

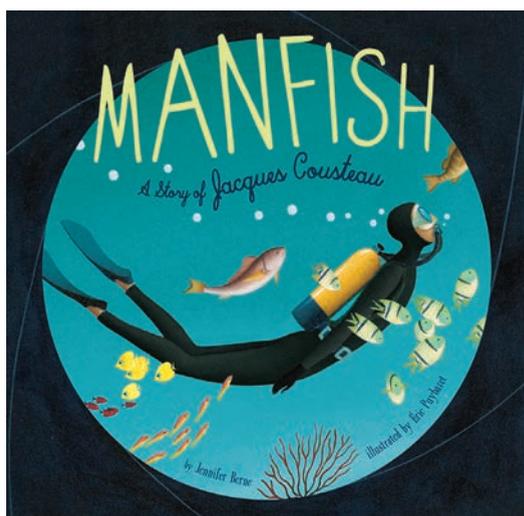
A Page in a Book[®]

RECOMMENDING THE BEST BOOKS FOR CHILDREN & TEENS

By Paige Gardner Smith

Real Boys Who Made a Difference

Looking at our little boys we can't help but wonder who they will become as adults. We ask ourselves what we can do to foster their strengths, to give them courage to take on hard challenges. Their experiences as children often provide the early inspiration that moves them in the direction of a future that is both rewarding for them – and sometimes rewards the greater community as well. Cultivating a “can-do” attitude in children goes far toward building their confidence to follow their heart, pursue their dreams and blaze new paths. The following titles share the inspirational stories of young men who stepped up to a challenge and made a difference!



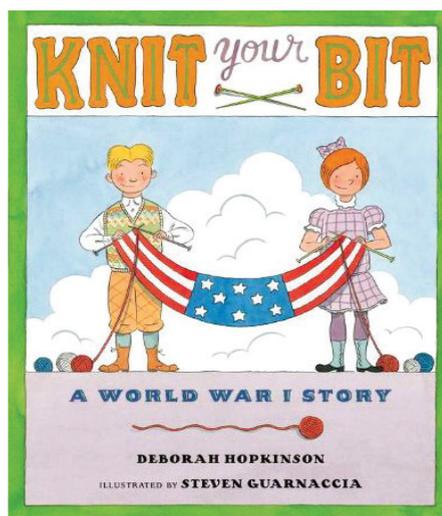
Manfish: A Story of Jacques Cousteau

By Jennifer Berne, Illustrated by Eric Puybaret (Chronicle Books)

As a little boy in France, Jacques Cousteau was fascinated by water. How it felt, why he floated on it, why rocks sank in it. He dreamed of flying among the fish below, delving their world beneath the surface of the water. But you can only hold your breath so long. As he got older he began to explore his passion for mechanics, chemistry and film, learning how cameras worked, processing his own film and making a LOT of home movies.

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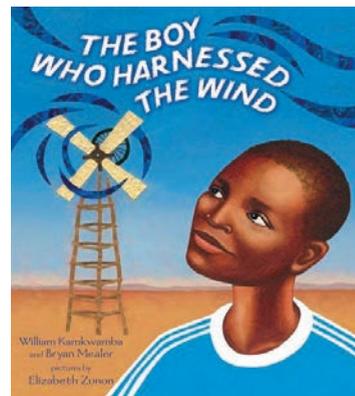
But the sea kept calling to Jacques until he found a way to fly among the fishes below. His invention of scuba gear, with his friend Emile, and his knowledge of film-making allowed him and his friends to record the unseen beauty beneath the waves, inspiring generations to protect its fragile majesty. With poetic rhythms, stark illustrations and inspirational afterword, “Manfish” is a book you'll dive into regularly!



Knit Your Bit: A World War I Story

By Deborah Hopkinson, Illustrated by Steven Guarnaccia (G.P. Putnam / Penguin)

When Mikey's father heads off to war, he wants to be brave and go with him. But as his Dad boards the train, he reminds Mikey that sometimes it takes bravery to stay behind and support the war from home. When Mikey asks his mother what he can do to help with the war, she reminds him that the soldiers need knitted socks and caps. She offers to teach him how to knit, and he immediately nixes the idea... because “knitting is for girls.” But when he sees pictures of firemen knitting, and the president raising wool sheep on the White House lawn, he realizes that everyone can do their part. Mikey decides he's brave enough to take up the needles and learn to knit. (He even persuades some of his buddies to join him.) This story is based on the true “Knit Your Bit” efforts across the U.S. when schools and clubs hosted contests, knitting bees and other events to get everyone knitting for the soldiers overseas.



The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind

By William Kamkwamba & Bryan Mealer, Illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon (Dial Books for Young Readers / Penguin)

In William's village in Malawi, there was no electricity or running water. He spent his days alongside his neighbors and family farming in the drought-plagued earth. But at night he dreamed about the radios he heard, cars he saw on roads – he wanted to know how they worked. As the crops dried up brining famine in its wake, William was forced to leave school and had to find another way to learn. Using the small library near his village, he found an English dictionary and taught himself to read the science and technology textbooks. He learned how things worked and believed he could make something that would help his village – a windmill. But with no money for tools and materials, the boy William will have to use all his creativity and tenacity to build something that may save his village. The title's message of strength and perseverance is as lovely as the richly illustrated pages that bring this true story to life.