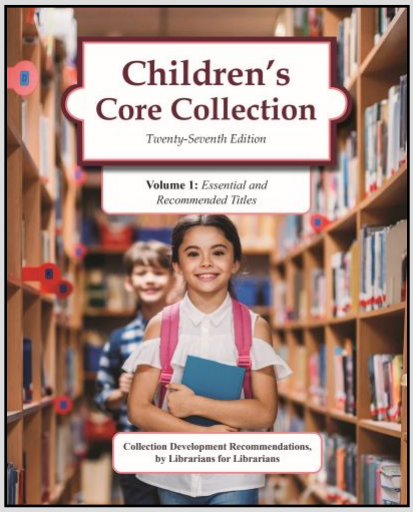
Children's Core Collection

REVIEWS



Pub. Date: August 2025
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List Price: $240

"**Available in print or e-book formats, this resource identifies 12,000 titles as a "best" or "opening day" collection for children from preschool through Grade six. Regularly updated, this volume is part of the Core Collection Series which includes other title lists for Middle & Junior High, Senior High, and Young Adult readers.** Entries include bibliographic information, subject headings, a Dewey number, a summary, and notes including grade level suitability.

Selection of books for libraries serving K-12 students is (unfortunately) a contested process in America. Some interested parties seek to put books on shelves, others to remove them. Challenges around sexuality and race are widespread: titles dealing with anti-racism, same-sex relationships, gender identity, and reproductive rights are particularly targeted in a political phenomenon that places publishers and librarians in the middle.

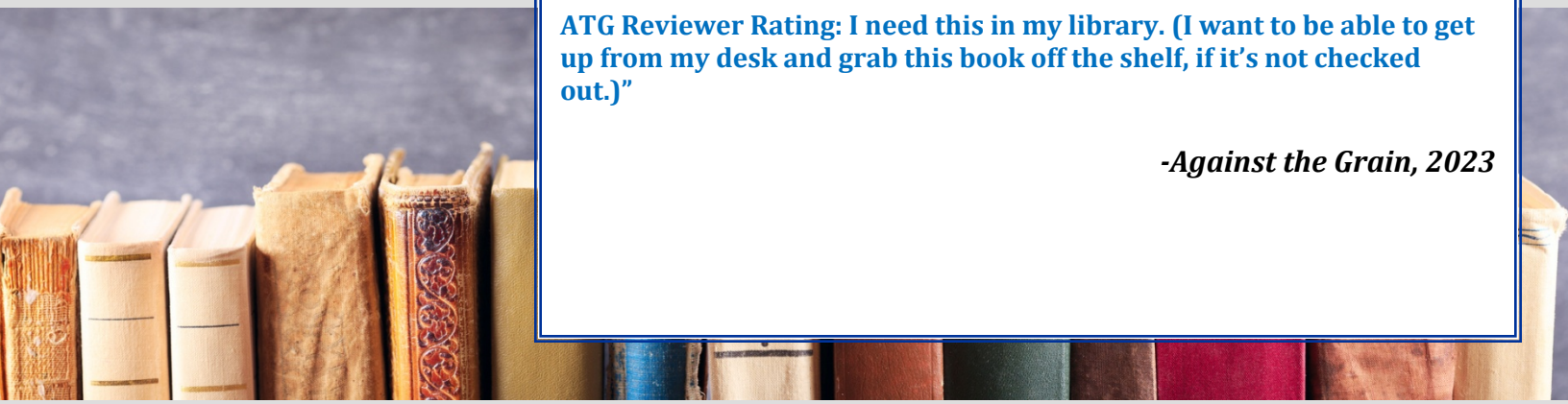
Identification of "best" books is not self-evident. Collection development relies on the exercise of judgement and expertise. Librarians have a long history of sharing selection insights with each other, and publishers have taken part by disseminating "best" title resources (the first edition of this work appeared as early as 1909).

The editor's goal is stated clearly in the preface to Children's Core Collection: "to emphasize equity, diversity, and inclusion, representing and reflecting a varied community in which many voices can be heard" (page vii). The integrated author, title and subject index offers headings such as "Gay boys," "Race relations" and "Sex education for children" — and all of these headings recommend books that have been frequently challenged."

"It is a sign of the times, that editors and authors making book recommendations are adding political and social justice elements to deliberations about "quality" and the appropriate audience for a book. In this case, Kendal Spires makes his intentions clear — opting for diversity, equity and inclusion — and then hits the target.

ATG Reviewer Rating: I need this in my library. (I want to be able to get up from my desk and grab this book off the shelf, if it's not checked out.)"

