

KEYSTONE TO READING ELEMENTARY BOOK AWARD LISTS
2020-2021

Annotated Preschool List

Can I Keep It? by Lisa Jobe

A young boy is searching for the perfect pet. When he asks to keep them, his mom points out that birds belong in the sky and frogs belong in the pond. The boy starts to wonder if there is an animal that belongs right there with him.

Hibernate with Me by Benjamin Scheuer

Big Bear and Small Bear share a story of love and caring through the seasons. Based on a song, the book offers a gentle reminder that when feeling sad or scared there is always love.

If I Was the Sunshine by Julie Fogliano

Clever verse and beautiful illustrations combine to help young readers explore the nature of relationships and connection.

One Dark Bird by Liz Garton Scanlon

One starling is joined by hundreds more and together they dance across the sky. Told in rhyme with counting 1-10 up and down.

Puddle by Richard Jackson

A puddle sits despairingly as she is trampled on by humans and animals alike until something miraculous happens that makes her feel worthwhile.

Tiny T. Rex and the Impossible Hug by Jonathan Stutzman **PA Author**

Tiny T. Rex's friend Pointy needs a hug, but with his short stature and teeny T. Rex arms, Tiny has to work hard to find a way to help. Join this plucky little dinosaur in a warm and funny tale that proves the best hugs come from the biggest hearts.

Trains Run! By George Ella Lyon and Benn Lyon

This rhyming story explores many aspects of trains including how they are powered, the sounds they make, and the people who ride and work on them.

Whose Footprint Is That? By Darrin Lunde (Nonfiction)

In this book, seven pairs of animal tracks are paired with information about the animals' locomotion, asking kids to guess which animal left which tracks behind.

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Annotated Primary List

A Boy Like You by Frank Murphy *PA Author*

Encourages every boy to embrace the things that make him unique, and to be curious, brave, kind, and thoughtful.

A Kite for Moon by Jane Yolen and Heidi Stemple *PA Illustrator Matt Phelan*

A little boy flying his kite notices a sad Moon. He sends up kites to her, writing notes promising he will come see her someday. This promise propels him through years of studying, learning, and training to become an astronaut.

Badger's Perfect Garden by Marsha Diane Arnold

Badger and his friends plant rows of perfect flowers and vegetables. But then a rainstorm comes and washes away the beautiful seeds, and Badger thinks his perfect garden is ruined. But is it? This story will encourage young readers to think beyond expectations and imagine what is possible.

Be a Maker by Katie Howes *PA Author*

Illustrations and rhyming text invite the reader to make everything from a tower to a charitable donation, alone or with neighbors.

Birds of Every Color by Sneed B. Collard III (Nonfiction)

For birds, colors serve important purposes. They send messages, attract mates, answer questions, and much more. *Birds of Every Color* paints a dazzling introduction to bird colors and their roles in our world.

Boom! Bellow! Bleat! Animal Poems for Two or More Voices by Georgia Heard

A collection of poems based on research about animal sounds. Includes additional nonfiction information in the back matter.

Common Threads: Adam's Day at the Market by Huda Essa

When Adam gets separated from his Mom and Dad at the Eastern Market, he mistakes a friendly, diverse cast of characters in their traditional Muslim clothing for his parents and shows that we all have more in common than you might think. This nearly-wordless picture book celebrates diversity and community in vibrant, dynamic art.

Nobody Hugs a Cactus by Carter Goodrich

Hank is a cactus who is prickly inside and out. But when he starts feeling lonely and decides a hug might be good, but no one wants to give him one. No one, that is, until Rosie tumbles by.

Skulls! by Blair Thornburgh *PA Author* (Nonfiction)

This story dispels any fears kids might have about their skeletons, flipping our view of skulls from a spooky symbol to a fascinating and crucial part of our bodies. Includes additional nonfiction backmatter.

Truman by Jean Reidy

After his best friend Sarah leaves for her first day of school, a tortoise named Truman goes on an adventure across the living room and learns to be brave in this thoughtful and heartwarming twist on a first experience story.

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Annotated Intermediate List

A Fist for Joe Louis and Me by Trinka Hakes Noble

Every night after coming home from work, Gordy's father teaches him how to box. Their hero is the famous American boxer, Joe Louis. When Gordy's father loses his job, his mother goes to work for a tailor, and Gordy becomes friends with the tailor's son who also shares a love of boxing. Against the backdrop of the 1938 Fight of the Century, a young boy learns what it means to make a stand for a friend.

Birdie by Eileen Spinelli **PA Author** (Middle Grade Novel)

Twelve-year-old Birdie is still grieving for her father, a firefighter killed in the line of duty, as she struggles to adjust to many changes in her life. Told in verse.

Dancing Hands: How Teresa Carreño Played the Piano for President Lincoln by Margarita Engle (Nonfiction)

Teresa and her family fled from war-torn Venezuela to America where another war was raging. Still, Teresa continued to play the piano she loved and became famous as the talented Piano Girl who could play anything from a folk song to a sonata. So famous, in fact, that President Abraham Lincoln wanted her to play at the White House.

Goodbye, Mr. Spalding by Jennifer Robin Barr **PA Author** (Middle Grade Novel)

Set in Philadelphia during the Great Depression, this middle-grade historical novel tells the story of a twelve-year-old boy and his best friend as they attempt to stop a wall from being built at Shibe Park, home of the Philadelphia Athletics, that would block the view of the baseball field from their rooftops.

Puma Dreams by Tony Johnston

A girl visiting her grandmother longs for a glimpse of the solitary and rarely seen puma. So, the girl and her grandmother stand watch each day, and then finally, without warning, she sees the beautiful animal from afar. Knowing she may never see a puma again, she now knows it's everyone's responsibility to protect these increasingly threatened animals.

Snowman-Cold=Puddle: Spring Equations by Laura Purdie Salas

An exploration of spring where math meets metaphor. Each clever equation is a tiny poem that prompts readers to look at the ordinary and see the miraculous. Information in the sidebars reveal the science behind the signs of spring.

Seashells: More Than a Home by Melissa Stewart (Nonfiction)

An introduction to the remarkable versatility of shells. The text highlights how shells provide more than a protective home and includes characteristics specific to each shell.

SumoKitty by David Biedrzycki

A stray kitty gets a job in a sumo stable, chasing mice in exchange for food. But when eating like a sumo wrestler slows the feline hero down, he realizes he must train like a wrestler, too.

The Boy Who Grew a Forest: The True Story of Jadav Payeng by Sophia Gholz (Nonfiction)

This book tells the inspiring true story of Jadev Payeng who, as a young boy, became concerned about the deforestation and erosion occurring on his island home in India. He began to plant trees which, over the years, turned into a huge forest of native plants and animals.

You Are Home: An Ode to the National Parks by Evan Turk (Nonfiction)

The beauty and importance of the National Parks is showcased in this book that takes readers on an amazing tour across the United States. Includes extensive back matter.