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REVIEW: The Real Question

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West Georgia Regional Library

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Family Payne by Jerry Gollihar
(PublishAmerica, 2005; ISBN 1-4241-0823-3, \$19.95).

Family Payne continues the adventures of Agnes and Me, described by Jerry Gollihar in his previous book, *Agnes and Me*. Payne is going into the second grade, Agnes into the fourth, and like many children during the 40s and 50s, they have only one set of school clothes, which leads to one of their first adventures. Agnes wants a new dress for school and, with Payne's help, ends up stealing one from the local Catholic Church. Although she finally does get a new feed sack dress, she is not sure it is worth all she went through. Payne becomes a local hero by rescuing the neighbor's baby after that neighbor had dug a "spite" ditch between their homes. More events occur in their lives that are a reminder of how families can be there for each other in good and bad times. The older Conley girls come back home providing more opportunities for adventures. Ma Conley helps out some local folks by taking them in or giving them lessons in cooking or sewing, proving that anyone can become family, especially since everyone calls her Ma. Recommended for any fiction collection. ▶▶

— Reviewed by **Lee Ann Cline**
Dalton State College

JUVENILE LITERATURE

The Real Question by Adrian Fogelin
(Peachtree Publishers, 2006; ISBN 1-56145-383-8, \$15.95).

Fisher Brown is a 16-year-old overachiever, immediately likable for the way he pokes fun at the wholesomeness that has been ingrained in his character by his overprotective father. Fish's snappy narration makes the story of his unauthorized trip away from home a great read. Rather than stay home alone and study for the SAT all weekend, Fish takes off with Lonny, the unreliable and wild brother of a neighbor. They head to a part of Florida that is pretty indistinguishable from South Georgia to roof the house of Lonny's ex-wife, a waitress who is just scraping by. Lonny has some of the funniest lines in the novel, such as, "The Peace Corps, huh? Is that where smart guys go to do roofs?" The



advice he gives Fish contradicts the sayings that Fish's guidance counselor dad has taped up around Fish's bedroom. Lonny's irresponsibility will keep readers in suspense about how Fish will get himself home, and whether or not his academic record will have been trashed by then. The time away and the journey back teach Fish a lot about himself and his relationships with the people he loves, especially with his best friend Desiree. *The Real Question* is appropriate for readers in grades 9 and up. ▶▶

— Reviewed by **Ellen Zander**
West Georgia Regional Library

The Boy Who Was Raised by Librarians by Carla Morris,
illustrated by Brad Sneed
(Peachtree Publishers, 2007; ISBN: 978-56145-391-7, \$16.95).

First-time children's book author Carla Morris draws upon her experiences as the children's librarian at the Provo City Library in Utah to pen a gently humorous look at all the wonderful information that any curious child, such as Melvin, may find, especially when guided by three helpful, friendly reference librarians, at the local public library. Brad Sneed's colorful illustrations enhance this warmhearted tribute to the "that's how librarians are" nature of this dynamic trio. Marge, Betty, and Leola continuously help and encourage Melvin since "[w]hatever he was interested in, they were interested in it too." Recommended for most children's collections. ▶▶

— Reviewed by **Lory Cox**
Fulton County Public Schools



The Rainforest Grew All Around
by Susan K. Mitchell, illustrated by
Connie McLennan (Sylvan Dell,
2007; ISBN 978-0-9768823-6-7,
\$15.95, also available in paperback).

This engaging book about the rainforest, inspired by the author's experience using the song "The Green Grass Grew All Around" with preschoolers, amply fills a new publisher's mission to provide "Science and Math through Literature." With intricate, colorful illustrations, views from underneath and through the

