

KEYSTONE TO READING ELEMENTARY BOOK AWARD LISTS

2023-2024

Annotated Preschool List

Bus Stop by Angela H. Dale and Lala Watkins

It's time for school, and all the neighborhood kids from A to Z gather one by one in the frosty dawn to wait for the school bus. But something more thrilling arrives first. Snowflakes fall, transforming the bus stop into a winter wonderland—and an official snow day.

Fire Chief Fran by Linda Ashman and Nancy Carpenter

Perfect for fans of firefighters and fire trucks, this energetic rhyming picture book shows how a fire chief and her crew keep their community safe.

Home Is Where the Birds Sing by Cynthia Rylant and Katie Harnett

Celebrate all kinds of homes—and all kinds of families—in this cozy, lushly illustrated ode to the universal feeling of being at home.

How Can We Be Kind? Wisdom from the Animal Kingdom by Janet Halfmann and Darla Okada

This book shows children the ways they can be kind just like animals are to each other, while at the same time teaching them about the magic and the beauty of the natural world.

I'll Always Come Back to You by Carmen Tafolla and Grace Zong

When a mother goes out to work and her daughter stays behind, Mom reassures her child that nothing can keep her from coming back home again. Mom promises that she would even ride on a whale or fight off a passel of bears, if that's what it takes to return to her child!

Mud! by Annie Bailey and Jen Corace

An energetic picture book ode to rainy days, outdoor play, and siblings, all about oozy, smoozy, squishy mud!

Things We Feel by Sylvia Vardell and Janet Wong

In this alphabet book, you'll find poems from A to Z written by twenty-six different poets (four from PA) along with full-color photos that will help kids talk about feeling amazed, brave, curious, determined, and more. Includes resources for parents, teachers, and fun activities for kids.

Tree Hole Homes: Daytime Dens and Nighttime Nooks by Melissa Stewart and Amy Hevron

This science and nature-themed picture book offers an inviting peek into the secret world of tree hole dwellers. From black bears to tree frogs and bobcats, it's surprising just who you'll find! A main text gives general information about tree holes and a secondary text provides more detail.

Where the Wee Ones Go: A Bedtime Wish for Endangered Animals by Karen Jameson and Zosienka

Wee readers will discover where endangered animals go to sleep in the lush beauty of this bedtime picture book. From the Pacific Ocean to China's mountains, the Australian outback, and beyond, each baby animal has a warm, safe place to fall asleep.

Zach and Ike Are Exactly Alike by Suzanne Bloom

In this classic friendship story, readers will see that Zach and Ike are alike in some ways, but different in others--and that's okay! Because you don't have to be exactly alike to be friends.

KEYSTONE TO READING ELEMENTARY BOOK AWARD LISTS

2023-2024

Annotated Primary List

Abdul's Story by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow and Tiffany Rose **PA Author**

Abdul loves to tell stories. But writing them down is hard. His letters refuse to stay straight and face the right way. And despite all his attempts, his papers often wind up with more eraser smudges than actual words. Abdul decides his stories just aren't meant to be written down...until a special visitor comes to class and shows Abdul that even the best writers—and superheroes—make mistakes.

All from a Walnut by Ammi-Joan Paquette and Felicita Sala

When Emilia finds a walnut one morning, Grandpa tells her the story of his journey across the ocean to a new home, with only one small bag and a nut in his pocket. Step by step, Grandpa teaches Emilia how to cultivate her own seed. But as her little nut grows, Grandpa begins to slow down. This tender story is a reminder that the best things grow with time and that even when they are no longer here, the ones we love are always a part of us.

A Planet Like Ours by Frank Murphy and Charnaie Gordon, and Kayla Harren **PA Author**

Our planet Earth is as individual and special as each one of us. Its ability to sustain and nurture life is unique in our solar system--and beyond. In this book, celebrate all the wonderful, miraculous, astounding qualities of our Earth while learning how to protect her for future generations.

A Poem Grows Inside You by Katey Howes and Heather Brockman Lee **PA Author**

The seed of an idea waits for the rhythm of the rainfall to awaken it, then takes root and begins to grow. This book is a celebration of creative expression and an acknowledgement of the courage it takes to let it into the sun.

Francis Discovers Possible by Ashlee Latimer and Shahrzad Maydani

At school, when her class is reviewing words that begin with the letter "F," someone sneers "Fat, like Francis." Francis always thought "fat" was a warm word, but now "fat" feels cold, and Francis feels very small until she explores the word "possible." This book is an ode to self-acceptance.

If This Bird Had Pockets: A Poem in Your Pocket Day Celebration by Amy Ludwig VanDerwater and Emma J. Virján

Fascinating information about the animals (yes, sea otters have pockets!) tucked into short, lively poems and bright, bold artwork make this collection perfect for any day of the year.

