What is the Children’s Choices project?

Each year 10,000 school children from different regions of the United States read and vote on the newly published children’s and young adults’ trade books that they like best. The Children’s Choices for 2006 list is the 32nd in a series that first appeared as “Classroom Choices” in the November 1975 issue of The Reading Teacher (RT), a peer-reviewed journal for preschool, primary, and elementary levels published eight times a year by the International Reading Association (IRA). This list is designed for use not only by teachers, librarians, administrators, and booksellers, but also by parents, grandparents, caregivers, and everyone who wishes to encourage young people to read for pleasure.

Children’s Choices is a project of a joint committee supported by IRA and the Children’s Book Council (CBC). IRA is a nonprofit educational organization whose members include classroom and reading teachers, school administrators and supervisors, parents, college/university faculty, and others who are dedicated to improving reading instruction and promoting literacy worldwide.

CBC is the nonprofit professional association of U.S. publishers and packagers of books for young people. It encourages childhood literacy through sponsorship of national programs including Young People’s Poetry Week and the 87-year-old annual observance of Children’s Book Week, as well as working cooperatively with other professional associations.

In 1969, IRA and CBC formed a liaison committee to explore areas of mutual interest to reading teachers and publishers. Among the committee’s initial charges was the development of a core selection of trade books for the classroom. This list of Children’s Choices has remained an important activity of the committee, which each year produces this child-selected bibliography identifying titles that can be used successfully in reading programs, can be related to the classroom curricula, and are known to engage children.
**How are books selected and annotated?**

More than 460 books were evaluated by children for Children’s Choices for 2006. The books to be tested were selected by publishers from the books they published in 2005 and were sent to five review teams located in different regions of the United States. Each team consisted of a children’s literature specialist plus one or more classroom teachers who in turn worked with other classroom teachers, school librarians, and more than 2,000 children. Throughout the school year the books were in classrooms, being read to or by children.

Children’s votes were tabulated in March, and the top 97 titles for 2006 were announced at the annual International Reading Association Convention in May. The review teams provided an annotation for each title on the list.

**What bibliographic information is provided?**

Books selected for the Children’s Choices list have been grouped by reading levels:

- Beginning readers (ages 5–7)
- Young readers (ages 8–10)
- Advanced readers (ages 11–13)

Users should note that many books read easily by beginning readers are also enjoyed by more advanced readers, and many titles for advanced readers are accessible to younger readers or can be read aloud in the classroom.

The title, author, illustrator, publisher, and price are provided for each book as well as a brief annotation prepared by a review team. All books listed are hardcover unless otherwise noted. Prices are accurate as of late spring 2006; they are subject to change without notice. These abbreviations are provided for easy reference:

- Ill. illustrator of the book
- Pb. a paperback book
- (library) indicates the library edition of a book
- (trade) indicates the edition of the book available from booksellers
- pp. page count
- F. paperback is forthcoming but not yet available

All books on this list should be available through your local library or a local bookseller.

**Beginning readers**

**The Bake Shop Ghost**
*For years Miss Cora Lee Merriweather’s habitually sour face has peered over her delicacy-filled bakery counter. After her death, she haunts the shop. Annie Washington fights back. Determined, she finally discovers a secret that leads to a surprising partnership.*  
(Team 3)
Houghton Mifflin. 28 pp. US$16.00 (trade).

**Belinda in Paris**
Amy Young. Ill. by the author.  
*Everyone in Paris is excited to see the famous ballerina Belinda dance, everyone except Belinda who has lost her shoes. With help from a cobbler and some unique foot forms, a night of marvelous dancing is saved. Très magnifique!*  
(Team 3)
The Big, Blue Lump
Yeti Frankel. Ill. by the author.
Bandy is a little bug who only looks helpless. Cyril the pig was only one of a number of animals to discover he wasn’t an easy meal. The obvious and predictable humor captivates children. (Team 1)
Snow Tree Books. 32 pp. US$16.95 (trade).

