

**Summer Reading 2022**  
**Oceans of Possibilities**  
**Children's and YA Literature**  
**Wellfleet Public Library**

*All selections and annotations by WPL Librarian Anna L. Nielsen*

**Graphics**

**Bassi, Sandro. *Alien Nation*. NY: Em Querido, Levine Querido, 2021.** This debut wordless graphic novel/picture book by Venezuelan artist Bassi is a gorgeously specific study of alienation and isolation. His pencil style reminds of Brian Selznick (read Selznick's 2007 *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, NY: Scholastic Press for comparison) but before the nostalgia of an older world and an older story can set in, Basso closes in on the details of the no less prescient story of now and always, of aliens being other, isolated, alone – a nation of aliens. The metaphor for aliens to study alienation may be obvious, but that's the point. Instead of Selznick's young boy of the past searching for connection we have aliens of the present (or future) reaching solely for technology, inalienably alone. Maybe technology isn't all it's cracked up to be. **Ages: 8+.**

**Breemaud, Frederic; illus. Federico Bertolucci. *Love the Mastiff*. Magnetic Press, 2021.** Fifth in the award-winning series of wordless, wildlife graphic novels, this one is about a mighty mastiff lost in the Australian outback, trying to survive, trying to find home. Along the way, he saves other animals from predators and fights his way free from those who would hunt him. The sequential narrative is breathtaking, making the reader ache for the beloved hound. Lush and dramatic and dripping with ink and so very, very real. **Ages: 12+.**

**Dwinell, Kim. *The Science of Surfing: A Surfside Girls Guide to the Ocean*. Marietta, GA: Top Shelf Publications, 2021.** Who better to learn about the ocean from than two girls who love to hang ten? Sam and Jade take a break from solving mysteries and falling in crush with ghost boys (*Surfside Girls: The Secret of Danger Point* and *Surfside Girls: The Mystery at the Old Rancho*) to learn everything they can about the ocean and how to help keep it clean and healthy. They talk about marine biology, and the moon and the waves, and of course, surfing. Educational fun and a beach read for a lazy day. **Ages: 8+.**

**Fenske, Jonathan. *Hello Crabby* and *Let's Play, Crabby!* NY: Acorn, Scholastic, 2019.** This Early Reader graphic novel series is all about a crab who is crabby. Not gabby, not blabby, just plain old crabby. Pushy Plankton gives cheering him up her very best shot. It doesn't work. Poor Crabby. He really is crabby. Amusing fare for those learning to read; how to draw the main characters sections included in the back pages. **Ages: 4+.**

**Ferry, Beth; illus. Jared Chapman. *Crab and Snail #1: The Invisible Whale*. NY: Harper Alley, HarperCollins, 2022.** Crab and Snail are BFF's – best beach friends, because they are best friends and they live on the beach (in the surf zone, specifically). They are also goofy. Rounding out the crew are Grip and Drip, the Barnacle Brothers. They are goofy, too. They all meet Know It All Gull, who tells them about Isabel the invisible whale, and somehow they all become friends, which makes Crab feel sparkly and Snail feel tingly, because it is good to make new friends. The illustrations are straightforward cartoons of comforting pastels, without any distracting flourishes or detail hinting at deeper meaning. This is just fun, Crab and Snail, BBF's. **Ages: 6+.**

**O’Neill, Katie. *Aquicorn Cove*. Portland, OR: Oni Press, Inc., 2018.** From the Eisner Award-nominated O’Neill comes this gentle story of a cove and the reef that used to protect it and the people and sea-people that live in both. Lana comes back to visit her aunt who lives in and fishes the cove, and meets sea-creatures who help her to see the negative effects of over-fishing and plastic pollution, and how without the coral reef and the sea, all life is lost, human and nautical. The messaging is clear, but it’s more a love note to the ocean, complimented by cuteness and magic and the belief that we can all do what we can in our corners of the world to make everything okay. Sweet and hopeful. **Ages: 7+.**

**Petty, Katy Reed; illus. Andrea Bell. *The Leak*. NY: First Second, 2021.** Journalism, fighting for truth, fighting against corporate corruption, first kisses, growing up, family believing and believing in each other, not believing or believing in each other, redemption – this book, and the life and adventures of young Ruthie, has it all. There’s poison in the water and she is going to do something about it. And it all starts with a trip to a dentist. Excellent romp that stirs with courage and social justice, and the everyday antics of being a kid. Ruthie rocks. **Ages: 9+.**

**Snyder, Timothy; illus. Nora Krug. *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*. Graphic edition. CA & NY: Ten Speed Press, Penguin Random House, 2021.** Based on Snyder’s New York Times #1 bestselling book of “lessons for surviving and resisting America’s arc toward authoritarianism,” this graphic edition for young adults eases the intensity but not the importance of the lessons with collage-style art that presents almost as journal entries, complete with pencil drawings and colors reflective of passion and serious thought. After all, this living in modern times is serious business. Highly recommended. **Ages: 12+.**

**Weill, Jean-Pierre. *The Well of Being*. NY: Flatiron Books, 2013.** An illustrated inquiry into the art of happiness, or at least into the art of not being in states of constant anxiety and despair. “When we put on the hat of well-being we incline towards joy without special occasion.” Now wouldn’t that be lovely, especially after the years we’ve had and the world as it is, to incline towards joy? While admitting some “tracks lead to excruciating darkness,” Weill urges us to be well, to know that the world is still beautiful. Subtitled “a children’s book for adults, it’s really for all of us wondering the why’s and how’s of the world and how to exist in circumstances that seem inexplicable and unalterable. His watercolors never fill the page – just a small part of it, exquisitely, to draw our focus. The dabs and brushes of color manage to saturate the page and barely touch it at the same time, adding to our sense of how precariously we tend to see the world. Interspersed throughout are nods to the cultures that affect us: a drenched black rendering of a Giacometti appears on the page explaining the cynicism of modern existentialism and Munch shows up with a scream. A cat sees himself a lion, a lion sees herself a cat. How do we map who we are? How do we script our own story? **Ages: 12+.**

**Zakroff, Casey; illus. Pat Lewis. *Science Comics: Whales Diving Into the Unknown*. NY: First Second, 2021.** The Science Comics series has established itself as reliably excellent, and this entry is no exception. From the very beginning, with the introduction by marine biologist Asha de Vos who tells us about growing up in Sri Lanka and loving whales and studying whale poop and learning that whale poop fertilizes the phytoplankton that produces 50-70% of the oxygen we breathe, the reader is hooked. Once the actual graphic novel gets going we learn how important sound is to whales, how baleen whales eat (bait balls are ingenious), how the bones of blue whales help them float, etc., etc. It’s all fascinating. **Ages: 8+.** Also read **Joe Flood’s *Science Comics: Sharks, Nature’s Perfect Hunter*. NY: First Second, 2019.**