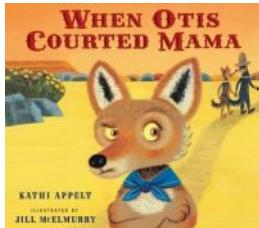
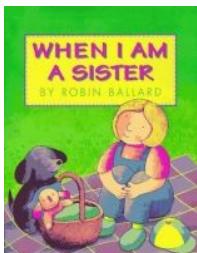


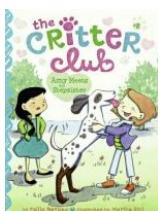
Blended Families



Appelt, K. When Otis Courted Mama. Apart from sticker burrs and sand fleas, Cardell's life is mostly wonderful. He knows he's loved through and through by his perfectly good mama and his perfectly good daddy. They live in different parts of the desert, but that's okay—Cardell is mostly used to it. Then Otis comes calling, and Cardell feels a grrr form in his throat. Otis can't make jalapeño flapjacks or play Zig-the-Zag anything like Cardell's daddy. And so Cardell waits for Mama to say "Adiós, Otis." But what will happen if she doesn't? j PAR PIC Appelt

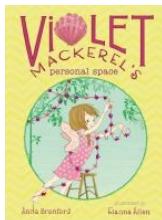


Ballard, R. When I Am a Sister. How will it be when the baby comes? This young narrator is worried. Where will she fit in when Papa and her stepmother, Kate, have the baby? Will there still be story time before bed? And swimming at the big pool? Papa agrees that some things will be different. But change can be good, especially when it means becoming someone's big sister or brother. j PAR PIC Ballard



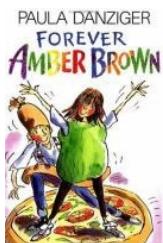
Barkley, C. Amy Meets Her Stepsister. Amy's mom and dad have been divorced for as long as Amy can remember, but nothing prepares Amy for the news she gets on a weekend visit with her dad: he is remarrying! In addition to getting a stepmother, Amy will also be getting a stepsister her age named Chloe. Will she and Chloe ever be friends? j Barkley

Boyd, L. Sam is My Half-Brother. Hessie is spending the summer with her father and stepmother. But there is a baby now, and he is getting a lot of attention. Hessie feels that everything revolves around Sam and finally runs into the woods to escape all the rules about babies. Her father comforts her by telling her about herself as a baby and then points out some advantages to being a big sister. j PAR PIC Boyd

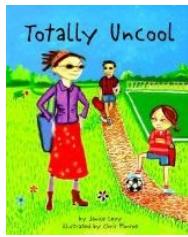


Branford, A. Violet Mackerel's Personal Space. Mama and her boyfriend, Vincent, announce their plans to marry and move to a larger place. Violet's excited about the wedding but nervous about the move. Her older brother, Dylan, wanting none of it, relocates to a tent in the garden. His anger about the move is distressing to Violet, but it allows her to try out one of her new theories in an attempt to bring him round. j Branford

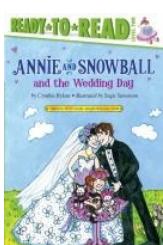
Blended Families



Danziger, P. Forever Amber Brown. Amber is used to change; her life has been full of it lately. First her best friend Justin moved and she became best friends with Brandi. Then she had to deal with her parents' divorce and her dad's move to France. She's even getting used to her mom's boyfriend, Max. Now the only change that she wants is to redo her bedroom. But then Max asks Amber's mom to marry him. If she says yes, they might have to move. But if she says no, then Max may leave. Amber's mom is confused and so is Amber! Can't things just stay the same for once? j Danziger



Levy, J. Totally Uncool. A young girl describes all of the "ooly uncool" aspects of Dad's new girlfriend...she plays the tuba, sings opera to her goldfish, wears sneakers with skirts, and more. However, as she considers all that is not right with Dad's girlfriend, the child has to admit that Sweet Potato (a.k.a., Elizabeth) does have some positive traits. She is encouraging, helps with homework, and knows how to keep a secret. "Maybe there's hope for her yet." j PAR PIC Levy



Rylant, C. Annie and Snowball and The Wedding Day. Annie, her dad, and her bunny, Snowball, love living next door to her cousin Henry, his parents, and his big dog, Mudge. But something is missing. Annie wants her dad to find someone to love. Then her dad meets a woman named Martha and falls in love. Annie is excited that Martha makes Dad so happy, but she is a little worried about meeting her for the first time. jEasy Rylant