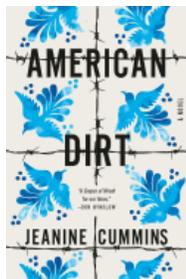


Bookbites

Bookends on Main

What's Hot, Trending Now



American Dirt follow-up: Despite the backlash about this book, threats against the author and so on, it is continuing to top the bestseller list. *Publisher's Weekly* has an interesting interview with the author as well as a through

analysis of the book. The top-15 fiction books this week:

1. *Where the Crawdads Sing*, Delia Owens
2. *Such a Fun Age*, Kelly Reid
3. *American Dirt*, Jeanine Cummins
4. *A Long Petal of the Sea*, Isabel Allende
5. *The Dutch House*, Ann Patchett.
6. *Weather*, Jenny O'fills
7. *The Starless Sea*, Erin Morgenstern
8. *Dear Edward*, Ann Napolitano

9. *Real Life*, Brandon Taylor

10. *The Giver of Stars*, Jojo Moyes

11. *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*, Olga Tokarczuk,

12. *Nothing to See Here*, Kevin Wilson

13. *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, Ocean Vuong

14. *This Tender Land*, William Kent Krueger

15. *The Water Dancer*, Ta-Nehisi Coates

2020

March

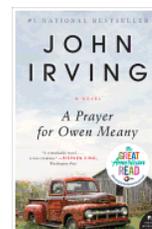
Our book club book this month is

A Prayer for Owen Meany by John

Irving, 1989. It's

brilliant, hilarious, touching, and of

course, long, but worth the read.



Thinking about Spring

Midwest Connections Picks used to occupy this space, but the program has been discontinued.

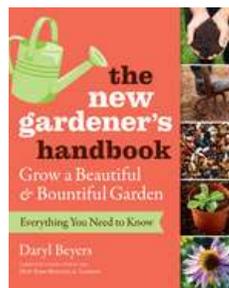
Left-over titles in this program are still available but have been blended into the rest of the bookstore population according



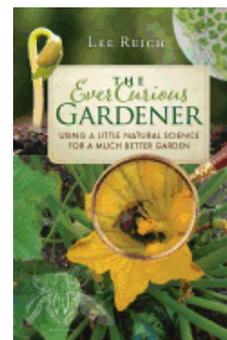
to their category. The best-seller *Such a Fun Age* is among them.



Beautiful pictures and 100 one-paragraph bits of advice about growing a beautiful and fruitful garden.



The New Gardener's Handbook has beautiful illustrations and practical information that does not overwhelm with detail.



The Ever Curious Gardener blends science with real-world applications.

Enter the Aardvark by Jessica Anthony



Occasionally I read a book and think “I could have written that,” and other times I think “I wish I could write a book like this.” *Enter the Aardvark* is one of the latter. I read it in one

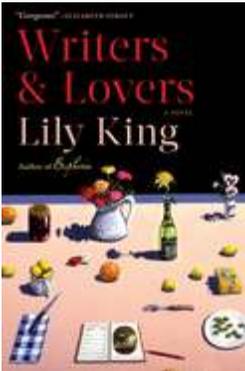
sitting except for brief breaks to stretch my legs and watch the cold open of Saturday Night Live.”

When I first picked up the book from a pile of Advance Readers due out in March, the book blurb made me wonder whether it will attract many readers. I don’t know if it will, but its oddball nature sets it apart from the numerous thrillers and romances that are published each month. I decided to give it a try.

Anthony’s book starts with a 3 page summary of the history of evolution and continues with breakneck speed for another 175 pages. It’s often hilarious, sometimes sad and thoroughly entertaining. The main character is a young congressman with an obsession with

Ronald Reagan. There is also a Victorian taxidermist, a Victorian animal collector, a Namibian- American congressman, wives and girl friends, Nazis, and assorted supporting characters to help carry out the action. Of course, there is also an aardvark. The plot is complex and compressed. Political ambition, gayness, and the pressure of convention are core themes. The book is at once a comment on modern values and a satire on politics. As a side dish, there are dozens of contemporary references to the price of things from \$6 pretzels to \$32,400 beds. It’s a hoot.
–ST

Writers and Lovers



Lily King, the best-selling author of *Euphoria* has penned another noteworthy novel. *Writers and Lovers* follows Casey, an aspiring writer in her early

thirties who waitresses and works odd jobs that allow her the time to

pursue her true passion. Casey has been coasting along and working on her novel for six years and now finds herself coping with a recent heartbreak and the unexpected passing of her mother. In the months that follow she faces health scares,

has to choose between two very different men that she has come to care for, and has to mentally prepare herself to release her novel to the publishing world. Readers will identify with Casey as she struggles to navigate the unforeseen events and transitions in her life and will want to keep reading to see how all the chapters in Casey’s life (and her novel) unfold.

