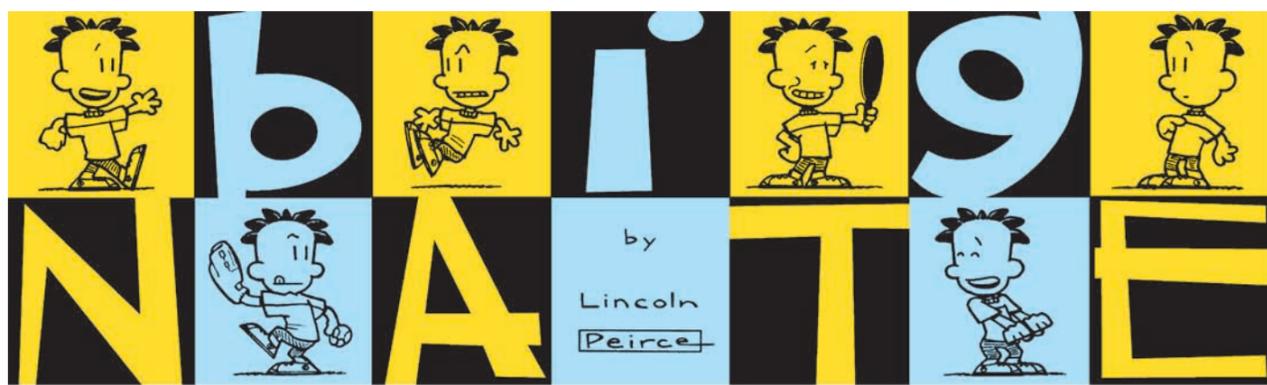
There were definitely some things that little kids might not understand but, in terms of vocabulary, anyone can read it if they want to.

I think that "Hope in the Holler" was pretty good and a short, quick read for vacations since it is fairly thin with only about 210 pages.

Those who read this will find hope in the most desperate times, even if it means struggling through the deepest troubles.



By Katherine Gagner, 13, a CK Reporter from Boulder



New, young hybrid bird discovered in Amazon jungle



People may create a mule by breeding a horse with a donkey, and they've also created "tigelons" by mating lions and tigers.

But an international group of ornithologists have found something very rare: A hybrid in the wilds of the Amazon rainforest.

The golden-crowned manakin was discovered in 1957, but was so rare that it wasn't seen again until 2002.

There was a theory that it was a

hybrid of the snow-capped manakin, named for its bright white cap of feathers, and the opal-crowned manakin, which has bright, light-blue feathers on its head.

To test this theory, ornithologists trapped 144 birds and took blood samples to test their DNA.

They found that, indeed, the golden-crowned manakin began about 180,000 years ago as a hybrid of the other two birds.

That's very rare, and very recent:

Most bird breeds are at least a few million years old.

At one point, they suggest, the two older breeds were separated from the home grounds of the new bird. It only bred with its own kind and became a separate species.

And here's an oddity: The older species do not have pigment in their crowns, but get their color by refracting light. However, the golden-crowned manakin has yellow pigmented feathers.

photo/ Dymorodrepanis

Graphic novel tells touching, exciting story

Here's a fairytale-like world, with a twist... Meet Pig, in "The Dam Keeper" by Robert Kondo and Dice Tsutsumi.

Pig lives in Sunrise Valley: or rather, between it and the black fog that kills everything in sight.

He is the dam keeper, which means that he has to keep the giant dam running that continuously blows away the poisonous mist.

He has never been accepted in his town except by one animal, and is either ignored or bullied by the rest.

Then, when disaster occurs, Pig has to unite with an unlikely friend and a bully to get back to their town before time runs out.

This graphic novel is a story that really touched me.

Though sad and even creepy at parts, it really makes you understand how much the characters are overcoming when they still believe in hope.

"The Dam Keeper" shows a journey worthy of Disney, turning a lifelong bully into a newfound friend and a loyal friend into someone who truly understands the struggles faced.

The characters have a lot of depth, and the stereotype of cute talking animals is immediately shattered.

Yes, they are drawn cute, but they have real emotion attached to them, and



aren't afraid to show sadness.

Both Robert Kondo and Dice Tsutsumi have worked with Pixar, and have experience with a lot of different animation work.

