

For Younger Readers

Two from China

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This year, we feature a pair of science books for children and young adults from China. These were selected from recommendations provided by colleagues in the Ministry of Education, China Association for Science and Technology, CCTV (China Central TV), China Association of Popular Science Writers, and several major publishers. Both titles represent popular series that are intended to introduce young readers to nature, science, and technology, and both books are suitable for students from the upper levels of elementary school through high school.

The most popular of such series is *A Hundred Thousand Whys*, which has influenced several generations of readers since it was started in the early 1960s. The books use a question-and-answer format to cover subjects such as astronomy, botany, geography, medicine, social sciences, and zoology. The series includes many picture books, and the material has also been released in video and CD sets.

The president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (Yongxiang Lu) and other leading researchers edit another prominent series, *Approaches to Science*. Drawing material from a program on the educational channel CCTV-10, it explains scientific issues behind hot topics in the news and important societal problems.

潜海世界 (Qianhai Shijie) [Undersea World]. Yi Chen. Popular Science Press, Beijing, 2009. 107 pp. Paper, ¥29.90. ISBN 9787110069929. [Knowledge Is Power]. As an enthusiastic diver, Chen brings readers along on her exciting underwater journeys through relatively unknown and remote places in China and many other parts of the globe (such as Africa and the Philippines).

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Color photos illustrate a variety of marine fauna described in the text, including nudibranchs, crabs, sea snakes, corals, fish, turtles, and sharks. There are also interesting and historic human-made objects and treasures—for example, a section of the Great Wall that has been hidden by water since the construction of a large reservoir in Hebei province several decades ago. Through the text, the author also shares anecdotes regarding the challenges, surprises, and processes of her discoveries.

蜜蜂的故事 (Mifengdegushi) [Stories of Bees]. Jingdong Wang. Hubei Children's Press, Wuhan, Hubei, China, 2009. 214 pp. Paper, ¥10.80. ISBN 9787535345097. [Famous Popular Science Writers for Juveniles and Children].

Throughout the four decades of his adult life as a biology teacher in rural China, Wang has raised bees at home and observed them daily. Reflecting his passion and devotion, the award-winning author details alluring aspects of bee biology, such as social structure, division of labor, "marriage," communication, memory, architectural prowess, and honey production. He discusses several of the services bees provide people, including how the insects help produce fruits, detect mines, forecast weather, and enhance human health. Wang also tells fascinating stories about complex interactions among bees, other animals, plants, and microorganisms. Black-and-white diagrams and full-page drawings enhance the text.

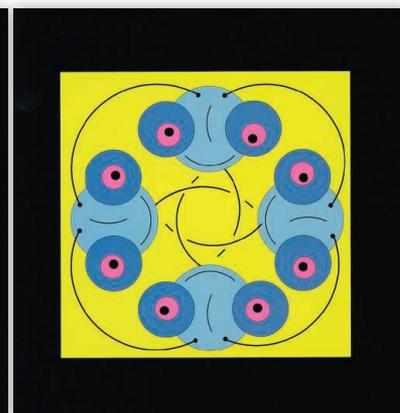
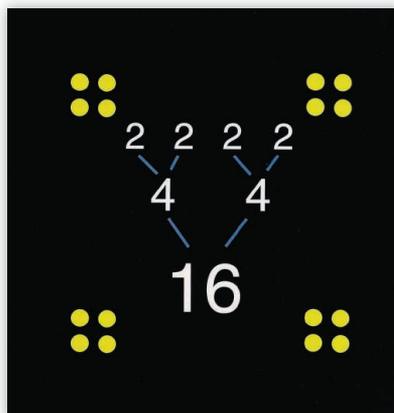


10.1126/science.1200647

BROWSINGS

You Can Count Monsters: The First 100 Numbers and Their Characters. Richard Evan Schwartz. A K Peters, Natick, MA, 2010. 241 pp. Paper, \$24.95. ISBN 9781568815787.

This parade of 100 monsters offers young children a playful visual exploration of multiplication and "the building blocks of numbers." Bright, colorful creatures represent prime numbers. Mathematician Schwartz illustrates composite numbers by combining the monsters that match their prime factors. For each number, he also provides a factor tree and an arrangement of colored dots that demonstrates its nature. Background information in the introduction and appendices will help older readers answer questions about factoring from the book's intended young audience.



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