Brand-new Pencils, Brand-new Books
Diane deGroat. Ill. by the author.
Gilbert is excited and nervous about the first day of first grade. Will his teacher be nice? Will Patti still be his friend? Will he learn to read? In this reassuring story young readers will identify with the emotions all students experience. (Team 4)

The Bravest of the Brave
Shutta Crum. Ill. Tim Bowers.
The rhythm of this tale about a skunk who heads home and wonders about robbers, pirates, ghosts, and trappers is very engaging. Children are captive to the tension of the tale. (Team 1)

Click, Clack, Quackity-Quack: An Alphabetical Adventure
Duck takes the cows’ typed note, a picnic invitation to all animals, around the farm. The unlikely bounty humor of this alphabet romp in both verse and illustration is a child magnet. (Team 1)

Cornelius P. Mud, Are You Ready for Bed?
Barney Saltzberg. Ill. by the author.
Cornelius P. Mud takes care of bedtime rituals in a very unusual way, with cookies for fish and his toys in the refrigerator. Children love the illustrations that tell what Cornelius does when he answers mother’s question. (Team 5)

Dad, Are You the Tooth Fairy?
Jason Alexander. Ill. Ron Spears.
Gaby poses this question to his father when other children talk about tooth fairies as make-believe beings. The author gives an answer that satisfies reason without destroying the heart. (Team 5)

The Dog Who Cried Wolf
Keiko Kasza. Ill. by the author.
Moka, an adventurous dog, decides to run away and try the carefree life of a wolf. He tries to hunt for food, but rabbit outruns him; skunk sprays him; and beetle pinches his nose. Finally, he realizes that home is the best place for him. (Team 4)

Dougal, the Garbage Dump Bear
Matt Dray. Ill. with photographs.
Dougal is a good-hearted bear whose life changes drastically when he is tossed into the trash. A timely rescue by an Australian garbage dump worker leads to new friends and adventures, carefully detailed in this album of informative snapshots. (Team 3)
Kane/Miller Book Publisher. 32 pp. US$14.95 (trade).

Eddie’s Kingdom
D.B. Johnson. Ill. by the author.
Eddie draws a picture of his apartment building. The snickering and grouchy neighbors do not match Eddie’s desire for a peaceful neighborhood. His approach and skill in bringing the neighbors together celebrate children’s innovation and kindheartedness. (Team 5)

The First Day of Winter
Denise Fleming. Ill. by the author.
Young readers will relate to this book through the bright, colorful illustrations and the familiar “Twelve Days of Christmas” pattern. Children build a snowman, using a counting pattern. (Team 2)
The Giant Hug
Sandra Horning. Ill. Valeri Gorbachev.
Owen sends Granny a hug. He hugs Mr. Nevin at the Post Office who hugs Mrs. Porter who hugs someone else...all the way to Granny. The humor associated with each hug passing appeals immensely to children. (Team 1)

Good Dog
Maya Gottfried. Ill Robert Rahway Zakanich.
Sixteen poems about dogs are accompanied by 16 illustrations of the animals that are so real they begged to be scratched and tickled by the reader. (Team 1)

A Grand Old Tree
Mary Newell DePalma. Ill. by the author.
The simple images and the evocative description of the life cycle of a tree that gave much and asked little over her lifetime calm and warm readers. Children are fascinated by the multiple uses of the tree and its renewal over time. (Team 1)

Hot Air: The (Mostly) True Story of the First Hot Air Balloon Ride
Margorie Priceman. Ill. by the author.
This mostly wordless book illustrates the story of three farm animals’ adventure in France as the passengers in the first hot air balloon. The bright, colorf illustrate provide a visual picture of this amazing feat. (Team 2)

How Do Dinosaurs Eat Their Food?
Jane Yolen. Ill. Mark Teague.
Jane Yolen never fails to fascinate children with her clever language and ability to identify subjects of interest. In this book readers discover they have table manners that are not a lot different from dinosaurs. (Team 1)

I’m a Pig
Sarah Weeks. Ill. Holly Berry.
This delightful rhyming tale celebrates all the special, silly, or sometimes dirty, things about being a pig. This book easily leads into a character education lesson with its strong message for young children—be happy with who you are. (Team 4)

I’m Not Afraid of This Haunted House
Laurie Friedman. Ill. Teresa Murfin.
This cleverly illustrated story, told in verse, is rich with haunting expressions and ghoulish creatures. The scary tale doesn’t haunt Simon Lester Henry Strauss, but in the end a clever little mouse makes him run from the haunted house. (Team 4)
Carolrhoda Books, a division of Lerner Publishing Group. 32 pp. US$15.95 (trade).

