

KEYSTONE TO READING ELEMENTARY BOOK AWARD LISTS
2019-2020

Annotated Preschool List

Dreaming of You by Amy Ludwig VanDerwater

This lyrical and beautifully illustrated lullaby picture book prepares children ages 3-6 for bedtime by imagining what animals dream.

Hedgehog Needs a Hug by Jen Betton

Hedgehog needs a hug to make him feel better, but none of his animal friends are eager to wrap their arms around his prickles. Then Hedgehog finds another animal who is feeling exactly the same way.

I Just Like You by Suzanne Bloom

A sweet group of young animals shows readers that even though others might look, talk, or walk differently, we can like each other just as we are.

Let's Go ABC! Things That Go, from A to Z by Rhonda Gowler Greene

An ABC book in rhyme about vehicles.

Pippa & Percival, Pancake & Poppy: Four Peppy Puppies by Deborah Diesen

Four puppies meet and have a great time together until they get frightened and race back to their homes. Great rhyme and rhythm.

Rumble Grumble...Hush by Kate Banks

This rhyming book follows a child through the sounds of his day.

The Big Umbrella by Amy and Juniper Bates

PA Authors

A simple book with a powerful message - there is room for everyone in our world.

Who Eats Orange? by Dianne White (Nonfiction)

An exploration of colors and animals' favorite foods. Includes familiar as well as exotic animals from around the world with lots of information in the back.

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Annotated Primary List

Can I Be Your Dog? by Troy Cummings

This picture book shares the tale of Arfy, a homeless mutt who lives in a box in an alley. Arfy writes to every person on Butternut Street about what a great pet he'd make.

Elmore by Hollie Hobby

Elmore is a porcupine desperate to make friends. But it is hard to seek closeness with others when you're covered with spikes that shoot off your back every so often. Elmore suffers rejection and heartbreak, but the forest animals find a way to connect with this prickly bundle of love.

Friends Stick Together by Hannah E. Harrison

Rupert is a refined rhinoceros. Levi, the new tickbird in class, burps the alphabet, tells corny jokes, and does embarrassing air guitar solos. Worse, he is determined to be Rupert's symbiotic best pal! Rupert wants him gone. But when Levi finally does bug off, Rupert finds the peace and quiet a little boring.

Idea Jar by Adam Lehrhaupt (PA Author)

The idea jar is where students keep their ideas—anything from a Viking to a space robot to a giant dragon. These ideas can be combined to make new exciting stories. But watch out when the ideas escape the jar—they might get a little rowdy!

Inky's Amazing Escape: How a Very Smart Octopus Found His Way Home by Sy Montgomery (Nonfiction)

Inky achieved worldwide fame after escaping from New Zealand's National Aquarium via a floor drain. The author seamlessly incorporates interesting facts about octopuses into the narrative. An author's note provides more information on Inky, observations about octopuses in captivity, and fun facts.

Kate, Who Tamed the Wind by Liz Garton Scanlon

A wild wind blows on the top of a steep hill, turning everything upside down for the man who lives there. Luckily, Kate comes up with a plan to tame the wind. With a wheelbarrow full of young trees, she journeys up the steep hill to add a little green to the man's life, and to protect the house from the howling wind.

Mommy's Khimar by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow (PA Author)

A young girl plays dress up with her mother's headscarves, feeling her mother's love with every one she tries on. Charming and vibrant illustrations showcase the beauty of the diverse and welcoming community in this portrait of a young Muslim American girl's life.

Pipsqueaks, Slowpokes, and Stinkers: Celebrating Animal Underdogs by Melissa Stewart (Nonfiction)

This book, written in a lively and playful voice, introduces young readers to a variety of "animal underdogs." It explains how characteristics that might seem like weaknesses are critical for finding food and staying safe in an eat-or-be-eaten world.

Terrific Tongues! by Maria Gianferrari

This fascinating and whimsical nonfiction picture book uses humorous comparisons and playful artwork to teach children the unusual ways that a variety of animals--from woodpeckers to snakes to bats--use their tongues to find food, eat, and clean themselves.

We Don't Eat Our Classmates by Ryan T. Higgins

It's the first day of school for Penelope Rex, and she can't wait to meet her classmates. But it's hard to make human friends when they're delicious! When Penelope gets a taste of her own medicine, she finds she may not be at the top of the food chain after all.

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Annotated Intermediate List

Americans by Douglas Wood

Americans are different from one another in many ways. And despite these differences, Americans share certain ways of doing and being that hold us all together.

Blacksmith's Song by Elizabeth Van Steenwyk

The son of an enslaved blacksmith learns that his father is using the rhythm of his hammering to communicate with travelers on the Underground Railroad. When Pa falls ill, it is up to him to help others along the journey—and also lead his family's escape.

Earth Verse: Haiku from the Ground Up by Sally M. Walker (Poetry and Nonfiction)

A combination of haiku and art encourages readers to think about the processes of our planet. Includes NF information about rocks, earthquakes, fossils, glaciers, and volcanoes.

Game Changers: The Story of Venus and Serena Williams by Lesa Cline-Ransome (Biography)

At age fourteen, Venus played her first professional match. Three years later, it was Serena's turn. It wasn't easy. Some tennis fans cheered for these two fresh faces, while those who were unhappy to see two black girls competing in a nearly all-white sport booed and taunted them. But they didn't let it stop them.

Louisiana's Way Home by Kate DiCamillo (Middle Grade Novel)

Louisiana's granny wakes her up in the middle of the night and tells Louisiana they must leave home immediately. Although Granny intends never to return, Louisiana feels she must find a way to return to the friends she has left behind. Things get even more complicated as Louisiana becomes involved in the lives of the people in a small Georgia town. This book is filled with themes of forgiveness, love, home, and family.

One Iguana Two Iguanas: A Story of Accident, Natural Selection, and Evolution by Sneed B. Collard III (NF)

This is a fascinating story of two species of iguana, one land-based and one marine, both of which developed from a single ancestor that reached the islands millions of years ago. The animals evolved in different directions while living within sight of one another. An exploration of Darwin's discovery of natural selection.

Rescue and Jessica: A Life-Changing Friendship by Jessica Kensky and Patrick Downes

Rescue gets the news that he's better suited to being a service dog than a Seeing Eye dog, and he's worried that he's not up to the task. Then he meets Jessica, a girl whose life is turning out differently than the way she'd imagined it, too. It turns out that Rescue can help Jessica see after all: a way forward, together, one step at a time. Based on a true story from the Boston Marathon bombing in 2013.

Strongheart: Wonder Dog of the Silver Screen by Candace Fleming (Middle Grade Novel)

In this historical fiction account, Strongheart, a German police dog, is brought to the U.S. and becomes a silent-movie screen star. Strongheart lives up to his name as he overcomes adversity with loyalty and grace. Illustrations by Eric Rohmann enhance the story.

The King of Bees by Lester L. Laminack

Henry can't wait until he can have a bee suit of his own so he can help his Aunt Lilla with the sister bees. Day after day as Henry observes his Aunt Lilla work with the beehives, he becomes fascinated with her bee suit and her ability to communicate with the bees. When he learns that the bees are getting ready to look for a new place to live, he tries to find a way to communicate with the sister bees to convince them to stay.

Write to Me: Letters from Japanese American Children to the Librarian They Left Behind by Cynthia Grady (NF)

This is a touching story about Japanese American children who correspond with their beloved librarian while they are imprisoned in World War II internment camps.