-Against the Grain, 2023



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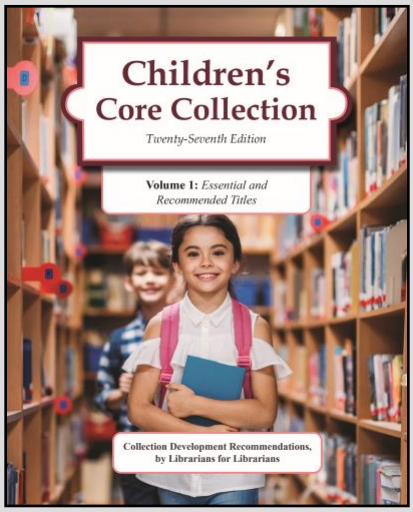

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"…**it remains the premier tool for maintaining and honing children's book collections**. Created by librarians for librarians, **its purpose is multifold**. **It is a device for making purchasing decisions, a curriculum support resource, a user services aid, a collection maintenance tool, and, most interestingly, a professional development tool**. Numbering nearly 16,000 English-language titles, the annotated catalog entries are arranged roughly into thirds using the Dewey Classification system for nonfiction, "E" for easy books, and "Fic" for fiction works. Nonfiction comprises the bulkiest part of the catalog, while the integrated index alone takes up a third of the entire text block. Stars denote the most highly recommended titles. All entries contain at minimum a publisher's description; most also include select book review excerpts (something which rival resources may point to, but do not necessarily include).

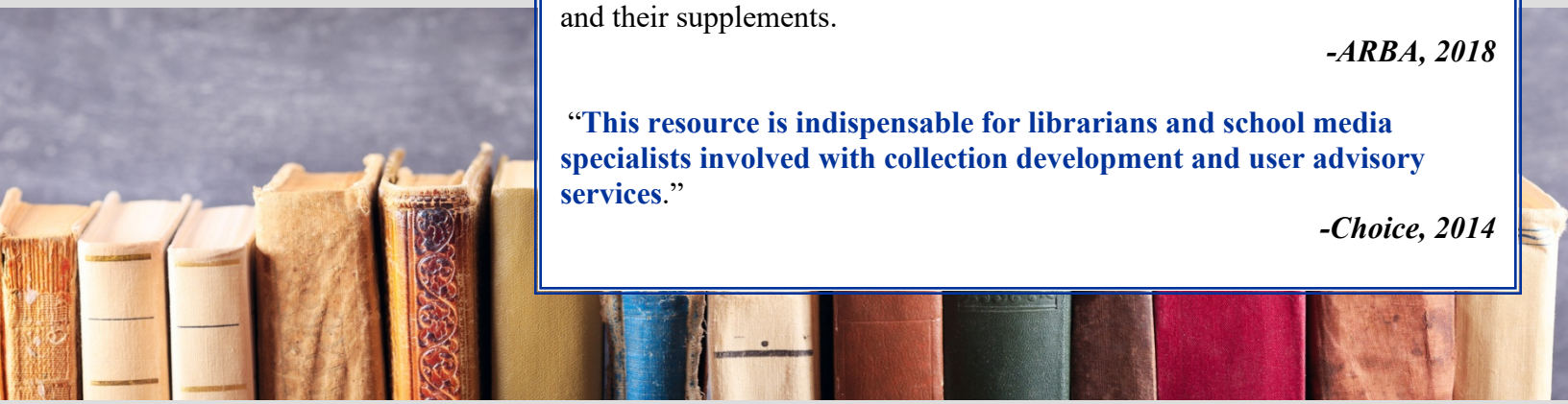
The previous edition was necessarily split into two volumes, but thanks to an enlarged trim size and lighter-weight paper, CCC is now available once again as a **single manageable volume**, albeit still totaling nearly 3,000 pages. New since the 22d edition is an appendix cross-referencing the Caldecott and Newbery Award-winning authors and titles appearing inside the volume. Removed since the last edition are outdated books primarily on internet safety.

Geared toward public and school libraries, **this highly usable print reference work will be essential** for those libraries that do not subscribe to the simultaneously appearing EBSCOhost version of more than 49,000 titles representing "a new abundance of books on technology, social sciences and sciences." Librarians should be aware that titles online are searchable also by grade level (a feature the print edition lacks). Compare CCC not only to its digital counterpart, but also to A to Zoo (picture books only) (see ARBA 2015, entry 694) and to the "Best Books for…" print resources in the Children's and Young Adult Literature Reference series, and their supplements.

-ARBA, 2018

"**This resource is indispensable for librarians and school media specialists involved with collection development and user advisory services**."

-Choice, 2014



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