The Little Engine That Could
Watty Piper. Ill. Loren Long.
This endearing classical tale tells of the brave little engine that struggles over the mountain bringing toys and food to all the children. The vivid illustrations follow the storyline. There are quaint images of toys, goodies, and happy faces when he “could.” (Team 4)

Little Pea
Little Pea was happy until it was dinnertime. Every night he had to eat candy. Once he managed to eat five pieces without too much complaining and was allowed dessert—spinach! Children recognize the twist on an old problem. (Team 1)

Little Spotted Cat
Alyssa S. Capucilli. Ill. Dan Andreasen.
When Mama Cat called, “It’s time for your nap,” Little Spotted Cat wasn’t ready. This endearingly mischievous kitten energetically crashes flower pots,
MORE ABOUT CHILDREN’S CHOICES

Who is on the IRA-CBC Joint Committee and who are members of the review teams?
Cochairing the 2005–2006 IRA-CBC Joint Committee were Teri S. Lesesne, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas, and Terry Borzumato, Random House Children’s Books, New York, New York. Representing IRA on the committee were Elizabeth Schmar Dobler, Jan L. LaBonty, Lauren Liang, Beth Pendergraf, Becky Rees, and Richard L. Allington; those representing CBC were Beth Eller, Sharon Hancock, Aimee Jackson, Margaret Quinlin, and Jeff Reynolds. CBC administrative staff coordinated the teams’ work.

The review teams described below coordinated the project at each of the following five test sites:

**Team 1:** Raleigh, North Carolina, consisted of one inner-city middle school, one inner-city elementary school, two suburban elementary schools, and one rural elementary school. Team leaders: Beth Weir and Robin Vincent.

**Team 2:** Las Vegas, Nevada, consisted of two suburban elementary schools and one suburban middle school. Team leaders: Lorna Tobias and Michelle M. Truman.

**Team 3:** Des Moines, Iowa, consisted of two parochial elementary schools, four suburban elementary schools, one urban elementary school, and one rural elementary school. Team leaders: Jill Caton Johnson and Donna Merkley. Support team leaders: Carol J. Fuhler, DeDe Small, and Liz Matevia.

**Team 4:** Briarcliff Manor, New York, consisted of seven inner-city elementary schools and three inner-city middle schools. Team leaders: Diane Mallett and Debra Conroy. Support team leader: Anne Newman.

**Team 5:** Tacoma, Washington, consisted of three urban elementary schools, two suburban elementary schools, one rural elementary school and one urban and one suburban middle school. Team leader: Belinda Louie.

How can I become a team leader?
Team leaders are selected by the IRA-CBC Joint Committee based upon numerous factors such as location within the United States; cooperation between team leaders, school administrators, and library media specialists; and ability to attend orientation sessions at the International Reading Association’s annual convention. Information about how to become a team leader is available from the Children’s Book Council, Attn: Team Leader Information, 12 W. 37th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10018-7480, USA. All applications remain on file, and periodically CBC reconfirms applicants’ interest. For additional information about this project and a downloadable application form, visit CBC’s website at www.cbcbooks.org.

How can I order copies of this list?
Offprints of this annotated 2006 Children’s Choices list (publication #9106) are available from the International Reading Association. Single copies are US$1.00 when you send a self-addressed 9” x 12” envelope to the attention of Department EG. Single copies of each choices list may also be downloaded as a PDF file at www.reading.org. To order bulk copies by phone with a credit card, call (in the United States and Canada only) 1-800-336-7323, or send your order to Order Department, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 6021, Newark, DE 19714-6021, USA. Bulk copies are also available in lots of 10 at www.cbcbooks.org.

Are other booklists available?
The International Reading Association prepares two additional annual booklists. Teachers’ Choices describes approximately 30 new trade books published for children and adolescents that teachers themselves have found to be exceptional in curriculum use. The list appears each year in the November issue of The Reading Teacher and is also available in bulk as a separate reprint and on the Association’s website at www.reading.org. Young Adults’ Choices lists approximately 30 new trade books that middle, junior high, and senior high school students have selected as being particularly appealing for their age group. This list appears each November in the International Reading Association publication Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy and is available as a separate reprint and on the Association’s website at www.reading.org.

Copies of either Teachers’ or Young Adults’ Choices lists are available from the International Reading Association, Attn: Dept. EG, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139, USA. Prices for each annotated list are the same as those given for the Children’s Choices offprint. Prepaid orders for bulk copies should be sent Attn: Order Department at the same address. To order bulk copies by phone with a credit card, call (in the United States and Canada only) 1-800-336-7323, ext. 266.

