and is studying different types of energy. With Grandpa Al’s electricity bill skyrocketing, Frank wants to find an alternate way to run all his gadgets. Meanwhile, Frank’s archenemy, T. Edison, has purchased the local town power plant and is destroying all his competition. With no alternate source of energy, everyone will have to pay his ridiculous prices. Can Frank stop his nemesis from destroying the town’s energy sources? The two-color cartoon illustrations are detailed and engaging. Although a little one-dimensional, the characters are fairly likable and it is easy to root for them. Although the facts are educational and presented in an interesting way, they tend to sideline the story. The plot is straightforward and draws readers into the book with its boy-friendly hijinks, but tends to feel a little forced.

VERDICT This book teaches kids a lot in an accessible, easy-to-read format, but may disappoint some of Scieszka’s longtime fans.

–Kira Moody, Whitmore Public Library, Salt Lake City, UT

Shannon, George. One Family. illus. by Blanca Gomez. 32p. Farrar/Frances Foster Bks. May 2015. Tr $17.99. ISBN 9780374300036. PreS-Gr 2—This deceptively simple concept book celebrates family and community. May 2015. Tr $17.95. ISBN 9781935954088. PreS-Gr 1—One night Sophie discovers a crocodile under her bed and is thrilled and not the least bit frightened. Carl (the croc) on the other hand is a bit skittish and tries to hide. Eventually the two perform tricks, make about a thousand pancakes, and create egg-carton-crocodiles. Finally, when it is time for bed, Carl tells Sophie a story involving all his reptilian antics. In this simple and classic story, the Schuberts give a nod to Maurice Sendak as Sophie has a stuffed toy wild thing. The illustrations are light and simultaneously vibrant, giving off the glow of sleep and dreamland. Children will love the dynamic between Carl and Sophie, teaching a lesson in imagination and fearlessness. A great title for reading aloud, the book even comes with a craft idea for children and caregivers.

VERDICT Short and sweet, this is an endearing story with energetic illustrations.

–Kaitlin Connors, Virginia Beach Public Library

Schneider, Antonie. Mr. Happy and Miss Grimm. illus. by Susanne Strasser. 32p. Holiday House. May 2015. RTE $16.95. ISBN 9780823431984; ebk. $16.95. ISBN 9780823433605. LC 2014005694. K-Gr 2—When two people who are opposites in every way become neighbors, everything changes—and for the better. Mr. Happy is cheerful. He wears a funny hat with a four-leaf clover sticking up. He adds polka dots to his roof and flies kites in the rain. Miss Grimm is surrounded by darkness and decay in her house, which is numbered 13. She slams doors and builds a scarecrow to keep the birds away. And although she tries to remain grim, the beauty that comes with living beside a happy person soon causes her to change her name (and her whole way of being) to something that reflects a happier way of living. Strasser’s quirky illustrations add interest and humor to the page. There are symbols of good and bad luck in this story, as well as visuals that show how seeds are spread and grown. VERDICT This is a wonderful addition to large and small libraries.

VERDICT This book teaches kids a lot in an accessible, easy-to-read format, but may disappoint some of Scieszka’s longtime fans. –Kira Moody, Whitmore Public Library, Salt Lake City, UT

Schubert, Ingrid. There is a Crocodile Under My Bed. tr. from Dutch. illus. by Dieter Schubert. English ed. 32p. Lemniscaat. May 2015. Tr $17.95. ISBN 9789193554088. PreS-Gr 2—Boy genius Frank Einstein is back and is studying different types of energy. With Grandpa Al’s electricity bill skyrocketing, Frank wants to find an alternate way to run all his gadgets. Meanwhile, Frank’s archenemy, T. Edison, has purchased the local town power plant and is destroying all his competition. With no alternate source of energy, everyone will have to pay his ridiculous prices. Can Frank stop his nemesis from destroying the town’s energy sources? The two-color cartoon illustrations are detailed and engaging. Although a little one-dimensional, the characters are fairly likable and it is easy to root for them. Although the facts are educational and presented in an interesting way, they tend to sideline the story. The plot is straightforward and draws readers into the book with its boy-friendly hijinks, but tends to feel a little forced.

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–Kira Moody, Whitmore Public Library, Salt Lake City, UT

The Bella and Harry series was developed to inspire young readers to embrace the world and encourage its exploration.
ty, while also offering young readers a chance to practice counting. Each spread features an increasing number of people who form a family. From babies in buggies to white-haired elders holding hands, families stretch across generations and races. Young listeners will recognize familiar activities such as strolling through the zoo, doing laundry, or baking cookies. The brief text mentions objects to be counted, and children can practice again with a spread that features all the items from 1 to 10. A final view of the city streets brings together many of the people featured in earlier pages to celebrate “One is one and everyone./ One earth. One world./ One family.” Gomez’s rich colors and clean design make the book a good choice for small group sharing, but she also includes many details to be appreciated in solo rereads. Even the fly leaves are carefully designed. In the front, individual portraits of people and animals gaze ahead as they hang on the wall. In the back, the characters lean from their frames to converse with one another, while some of the pets escape entirely. VERDICT Thoughtful text and great design make this counting book a top choice for most libraries.—Kathy Piel, Minnesota State University Library, Mankato


PreS-Gr 2—Troto, a cheerful little green car, arrives in the desert town of Cactusville, where three big bully trucks taunt him. He challenges them to a race at the canyon. Though the trucks are bigger and faster, Troto’s size makes him far nimbler, and soon he is crossing the finish line. The trucks acknowledge that he is “quite a car,” and Troto drives off into the sunset, happy and proud. Shulevitz crafts a simple yet satisfying tale with an appealing palette of desert hues offset by the bright vehicles. Though Troto earns their respect, it is his self-worth that remains the focus. VERDICT Vehicle fans will love this new car on the block.—Kathleen Kelly MacMillan, Carroll County Public Library, MD


PreS-Gr 2—Tallulah’s looking forward to dance camp this summer. She and her little brother will get to take ballet every day, but she also has to take tap and Tallulah’s not looking forward to that. She has been taking ballet for a while, but she’s never taken tap before and will be a “very beginning beginner.” On the first day, she meets Kacie who isn’t very good at ballet but is the best tap dancer in the class. at first Tallulah feels bad because Kacie is being praised while she is constantly being corrected during tap class, but over time the girls learn they have a lot to teach each other. Young readers will learn about the importance of being patient and open-minded when it comes to trying new things. The text is complemented with soft and expressive watercolor illustrations. VERDICT This book will appeal to young ballerinas and tap dancers.—Sarah Palaci, Cuyahoga Public Library System, OH


PreK-Gr 3—In the tradition of Mo Willems’s Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus (Hyperion, 2003) and Herve Tullet’s Press Here (Chronicle, 2011), Soffer’s charming duck hero breaks the fourth wall with panache.
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