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| MiraKaren Dean Jessa Jean's clumsy klutzyness causes much teasing at school. She is secretly, painfully jealous of brother Caid's and best friend Torie's athletic abilities. Defeated by a skateboard, then horribly embarrassed at the roller skating party, she wonders if there's any hope for gaining respect rather than ridicule. Surely she'll discover something to help her feel important too. **Hi Karen. So many of us can identify with being klutzy giving this wide appeal. Here’s my tweak on this that might be helpful. As in everything we do at the Academy, take what you like and leave the rest. Older brother Caid and BFF Tory are athletic stars, but Jessa Jean is just…well a klutz. Constantly ridiculed at school, painfully jealous of those she loves, Jessa Jean wonders if there’s anything she can do to gain the respect she so desperately craves.** - Erin diStefano Twins Willa and Jake were always told, "Appalachia is full of mystery and magic." But when they are sent there to live with their grandmother, all they can see is a boring summer ahead. Then, folk tales they were told as bedtime stories start coming to life and the twins must face that magic is real and for better or worse they are stuck in the middle of it. – **This sounds like it could be really fun and has great Common Core connections. Here’s my minor tweak: An Appalachian summer with Granma Heckert looks like it’s going to be painfully boring for twins Willa and Jake. But when Granma’s folk tales start coming to life, will Willa and Jake be able to face that magic is real, and for better or worse, they are stuck in the middle of it?**Heather Linford When the Insect Rescue Team rejects Adaline based on her flea-size, she feels her heart might break. New opportunity arises, however, when a trapped Princess, a greedy spider, and a narrow-minded beetle threaten the entire Insect Kingdom. It just might be that a flea has all the skills necessary to rescue the Princess and save the Kingdom. – **Hi Heather, what you had sounded fine except I got a bit confused about the having the word kingdom twice. I hope that this helps.** **All is not well for Adaline, the smallest flea in the land. After the heartbreak of being rejected by the Insect Rescue Team, Adaline must battle a greedy spider, match wits with a narrow-minded beetle and save a trapped Princess all on her own. Can the littlest, lonesome flea do all this and save her world as well?**[Kim MacPherson](http://KimMacPherson.com)Jubilee is a witch, but doesn’t know it. Her three older sisters want to keep it that way. When Jubilee discovers a love of ballet, her sisters know where her “magical” talent comes from. They ALSO know that danger looms if Jubilee continues to perform, so they cast long-forgotten spells to quash Jubilee's passion. But will that be enough? **Hi Kim, I think you have something that could be really cool, but I get caught up in the beginning question of why Jubilee’s sisters don’t want her to know that she’s a witch? Have her magic gifts come early and they are worried that she doesn’t have the maturity to deal with them? Could there be a parallel with her getting her first period early although that would be more of a middle grade book where you’d have the right age and space to get into these layers? Could one of the long forgotten spells go awry to create more drama and add another layer of complexity? And finally, I get confused as to whose point of view this story is coming from – is it Jubilee’s story or her sister’s? You need to clarity this although in a MG novel you could alternate chapters. Am looking forward to seeing where you go with this.**Lisa Ruggiero In my book, Huckle Bear Goes to Paris, Lucy always brings her stuffed Bear, Huckle Bear, with her when she travels to new places. But when Huckle Bear is accidentally left at the top of the Eiffel Tower, how will he ever find his way back to Lucy in a big city like Paris? **Hi Lisa, this sounds really cute, but you don’t need to say “In my book” as it’s a given, although I should have mentioned to everyone to include the title, which doesn’t count as part of your word count. Here’s my small tweak that raises the stakes a little with a ticking time clock and a bit more emotion. Lucy loves her stuffed animal Huckle Bear more than anything in the world. And Huckle Bear loves her right back. But when travelling in Paris she accidentally leaves him at the top of the Eiffel Tower, how will Huckle Bear find his way back to her before Lucy’s plane leaves for London and both their hearts are broken?**[Donna Maloy](http://www.donnamaloy.com) The Tiniest Things: introducing a few of the very smallest animals, vehicles, portraits, bugs, dolls, and other surprises (like a flea circus)—plus super microscopes that can see even the tiniest bits of our world. Each chapter will include photos and/or comparison graphics. **Donna, I love nonfiction and this sounds great. I’d amp up the drama and the fun just a smidge: The Teeniest Tiniest Things** **introduces some of the very smallest animals, vehicles, portraits, bugs, dolls, and other surprises like a flea circus and sub-atomic particles to kids who love the world of wee things. Nonfiction Chapter Book or Middle Grade. I’d love to see this expanded into a middle grade so you’d get more pages, deeper ideas, and bigger images.** Yvette Pompa Magic, the ocean, and items washed ashore take orphans Cornelia and Benito on a swashbuckling adventure aboard a pirate ship. Daggers, walking the plank, and a famous girl Captain set sail to returning the treasure. Accompanying their adventure is a golden retriever who wears a shiny, gold key around his collar - The key that may get them back home. **Love the sound of this Yvette and it provides great opportunities for vernacular language. Shiver me timbers! Orphans Cornelia and Benito are on a swashbuckling adventure aboard the pirate ship Pearl, as they set sail to return a plundered treasure. Dangerous daggers, the threat of walking the plank, and a famous girl Captain await. But what is that mysterious key hanging from the ship’s Golden Retriever’s collar and can it help them get back home?** Angie ChanFor every girl who’s been told “no” *because* she’s a girl … enter 9-year-old Mo, a headstrong Taekwondo black belt auditioning for a role opposite her martial arts movie hero. The catch? They want a boy. Mo transforms herself into a boy and defies all odds to win. But what happens when she is caught? Is her dream knocked out? **Hi Angie, I didn’t have much to say with this as it’s already pretty terrific but I would clarity that she’s not magically transforming earlier on. For every girl who’s been told “no” *because* she’s a girl … enter 9-year-old Mo, a headstrong Taekwondo black belt auditioning for a role opposite her martial arts movie hero. The catch? They want a boy. When Mo disguises herself as a boy, she defies all odds and wins. But what happens when she is caught? Is her dream knocked out?**  |