Annual lists distributed by the Children’s Book Council (CBC) are Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People, a project of the National Council for the Social Studies-CBC Joint Committee, and Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children, a project of the National Science Teachers Association-CBC Joint Committee. For a single copy of the Social Studies list or Science list, send US$2.00 and a self-addressed 6” x 9” envelope stamped with 76¢ U.S. postage to CBC, 12 W. 37th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10018-7840, USA; Attn: Social Studies List, or Attn: Science List. Multiple copy rates are available on the CBC website www.cbcbooks.org.

How do publishers obtain information about submitting titles for future lists?
The Children’s Choices project is open to all U.S. publishers of children’s books. Publishers who are not members of the CBC pay a per-title administrative fee to submit books for consideration. Submission information is available in late May. Publishers may request submission notification by filling out the form at www.cbcbooks.org/readinglists/participation.html or by e-mailing bibliographies@cbcbooks.org.

CBC welcomes publishers, large and small, to join its diverse membership. For membership information, write to CBC, 12 W. 37th Street, New York, NY 10018-7840, USA.

How can I find out more about the Children’s Book Council?
For a complete listing of CBC’s activities and publications, visit their website at www.cbcbooks.org.
Oscar’s Half Birthday
Bob Graham. Ill. by the author.

It’s a perfect day for a half-birthday celebration. A biracial family packs a picnic and walks through the busy city to a wooded area where they share the festivities with others in the park-like setting. (Team 3)


Picasso and Minou
P.I. Maltbie. Ill. Pau Estrada.

Using beautiful pen and watercolor illustrations that bring the story to life, this book provides information about Pablo Picasso’s life in a way that children will understand. The special friendship and loyalty of Minou, the cat, is heartwarming. (Team 2)

Piggy and Dad Go Fishing
David Martin. Ill. Frank Remkiewicz.

Piggy is thrilled to go fishing with Dad “for the very first time.” However, confronted with a smiling worm as bait and a sad-looking catch, Piggy and his Dad discover a new way to appreciate the sport. (Team 4)

A Pipkin of Pepper
Helen Cooper. Ill. by the author.

Cat, Squirrel, and Duck set out for salt. When they get separated in the city they end up with salt and pepper plus an adventure to discuss over their seasoned pumpkin soup. This is a tale with universal appeal. (Team 1)
Farrar, Straus & Giroux Books for Young Readers. 32 pp. US$16.00 (trade).

Russell the Sheep
Rob Scotton. Ill. by the author.

Russell the Sheep of Frogsbottom Field tries everything he knows to fall asleep. Nothing works except counting sheep! Russell is endearingly human and the illustrations of sheep knitting and cuddling teddy bears are as imaginative as the story. (Team 1)

Santa Claus: The World’s Number One Toy Expert
Marla Frazee. Ill. by the author.

How does Santa get the presents he gives out right 99.9% of the time? The reader discovers the answer in this breezy little exposé of Santa’s methods and work ethic. A little twist at the end makes the story very satisfying. (Team 1)

Sleep Tight, Little Bear
Martin Waddell. Ill. Barbara Firth.

As Little Bear settles down for the first night in his private cave, he worries that Big Bear will be lonely. Young children relate to wanting to be independent, but still needing the comfort of a bedtime story and a hug. (Team 4)

So, What’s It Like to Be a Cat?

The private lives of cats are explored in this question-and-answer exchange between a precocious young boy and an extremely smart cat. Young readers will be attracted to the rhythmic language and realistic illustrations from the cat’s viewpoint. (Team 4)

Someday Is Not a Day of the Week

Max, a young beaver, learns about the days of the week while trying to find “someday” on the calendar. All kids can connect to Max’s desire to spend time with the significant adults in his life. (Team 3)

Space Station Mars
Daniel San Souci. Ill. by the author.

An action-packed and whimsically illustrated narrative describing the adventures of seven young boys. This is another “clubhouse” mission complete with aliens, spaceships, and secret codes, sure to tap imaginations and lead to sharing of stories. Aliens beware! (Team 3)
Tricycle Press. 40 pp. US$15.95 (trade).

The Subway Mouse
Barbara Reid. Ill. by the author.

