



# Visalia Learning Center

## Newsletter

December 15, 2009

Volume 7, #9

Holiday Schedule

Closed Wed. Dec. 23 through Jan. 3. Open Monday Jan. 4 8:00 AM



**Location: 630 S. Atwood (Behind VUSD district office)**

**Hours: 8 AM-5 PM Monday - Friday**

We are open to all Visalia, Ivanhoe, and Goshen residents and all employees of Visalia public and private schools.

[Search the VLC Collection](#)

[George Pilling](#) is responsible for this newsletter. Please [email comments or suggestions](#).

Need reference sources? Check these out, which have been purchased for you by the VLC:

[World Book Online](#) | [Discovery Education Streaming](#) | [Toucan Fact Cards](#) | [Search the VLC Collection](#)

Use our [Materials Request Form](#) to request books and other items from our collection to be delivered to your site.

### New Website Help

Tutorials to help you figure it out.

<http://www.vusd.org/Academics.cfm?subpage=16342>

Contact your [Instructional Coach](#) if you want to start your classroom web site.



Podcast!

[Classroom Field Stories](#)

**Teachers! Parents!** Check the Instructional Coach web site at <http://www.vusd.org/Academics.cfm?subpage=16104> for links to the textbook publishers' pages about your students' books. (Go to Curriculum Tools, Textbook Support.) Most of these include practice pages, help, and lesson planning advice for teachers.

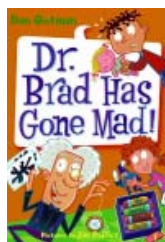
## Spotlight on New Books

### Fiction



***The Blue Shoe: A Tale of Thievery, Villainy, Sorcery, and Shoes*** by Roderick Townley. Hap Barlo sits in prison wondering what went wrong with his plan. He might be able to escape Xexnax and rescue his banished father with a little bit of luck and imagination. RL 5.9 grades 3-7

***Bystander*** by James Preller. Thirteen-year-old Eric discovers a lot about himself as the bully at his new school hurts people, but although school officials are aware of the problem, Eric may be the one with a solution. RL 5.0 grades 5-8



***Dr. Brad Has Gone Mad!*** by Dan Gutman. The latest in the My Weird School Daze series, this one is full of zany characters and fun humor. The school counselor thinks the class clown is a genius. Is he right? Reading level 3.0 grades 3-5

***Half Minute Horrors*** by various authors. Lemony Snicket, Neil Gaiman, James Patterson are a few of the writers of these delicious horror stories and pictures for grades 5-8. RL 4.9





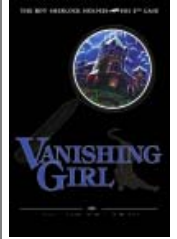
**Mouse and Mole: Fine Feathered Friends** by Wong Herbert Lee. I Mouse and Mole find an interesting way to birdwatch – from the nest! RL 1.8 grades 1-3

**Odd and the Frost Giants** by Neil Gaiman. Latest in the series about Odd, An unlucky twelve-year-old Norwegian boy who leads the Norse gods in an attempt to outwit evil Frost Giants. R.L. 4.5 grades 3-6.



**Pop** by Gordon Korman. Sixteen-year-old high-school quarterback Marcus Jordan becomes friends with a retired professional linebacker who is great at training him, but whose childish behavior keeps Marcus in hot water. RL 5.4 IL grades 7-10

**Vanishing Girl** by Shane Peacock. Third in The Boy Sherlock Holmes series. Mystery about a young socialite who vanishes and Sherlock must find her. RL 7.4 Grades 6-9

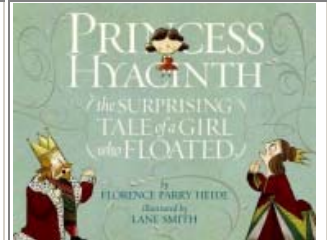


## Picture Books



**Not Last Night but the Night Before** by Colin McNaughton, ill. by Emma Chichester Clark. Rowdy nursery rhyme characters keep a child awake at night. RL 2.2 Grades K-3

**Princess Hyacinth: the Surprising Tale of a Girl Who Floated** by Florence Parry Hyde, ill. by Lane Smith. Unless she wears heavy clothes, Princess Hyacinth will float away. RL 2.5 Grades K-3

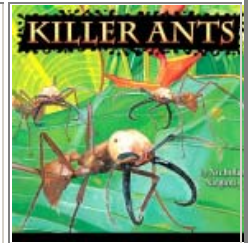


## Non-Fiction



**John Brown: the Fight for Freedom** by John Hendrix. Explores the life of nineteenth-century abolitionist John Brown and his dedication to freeing the slaves and ending slavery. RL 6.7 IL grades 5-9

**Killer Ants** by Nicholas Nirgiotis. Describes the different types of killer ants that are found around the world, providing information on their habitats, behavior, physical characteristics, and the ways they help and hurt humans. RL 6.0 Grades 5-8



## Teachers

Did you know that we can send books to your school library on the subjects that you are about to teach? During your class library time, your students can check out the VLC books as well as the ones in your school library. Let us know in advance if you would like this service.

You can also request books to be sent to you at particular levels. Just email [Judy](#) or [George](#).

## Goings on About Town

- [Imagine-U Children's Museum](#) is open from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Wednesday-Friday and 12-4 on Saturdays. Look for the **Family Learning Camp** this vacation.
- [The Enchanted Playhouse](#) presents "Tiny Tim's Christmas" in December.
- [Arts Visalia and other art venues](#) have great things going on for all ages!
- [The Tulare County History Museum](#) in Mooney Grove is a great place to take kids to learn more about Tulare County History. Call 733-6616.
- [Impact Center](#) (ongoing) multi-media free shows that support and enhance the curriculum. 733-6433 Check out the special holiday show!

## Author Visits

[Jeff Savage](#) is coming to Royal Oaks School Feb. 24. If your school wants to have Jeff come Feb. 25 or 26, contact George.

[Wendelin Van Draanen](#) will be at the Visalia Mall for **Heart Rocks** on Saturday January 30, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

## Quote of the Month

"Nations have recently been led to borrow billions for war; no nation has ever borrowed largely for education. Probably, no nation is rich enough to pay for both war and civilization. We must make our choice; we cannot have both." -Abraham Flexner, educator (1866-1959)

[Click here for a printable sheet of quotes from children's books](#)



## Recycle Ink Cartridges --and cell phones, too!



**(And donate to the VLC at the same time.)**

The VLC makes about \$70 per month by recycling inkjet and laser cartridges. Rather than throwing them out or sending them back to the company's recycling program, put them in the school delivery to the VLC. We will use the proceeds to improve our services. **Inkjet cartridges are worth as much as** laser carts, so don't forget to put them in an envelope for us! **You can now send in old cell phones, which will also be recycled.**

## Web Sites of the Month

- **Shmoop** [www.shmoop.com](http://www.shmoop.com) is a new website with many literature guides and other educational guides for older students - middle school to college.
- **Teacher Training Videos** [www.teachertrainingvideos.com](http://www.teachertrainingvideos.com) Russell Stannard, a lecturer at the University of Westminster (UK) has created a ton of training videos for many of the common educational technology tools; he covers Moodle, Twitter, Audacity, Wordpress, Jing, podcasting, and many more useful tools. From Kathy Schrock <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/schrockguide/sos.html>