–Heather O.

An extraordinary new novel of art, love, and ambition.

So We Can Glow



walks of life. I read it in one sitting

So We Can Glow by Leesa Cross-Smith is a truly amazing compilation of fictional short stories focusing on women of all ages, stages, and

and was completely blown away by the depth of the characters and the emotions conveyed in each story—some less than a page long! Many of the characters reappear in several stories which I loved. Leesa Cross-Smith is a true literary talent who is able to convey in this collection all the things that are unique and wonderful about being a woman, the power of female friendships, and falling in love. It also doesn’t shy

away from the things that aren’t so great such as the heartbreak of unrequited love or falling in love with someone who isn’t good for you. These unforgettable stories work in concert to explore women’s strengths and vulnerabilities and it is a book I plan to hold onto and re-read through the years.

–Heather O.

The Oracle Code for Middle Readers



The Oracle Code by Marieke Nijkamp

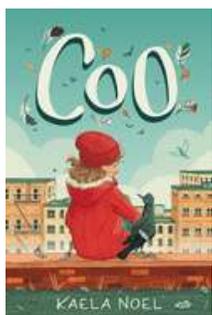
Babs can hack into any computer, solve any puzzle, break any code. As a 13-year-old, she has her whole life ahead of

her. Than a terrible accident puts her in a wheelchair and a rehabilitation center to learn how to live with her new normal. Her friends have all deserted her. Even her dad rarely visits or contacts her. She is all alone ~ or so she thinks. Other kids her age, who live at the rehab center, befriend her. Then patients start disappearing. Have they really been discharged? Or

is something more sinister going on. Using her ability to solve puzzles, she attempts to find the answers to the disappearances. As she works at it with two of her new friends, she discovers a great deal about her self and her strengths. It may be a graphic novel, but it reads like a suspense thriller.

—Pat T

Coo by Kaela Noel



Unthinkable that a mother could abandon her own infant. But sometimes life happens and it is the only choice available. Coo was left on the doorstep of an abandoned factory as a small infant. The pigeons who live in the rooftop dovecote find her, carry her up to their rooftop, and take care of her for 11 years. The only language she knows is pigeon. The only home she

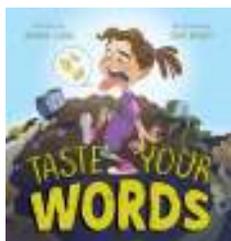
knows is on the roof. Her only friends are the pigeons. The only food she knows is the scraps and crumbs the pigeons bring her from the dumpster and the street. One day everything changes. The "healer," a local woman who feeds the pigeons

“An excellent read for middle readers to think about their own lives...”

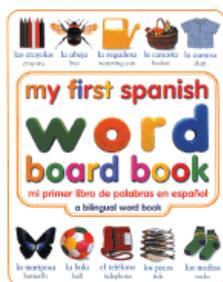
sees Coo and manages to take her to her own home. An adventure for

both of them ensues as she teaches Coo how to wear clothes, how to take care of herself, how to speak English. As Coo learns more about then the human world, she realizes that it is very confusing and very different from all she has known all her life to that point. How can she be true to herself and still remain true to her "first family," the pigeons. An excellent read for middle readers to think about their own lives and how important family, friends, and love are in life. Kudos to Kaela Noel on an excellent first novel. — Pat T.

New Children's Books

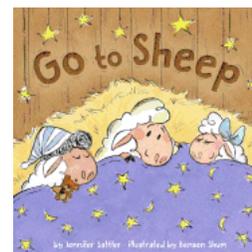
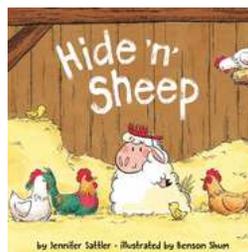


There is a message in *Taste Your Words* that applies to everyone: associate bad feelings and bad words with bad tastes, good feelings and words with good tastes.



schoolers.

This Spanish board book gets kids to learn a second language as pre-



The "Sheep" books are delightful read-aloud books.

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For the Future by Wendell Berry

Planting trees early in spring,
we make a place for birds to sing
in time to come. How do we know?
They are singing here now.
There is no other guarantee
that singing will ever be.