Lured by stories of life outside the subway, little Nib leaves his mouse family for a suspenseful journey to Tunnel’s End. He meets Lola and their trials are well rewarded. (Team 1)
Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic. 40 pp. US$15.95 (trade).
Three About Thurston
Susan Milord. Ill. by the author.

Thurston, a clever but cocky rooster, learns that despite his superior attitude there are some things a hen can do that he cannot when friend Mirabelle shows him an egg. Three brief vignettes and clear cartoonish illustrations highlight the humor. (Team 3)

Houghton Mifflin Company. 32 pp. US$15.00 (trade).

TIME for Kids: Snakes!
Lisa Jo Rudy and the editors of TIME for Kids.

A snake enthusiast’s dream come true! This book covers it all: body parts, movements, egg hatching, size, protection, prey, and the future. Full of cool facts and outstanding photography sure to “ooh” or “ugh” readers. (Team 3)


Toot & Puddle: Wish You Were Here
Holly Hobbie. Ill. by the author.

Toot ventures off to Borneo and gets stung by a bee and succumbs to a case of Violet Virus. Cousin Opal discovers the only cure that will restore his piggy pink color. Children enjoy meeting old friends in this story. (Team 1)


Traction Man Is Here!
Mini Grey. Ill. by the author.

Traction Man is a toy figure who protects his master and the world he lives in. The book captures children’s imagination about having a superhero action toy that keeps a scrubbing brush as a pet and tolerates granny’s knitted outfit. (Team 5)


Tumble Bunnies
Kathryn Lasky. Ill. Marylin Hafner.

Clyde worries about the Sports Spectacular until he and his friend, Rosemary, enter the tumbling event. All is well until Rosemary has a problem. Children feel very much a part of Clyde’s life having met him in other books. (Team 1)

**The Ugly Pumpkin**  
Dave Horowitz. Ill. by the author.  
*A funny-shaped outcast October pumpkin, teased by everyone, is determined to find someplace where he’ll fit in. By Thanksgiving he discovers his true identity, much to his chagrin. A unique spin on The Ugly Duckling. (Team 4)*  

**Walter Was Worried**  
Laura Vaccaro Seeger. Ill. by the author.  
*Walter is worried about the darkening sky. He is not the only child to feel this way. Through the clever use of alliteration Seeger helps readers identify and validate their feelings about weather patterns. (Team 1)*  

**Young readers**

**Amelia to Zora: Twenty-six Women Who Changed the World**  
The author creates an alphabet book using the first names of the 26 women who have made impressive contributions to the world. The women came from different ethnic groups and countries. (Team 5)  

**Army Ants**  
Sandra Markle. Ill. with photographs.  
*Army ants are scavenger insects living in tropical rain forests. Students who read the photographs as closely as the text will receive a double-dose of information about these unique clean-up crews. Includes a glossary and additional resources. (Team 3)*  

**Book of Boys (for Girls) & The Book of Girls (for Boys)**  
*Greenberg’s subversive humor is evident in this text in which the thoughts and words of children are presented in rhyme. Children are fascinated by the theme of gender differences. (Team 1)*  

**Chipi Chipis, Small Shells of the Sea/Chipi Chipis, Caracolitos del Mar**  
Irania Macías Patterson. Ill. Catherine Courtlandt-McElvane.  
*This story, written in both English and Spanish, tells of a young girl’s special day with her father. They go to the seashore where they gather chipi chipis, similar to small clams, and go home to make a delicious soup. (Team 3)*  

**Crybiology**  
Cherie Winner. Ill. with photographs.  
*Suspended animation in the form of hibernation happens in many animals’ life cycles. Can scientific advancement make it possible to freeze a human body without harming it? The book’s simple language allows young readers to learn about this complex topic. (Team 5)*  
Carolrhoda Books, a division of Lerner. 46 pp. US$25.26 (library).

**Dzání Yázhi Naazbaa’: Little Woman Warrior Who Came Home: A Story of the Navajo Long Walk**  
*This book tells of the plight Native Americans endured when relocated to reservations. The words, in both Navajo and English, and the vivid illustrations describe and depict a poignant story of endurance and survival. (Team 2)*  
Salina Bookshelf. 32 pp. US$17.95 (trade).
Game Day

Two American football superstars tell a story of brotherly love, perseverance and teamwork as each helps the other succeed. Readers get a good feel for the game of football and learn that it isn’t only those who score touchdowns who win. (Team 3)


The Gruesome Guide to World Monsters
Judy Sierra. Ill. Henrik Drescher.

