

**Books for Use by Classroom Teachers for *In Dulci Jubilo's*
2007 Art, Poetry and Essay Contest**

NON-FICTION:

Now and Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin by Gene Barretta
This book looks at the inventions and inspiration of Benjamin Franklin and how they've stood the test of time. Franklin designed the lightning rod, suggested the idea of daylight savings time, and invented bifocals—all inspired by his common sense and intelligence. This informative book brings Benjamin Franklin's genius to life, deepening our appreciation for one of the most influential figures in American history.

Steven Caney's Invention Book by Steven Caney. Kids are natural inventors, bursting with notions so crazy they just might work. Caney shows how to get into "an inventing frame of mind" and how to look at everyday objects in new ways, as clues to fresh ideas. From keeping a good notebook to setting up a workshop, from building the prototype to applying for a patent, the author covers it all, even showing the young entrepreneur how to market an invention successfully. And to get the creativity flowing, here are also hundreds of fantasy ideas that still need to be invented.

Nature got there first: Inventions inspired by nature by Phil Gates. Many kids today are more interested in computers and robots than frogs or ferns, and this is a great book to help convince them that there is, if nothing else, a utilitarian value to preserving nature. Most every technological solution humans have painstakingly contrived already existed in nature in some fashion. And if we want to build better computers and robots, we should conserve ecosystems filled with the billions of years of successfully evolved engineering solutions to emulate.

What a Great Idea! Inventions that Changed the World by Stephen Tomecek. Rather than presenting a "how it works" compendium or a series of mini-biographies, Tomecek puts significant inventions and discoveries in a historical context. Dividing the text into five broad time periods, he offers a series of essays on important advances that occurred in each "age." Each two-page explanation provides some background and a brief description of how the invention works as well as information about its impact on society and on later discoveries. What emerges is a sense of interconnectedness that other books often lack.

Made in China: Ideas and Inventions from Ancient China by Suzanne Williams. Surveying Chinese culture from the Bronze Age to the Ming Dynasty, the book sets scientific innovations within a historical context. It's a concise history of Chinese thought and creativity, covering scientific ideas and inventions, as well as religion and philosophy, government, trade, farming, and more.

Toys! Amazing Stories Behind Some Great Inventions by Don Wulffson. The author shares the stories behind classic and commercial toy inventions such as Legos, Mr. Potato Head, Raggedy Ann, toy soldiers, Twister, checkers, and remote control cars. Readers will discover that some of the most popular creations were the products of experiments gone awry, thus providing a lesson in persistence, surprise outcomes, and creative thinking.

FICTION:

The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick. Orphaned Hugo survives secretly in a Parisian train station (circa 1930). Part-time clock keeper, part-time thief, he leads a life of quiet routine until he gets involved with an eccentric young girl and an old man who runs a toy booth in the station. The book unfolds its cryptic, magical story in a format that blends elements of picture book, novel, graphic novel, and film.

Just a Dream by Chris Van Allsburg. Walter is a boy who imagines the future as a marvelous time, with tiny airplanes that can be parked on the roof of your house and robots that take care of all your work for you. One night, when Walter goes to sleep, his bed travels to the future. But he finds only piles of trash covering the street, and many other environmental nightmares. An awakened Walter, jolted by his dream, changes his ways, and later, his bed takes him to a different future.

The Time Machine by H.G. Wells. When a turn-of-the-century scientist travels into the distant future in his time machine, he expects to find progress and superior people. But instead he discovers a world in decay.