(In fact, the book is based on a short animated film Kondo and Tsutsumi made in 2014 when they were working at Pixar.)

Their illustrations use dark colors to really portray the emotion felt in the book by Pig and by the supporting characters.

This is a good book for ages 7 and up.

It is funny and cute for relatively young kids, and adults will get a deeper meaning out of it as well, and lots of people can enjoy it.

People who liked Disney's "The Black Cauldron" and "Adventure Down Under" will be sure to love this graphic novel.



By Sylvia Goodman, 12, a CK Reporter from Centennial

Weah scores in Liberian run-off election

It's not often that the presidents of small African countries are well-known in other nations unless they do something very wrong.

But Liberia's new president is famous throughout Europe and Africa for doing something very right, though hardly connected to politics.

George Weah earned international fame as one of the best strikers in football (or "soccer" for Yanks), playing for teams like AC Milan, Arsenal and Manchester City as well as his own national team.

Besides scoring a lot of goals, Weah scored awards for his humanitarian work off the pitch, including an ESPY and the Arthur Ashe Humanitarian Award, as well as serving as a UN Goodwill Ambassador.

After retiring from sports in 2003, Weah became involved in Liberian politics and his victory in the presidential elections last week was a mix of sports fame and his record of public service.

Liberia was founded in the middle of the 19th Century by Americans who opposed slavery and who helped 13,000 freed slaves emigrate and settle in the new country.

The nation became independent in 1847,

taking the name "Liberia" from "Liberty" and naming its capital city, Monrovia, for the US president who had helped its founding.

But the American immigrants did not get along well with the Africans who already lived there and whose cultures were very different from the newcomers.

Over the years, there have been conflicts, and Weah first ran for office in 2005, after a bloody civil war had ended and peace once more had come to Liberia.

His main opponent, who won that election, was Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa's first woman president and a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Her retirement led many politicians to seek the presidency, and, in October elections, Weah finished with 38 percent of the vote, the best of 20 candidates but not a majority.

Last week's election included Weah and his nearest opponent, Vice President Joseph Boakai.

Weah was announced the winner with over 60 percent of the vote.

He'll have a lot of work to do to fill the shoes of one of Africa's most respected leaders, but it is a great victory for a boy born in a Monrovia slum.



Former football star and new president of Liberia George Weah casts his ballot December 26 under the watchful eyes of blue-clad National Election Commission monitors.



Sudoku

1		2			
				3	
	6		2		
			4		3
	5				4
4			6		1

Rules: Every row across, every column down and each of the six smaller boxes must contain numerals 1,2,3,4,5 and 6, one time and one time only.
The solution to this week's puzzle is on Page 4.



Brainteaser

On this date in 1949, Luis Muñoz Marín became the first popularly elected governor of Puerto Rico, so our answers this week will begin with "D" for "democracy."

- The city of Denver is in this county.
- Denver gets much of its water from this Summit County reservoir.
- This invasive plant is a pest on lawns but was brought to America as a popular type of greens. Its French name means "lion's tooth" from its long, pointed leaves.
- A name for a person who is a bit too flashy a dresser, like a certain feather-wearing Yankee.
- In the comics, Blondie's husband
- Author of "Because of Winn Dixie," "The Tale of Despereaux" and "Flora & Ulysses"
- This Michigan city is known as the center of the American automobile industry
- Franklin Roosevelt is on this coin (Extra credit: Tell me in Spanish)
- The Broncos' Mr. Thomas
- Harry Potter's aunt and uncle

(answers on Page Four)

When temperatures fall, your nose runs to the rescue of your lungs

Winter's over in Australia, but an on-line feature there, the Conversation, recently received a question that is just coming into play in Colorado: Why does your nose run when it's cold?

It's true for about half of people, the writer there responded, and especially true for people with asthma, nasal allergies and other signs of a sensitive breathing system.

A writer in the UK who picked up on the story even cited a name for it which would make sense in Colorado: "Skier's Nose."

The basic explanation is quite simple: Your nose works to warm the air you breathe in order to protect the cells of your lung's lining.

How it does that is a little more complex. Your nostrils may seem dry much of the time, especially in a desert climate like the Front Range. But the back of your throat and your sinuses are always moist, even on a dry summer day.

This means that, when air gets to your lungs, it is already warm and moist.

