



## **TEACHINGBOOKS SPIRIT**

**Winter, 2003**

*This is the newsletter for <http://www.TeachingBooks.net>, an unparalleled multimedia children's literature database that utilizes cutting-edge technologies to reveal to educators and families that special spirit and personality behind the best in children's books.*

*TeachingBooks was founded upon the premise that educators find enjoyment and professional value in seeing and hearing authors talk about their work and sharing those presentations with children. We strive to give you unprecedented access to front-list authors and authoritative teaching materials.*

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As a hub of children's literature resources, TeachingBooks.net continually identifies, catalogs and maintains reliable links to curricular resources that help you share books in the classroom, library and home. Each issue of **TeachingBooks Spirit** highlights specific links to give you a flavor of what the site has to offer.

### **Exclusive Author Up-close Program: Francisco Jiménez (author of *The Circuit* and *Breaking Through*)**

[http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec\\_athr.cgi?name=Jim%26acute%3Bnez%2C%20Francisco](http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec_athr.cgi?name=Jim%26acute%3Bnez%2C%20Francisco)

In this personal, five-minute Author Up-close movie, Francisco Jiménez shares the autobiographical nature of his books, including his account as a migrant child in *The Circuit*; explains what he did to research and recall his childhood experiences; and expresses his belief in the power of education and the importance of a diverse curriculum. Jiménez, author of countless short stories and scholarly works, offers a realistic and touching glimpse into the lives of migrant worker families in his books for children which include *La Mariposa* and *The Christmas Gift*. *The Circuit*, his first novel, has received international acclaim and won The Boston Globe – Horn Book award in 1998. This production includes two additional original movies of Jiménez, each showing him reading from the first chapter of *The Circuit* — one in English and one in Spanish.

### **A TeachingBooks Author/Illustrator in the News: Arthur Geisert at the Art Institute of Chicago**

TeachingBooks-featured illustrator Arthur Geisert's illustrations are on display at The Art Institute of Chicago daily through March 16. The exhibit is called "The Etcher's Studio" and is appropriate for children and adults of all ages. Geisert is a remarkable copperplate etcher who has written and illustrated children's books since 1984. *The Giant Ball of String*, his most recent title, has received high praise from many significant reviewers. You can learn more about him and see his wonderful studio in our exclusive TeachingBooks Authors Up-close program at [http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec\\_athr.cgi?name=Geisert%2C%20Arthur](http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec_athr.cgi?name=Geisert%2C%20Arthur)

### **Additional Author Program: Peter Sís**

<http://www.petersis.com/content/about.html>

TeachingBooks continually identifies, catalogs and maintains reliable links to multimedia interviews with children’s book creators. While TeachingBooks does not create these programs, we believe that you'll enjoy them. In this featured author program, watch a video on how internationally acclaimed author/illustrator Peter Sís came to write *Tibet: Through the Red Box*.

**Author’s Personal Website:** [Pam Muñoz Ryan](http://www.pammunozryan.com/)

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Author Pam Muñoz Ryan’s site includes an annotated list of her books, her favorite links, advice on writing and getting children’s books published, a biography and FAQs. She asks that her books be purchased from local children’s booksellers, and lists a number of California stores. Muñoz Ryan is the 2002 winner of the Pura Belpré Award and the 2001 Jane Addams Children's Book Award for her book, *Esperanza Rising*, which received other honors as well. Her most recent book is *When Marian Sang*, a second collaboration with Caldecott Honor recipient Brian Selznick.

**Featured Activity Guide:** *The Winter of Red Snow* (Scholastic)

<http://www.scholastic.com/dearamerica/books/guides/redsnow.htm>

“What was it like to be a soldier at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777–78? What was it like to be an eleven-year-old girl living in Valley Forge at the time and watch the ragtag American soldiers stain the snow red with their shoeless, bloody feet as they marched by your cabin to set up camp in the fields down the road? In *The Winter of Red Snow*, author Kristiana Gregory takes young readers into the homes of the Valley Forge farmers, into the headquarters of George Washington and his officers, and into the tents of the soldiers.” — From the Guide’s introduction. Includes a book summary, discussion questions, student activities and a written interview with Kristiana Gregory.

**Featured Award/Distinction:** SLJ Best Books 2002

<http://slj.reviewsnews.com/index.asp?layout=article&articleid=CA260672>

Each December, *School Library Journal* publishes its top children’s book picks for the year. Here is a link to their online version of the list. “From the more than 4400 books reviewed in *SLJ*’s pages in 2002, the editors have selected the following 60 titles as those that represent the best of the year’s picture books, fiction, and nonfiction.” — From *SLJ*’s introduction to the list.

**Take Note:** Razorbill

<http://www.razorbillzine.com/>

This “Take Note” site is selected from TeachingBooks’ list of Young Adult Literature Sites; one of the categories in our Valuable Links section. Razorbill is an online ‘zine created especially for teens who love books and reading and learning more about authors. Its focus is on providing insights into authors of YA books and giving teens an opportunity to connect with authors and with one another around their favorite books.

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**Company Update:**

Thanks to all of you for your belief in and use of TeachingBooks.net! We hope you find it a valuable resource. Thousands of subscribers from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and in 22 countries around the world are now regularly using TeachingBooks. We've built a collection of unparalleled children's literature resources that grows continually and remains completely free to use.

We often get asked, "How do you make money doing this? Isn't there a charge?" TeachingBooks.net was built to optimize Internet technologies to give every school, library and resident equal access to the best in children's books. From the start, we defined a revenue model for our services that perpetuates equal access to these quality educational resources. Our hope is to find appropriate group sponsors who will purchase access to our multimedia children's literature resource for their constituents: teachers, librarians, and others in the educational and literature stream. Our home state of Wisconsin, for example, has put TeachingBooks.net on its 2003-05 budget so that from its open-access database, Badgerlink.net, everyone in Wisconsin can see our original author programs and access our catalog of more than 6,000 quality children's literature resources.

We share this information so that you can better understand TeachingBooks. If you can suggest any organizations or specific contacts that might be interested in discussing a partnership with us, please send an email about it to our Founder, Nick Glass at [Nick@TeachingBooks.net](mailto:Nick@TeachingBooks.net).

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We hope that these featured links from our database connect you to material that highlights the personality and spirit within the best of children's literature.

To learn more about what's happening at TeachingBooks, you can go to our News page at <http://www.teachingbooks.net/news.cgi> and read about where we've been, what we're doing and who's taken notice.

Thanks again for your interest in TeachingBooks.net, and have a great winter!

Nick Glass, [Nick@TeachingBooks.net](mailto:Nick@TeachingBooks.net)  
Virginia Harrison, [Virginia@TeachingBooks.net](mailto:Virginia@TeachingBooks.net)  
Jamie Ahlman Ng, [Jamie@TeachingBooks.net](mailto:Jamie@TeachingBooks.net)

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