Old Friends by Margaret Aitken and Lenny Wen

Marjorie wants a friend who loves the same things she does: baking shows, knitting, and gardening. Someone like Granny. So with a sprinkle of flour in her hair and a spritz of lavender perfume, Marjorie goes undercover to the local Senior Citizens Group. It all goes well until the Cha-Cha-Cha starts and her cardigan camouflage goes sideways. By being true to herself, Marjorie learns that friends can be of any age if you look in the right places.

Ten Blocks to the Big Wok: A Chinatown Counting Book by Ying-Hwa Hu

This bilingual book, in English and Chinese, teaches readers the numbers one through ten in both languages, and offers a wonderful tour of the everyday charms of Chinatown.

The Secret Life of the Sea Otter by Laurence Pringle and Kate Garchinsky **PA Illustrator**

Follow a year in the life of an adorable sea otter as she creatively hunts for food, deftly avoids danger from a great white shark, and gives birth to a pup.

The Tide Pool Waits by Candace Fleming and Amy Hevron

Along the Pacific Coast, whenever the tide goes out, seawater collects between rocks and reveals the mesmerizing, miniature world of tide pools. Dive into the rich ecology of tide pools and watch a hidden world spring in this masterful nonfiction picture book for very young readers.

KEYSTONE TO READING ELEMENTARY BOOK AWARD LISTS

2023-2024

Annotated Intermediate List

Building an Orchestra of Hope: How Favio Chávez Taught Children to Make Music from Trash by Carmen Oliver and Luisa Uribe

Music teacher Favio Chavez started giving music lessons to the children of Cateura, Paraguay, a town built on a landfill. Soon he had more students than instruments, so Favio and a local carpenter began to experiment with transforming garbage into wonder. With repurposed instruments in their hands, the children filled their community, and the world, with the sounds of a better tomorrow.

Cloaked in Courage: Uncovering Deborah Sampson, Patriot Soldier by Beth Anderson and Anne Lambelet

PA Illustrator

This book tells the remarkable story of Deborah Sampson, a woman who fought in the American Revolution disguised as a man—and who ends up finding her true identity and purpose in life.

Copycat: Nature Inspired Design Around the World by Christy Hale

Illustrations of plants and animals and tanka poetry are paired with photographs of innovative inventions and designs found around the world to present captivating examples of nature-inspired design.

Fly by Brittany J. Thurman and Anna Cunha

PA Author

Africa's grandmother was a double Dutch legend, and Africa knows she can become the same. Although her brother scoffs when she signs up for a double Dutch competition, Africa knows she has all the tools she needs: memories of her grandmother, her bestie Bianca's dance moves, her friend Omar's rhythm, and her classmates' Mary Mack timing and cartwheels.

Keeper of the Light: Juliet Fish Nichols Fights the San Francisco Fog by Caroline Arnold and Rachell Sumpter

Inspired by the logs of a female light keeper who kept the light shining through the fog following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, this adventurous story captures an important piece of American history.

Pizza! A Slice of History by Greg Pizzoli

PA AuthorIllustrator

Travel through time and around the globe to discover the mouth-watering history of pizza. Bursting with color, flavor, fun facts, and a family-friendly English muffin pizza recipe, this book reveals the delicious story of the world's best food.

The Seagull and the Sea Captain by Sy Montgomery and Amy Schimler-Safford

In a quiet harbor in New England, a sea captain, Ellis, is visited by a seagull that lands on the back of his family's passenger schooner. Ellis feeds the seagull, and by the end of the week, it is eating crackers right out of his hand. Their friendship lasted and Polly continues to visit.

Starring Steven Spielberg: The Making of a Young Filmmaker by Gene Barretta and Craig Orbeck

PA Author

From his younger years to his first days on a movie set, this biography captures the unique ways Steven Spielberg's memories influenced his career and helped him to become the celebrated filmmaker that he is today.

Washed Ashore: Making Art from Ocean Plastic by Kelly Crull

When artist Angela Haseltine Pozzi found plastic trash polluting the beach near her home, she took action. She formed an organization called Washed Ashore and started gathering trash from beaches and using it to create incredible sculptures of wildlife. These sculptures travel the country to teach people about the importance of these animals and the problems caused by plastic pollution. There's information about each ocean animal as well as tips for how you can reduce your plastic use, hold a beach cleanup and make your own plastic art.

Yuck, You Suck: Poems About Animals that Sip, Slurp, Suck by Jane Yolen and Heidi E.Y. Stemple

Within this book you'll find ticks, mosquitos, stingrays, elephants, jellyfish, and the particularly sucky lamprey. Sixteen slurpy poems introduce a suction-filled selection of animals.