When air is cold and dry, however, the brain sends more blood to your nose to increase warmth, and also sends messages increasing the moisture that is produced to help warm and moisten the air.

Your immune system also joins in the effort, and it's better to have too much moisture than not enough. But carry some tissues. photo/Tatiana Bashinskaya



Beyond These Pages!

Hot Links to Cool Sites!

NASA's Space Place
<http://tinyurl.com/ckspace>

NIE Special Report
<http://tinyurl.com/ckniereport>

Headline Geography
<http://tinyurl.com/ckgeography>

Pulse of the Planet
<http://tinyurl.com/ckpulseplanet>

How to become a NextGen Reporter!

<http://tinyurl.com/colokidsreporter>



To read the sources for these stories

A Natural Hybrid
 Liberian Elections
 Why Your Nose Runs

go to <http://www.tinyurl.com/ckstorylinks>

For local skater, sticking with her dreams paid off



I recently interviewed Katie Curran, who is a skater in "Disney on Ice."

I had seen the show, which was playing in Denver in December, and Katie is from Denver, so it was super exciting to learn about her!

Katie Curran started skating when she was 2 years old because her dad was a hockey player, so she was kind of destined to skate.

He brought her out on her

grandparents' ice rink, and that was it from there.

Her coach, Robyn Sudkamp, affected her career, because she used to skate for Disney on Ice. Sudkamp was the one who really pushed her to audition, and Curran gives all the thanks to her.

It took a lot of hard work to get to where she is now. Curran remembers when she was in elementary school and would wake up at 6 am every day, just to make sure she skated before school.

Then, after school, she would go to the rink and skate after school, too.

When Curran was younger, she did a bunch of ballet and dance classes, plus cardio and resistance training. It was a lot of work, and she said the thing that gets you through is persistence and always remembering your goals, and staying focused.

It's really cool for Katie Curran to be able to portray all these different Disney on Ice characters.

According to her, "You get to see all the kids' faces when you come out to the audience and they're so full of joy and happiness."

It's awesome, she says, that she can help to bring all these Disney characters to life!

Katie Curran plays Dory's mom in the second half of "Finding Dory," so she wears a full-out fish costume! She says her favorite part is traveling and getting to go to a new place and a new city every week.

Being on the road is definitely an adjustment, but she says anything is an adjustment.

"It's just a new experience, so you have to just learn to be quick on your feet."

"I'd say, just never give up from your dream because Disney on Ice was certainly a dream for me and I never thought it would come true." says Katie Curran.

But there she is now!

Katie Curran's Favorite Things:

Book: "Oh The Places You'll Go" by Dr. Seuss

Movie: "How the Grinch Stole Christmas"

Relaxing activity: Shop, take a bath, and watch movie by herself

Meal to eat before a show: Fruit or salad

Fast food restaurant: Chick-fil-A

Celebrity she'd like to meet: Ellen DeGeneres

Thing about living in Colorado: The mountains

Place(s) in Colorado: Denver and Boulder



By Talia Schanman, 9, a CK Reporter from Cherry Hills Village

Sudoku Solution

1	3	2	5	4	6
5	4	6	1	3	2
3	6	4	2	1	5
2	1	5	4	6	3
6	5	1	3	2	4
4	2	3	6	5	1

Brainteaser Solution



(see Page Three)

10 right - Wow!

7 right - Great!

5 right - Good

3 right - See you next time!

1. Denver 2. Dillon 3. dandelion 4. dandy 5. Dagwood
 6. (Kate) Di Camillo 7. Detroit 8. dime ("dime") 9. Demaryius
 10. the Dursleys

Starting next week!



Our next serial story, "Hooch," is set on America's northern border in the days of Prohibition. Kenny Rascoe's father died in the World War, and his mother died in the influenza epidemic that followed.

Now his chief influences are his uncles: Raymond, the customs officer who has taken over much of his father's role, and George, whom Kenny discovers is a bootlegger.

Raymond is a source of security and good advice, but George has a flashy roadster and exciting friends.

Kenny's classmates are impressed that Kenny knows famous gangster Eddie Nickels and his beautiful flapper girlfriend, but the fun ends when someone close to Kenny has a violent encounter with rumrunners.

For a teaching guide, go to <http://tinyurl.com/ckserial>

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Stories without bylines were written by the editor.