At the last PTA meeting, someone suggested that it would be nice to have a list of books that might make Christmas or Hanukkah gifts. And I would love it if our Amazon icon on the PTA website were used more so we get some of the cash back on those books. We have received about $1500 in gift certificates from Amazon since 2011. (Everything you buy on Amazon counts and your neighbors and family can use it too! We just bought a rain barrel on Amazon.)

Each month I read The Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books, Booklist, School Library Journal and The Horn Book to pick books that I think fit our students and curriculum. So, the following is a list of recent books I think the kids would like that get stars from the reviewing journals. I’ll start by reading levels and end with nonfiction.

**Preschool to Gr. 1**
- Have You Seen My New Blue Socks? By Eve Bunting
- One Gorilla: a Counting Book by Anthony Browne
- Nino Wrestles the World by Yuyi Morales
- That is NOT a Good Idea! By Mo Willems (think Elephant and Piggie)

**Picture Books**
- Crankee Doodle by Tom Angleberger (author of Origami Yoda books)
- Building our House by Jonathan Bean (author of our CB The Big Snow)
- Snowflakes Fall by Patricia MacLachlan (gentle tribute to Newtown CT)
- Amelia Bedelia by Peggy Parish (new edition for 50th anniversary)
- Picture a Tree by Barbara Reid (view the world in a different way)
The Dark by Lemony Snicket (how Laszlo stops being afraid of the dark)
Mr. Wuffles by David Wiesner (Caldecott author) (an almost wordless picture book)
Journey by Aaron Becker (another wordless picture book)

Level 1 and 2 books
Benjamin Bear in “Bright Ideas!” by Philippe Coudray (graphic novel) (follows Benjamin Bear in Fuzzy Thinking)
Penny and Her Marble by Kevin Henkes (also Penny and her Doll and Penny and her Song)
Bramble and Maggie: Give and Take by Jessie Haas (for horse lovers, follows Bramble and Maggie: Horse Meets Girl)
Elephant and Piggie books by Mo Williams (over 18 so far, kids love them and they win awards from the Theodore Geisel Seuss foundation as beginning readers)

Beginning Chapter Books
Mercy Watson books by Kate DiCamillo (six books)
Bink & Gollie: Best Friends Forever also by Kate DiCamillo (friendship stories)
Dodsworth in Tokyo by Tim Egan (also New York, Rome, London and Paris for young travelers)
I also like the Mouse and Mole books by Wong Herbert Yee and the Pearl and Wagner books by Kate McMullan

Advanced Chapter Books
Lulu and the Dog from the Sea by Hilary McKay (also Lulu and the Cat in the Bag, Lulu and the Duck in the Park)
Stink and the Freaky Frog Freakout by Megan McDonald (nine books in the Stink Moody series following McDonald’s Judy Moody books)

Fiction
The Hero’s Guide to Storming the Castle by Christopher Healy (follows The Hero’s Guide to Saving Your Kingdom) (fun reads!)
The Adventures of a South Pole Pig by Chris Kurtz (humorous read aloud)
Better to Wish by Ann M. Martin (starts Family Tree series following four generations)
Romeo Blue by Phoebe Stone (follows Romeo and Juliet Code) (WWII in Bottlebay, Maine)

And some Newbery 2014 contenders (announced January 27):
The Real Boy by Anne Ursu
True Blue Scouts of Sugar Man Swamp by Kathy Appelt
The Thing About Luck by Cynthia Kadohata (National Book Award Finalist)
Flora & Ulysses by Kate DiCamil
From Norvelt to Nowhere by Jack Gantos
One Came Home by Amy Timberlake
The Center of Everything by Linda Urban
Counting by 7s by Holly Goldberg Sloan
A Tangle of Knots by Lisa Graff (released in 2014)
Better Nate than Ever by Tim Federle (released in 2014)

Nonfiction (just the facts)
Millions, Billions, & Trillions: Understanding Big Numbers by David Adler (Gr. 4-6)
Look Up!: Bird-watching in Your Own Backyard by Annette Cate (Gr. 3-6)

Narrative Nonfiction (good to read aloud, tells a true story)
Hoop Genius: How a Desperate Teacher and a Rowdy Gym Class Invented Basketball by John Coy (K-3)
Becoming Babe Ruth by Matt Tavares (K-3)
On a Beam of Light: A Story of Albert Einstein by Jennifer Berne (K-3)
The Dolphins of Shark Bay by Pamela S. Turner (or any books in the Scientists in the Field Series!) (most are grades 5-8)
The Mystery of Darwin’s Frog by Martha Crump (Gr. 3-6)
**Graphic Novels**
Tommysaurus rex by Doug TenNapel (Gr. 3-6)
Squish by Jennifer Holm (5 books in series so far)
Binky by Ashley Spires (5 books in series so far)
Amulet by Kazu Kibuishi (also 5 books so far)