How do you protect yourself from a sisiutl? Read this book to be safe! Based on monster folklore around the world, it shares a gruesomeness rating, description, and survival tip for encounters with 63 monsters. Short passages will hook readers. (Team 3)


Judy Moody Declares Independence
Megan McDonald. Ill. Peter H. Reynolds.

Judy Moody is caught by the founding fathers’ spirit of revolution after her visit to Boston. Young readers greatly enjoy Judy’s declaration: Freedom from brushing her hair and from little brothers. The book helps children make connections with this historical event. (Team 5)


Legends in Sports: Babe Ruth
Matt Christopher. Ill. with photographs.

Babe Ruth never lost sight of the fact that baseball was a game to be played and enjoyed. Christopher has documented this in kid-friendly language as he describes Ruth’s life, spirit and integrity. (Team 1)


The Liberation of Gabriel King
K.L. Going.

Frita Wilson works hard to help her friend Gabe to overcome the fear of bullies in fifth grade. This is an inspiring story about friendship and understanding between an African American girl and a white boy. (Team 5)

TIPS FOR PARENTS, PRIMARY CAREGIVERS, AND EDUCATORS

Initial book activities
One of the easiest ways to begin telling the story of a book is through the use of illustrations. Most books for young children are illustrated in great detail, and noting important details related to the characters, plot, and setting will provide a wholesome first literacy activity.

• Set aside a regular time and place for books so that reading books becomes as natural as eating and sleeping.
• Browse through books to help the child become familiar with books and how they are handled.
• Read the story while the child points to the pictures. Adult and child can repeat interesting sounds, repetitive word patterns, and distinctive word features to the delight of both.
• Have the child tell the story using the illustrations, while the adult reinforces the telling. The two can predict outcomes, discuss how the characters feel, and relate the events to their own experiences.
• Read the book to the child and enjoy it together. Retell the story together and talk about the characters, setting, plot, and life experiences.
• Compare the similarities and differences of children’s books available as video productions.
• Have children make responses to the books read through art reproductions such as drawings, or by using clay, papier-mâché, dioramas, or fingerpaints.
• Make regular trips to the library and attend storytelling sessions. Visit bookstores together to begin a personal library for a child.

Beginning reading-level activities
Children at this level should be encouraged to browse through books and pretend to read the story, an initial step toward becoming an independent reader. Children may tell the story to themselves or attempt to read frequently highlighted words.

• Read the story as the child points to the pictures on each page.
• Let the child pretend to read the story as the adult points to the pictures.
• Read alternate pages, ask each other questions, and discuss the story. The adult models what he or she thinks of when reading the page so the child gets a variety of perspectives on the ways words have different meanings.
• Use computer programs to expand a child’s interest in specific topics and to provide valuable information for later curriculum study.
• Compare and contrast video adaptations of children’s books for this and more advanced literacy levels.

Primary-grade book activities

• Continue to spend time reading with the child; set aside a specific time and place.
• Be familiar with Children’s Choices books and other high-quality children’s literature.
• Become aware of the interests of your children and books that extend life experiences so they know what happens in the world around them.
• Encourage children to share books read in school with parents and caregivers at home. Parents and caregivers should encourage children to share books they’ve read at home with their teachers and schoolmates.
• Continue to extend the information and knowledge bases through computer programs and other technology that capitalize on topics initiated through reading.

Independent reader activities

• Challenge readers to compare and contrast books.
• Encourage children to develop an interest in a variety of genres such as biography, historical fiction, and poetry.
• Encourage children to read books related to beginning career and vocational choices.
• Seek a balance between school book activities, home and school literature activities, and familiarity with newspapers, magazines, and other text media that address contemporary social, cultural, and civic issues.

Develop the desire to be a lifelong reader

• Have students bring what is read to bear on what is viewed on film, television, and computer and other media technologies.
• View technology in the reflection of the literature.
• Keep in mind that the most memorable conversations are often filled with anecdotes from literature.
• Relate what has been read to the solution of problems. By internalizing what has been read, we use knowledge and wisdom to solve personal problems, to make significant decisions related to career choices, to find solutions to community and social problems, and to develop healthy attitudes toward a positive world environment.

IRA/CBC Liaison Committee
Teri S. Lesesne, 2005-2006 Cochair
Terry Borzumato, 2005-2006 Cochair
Mallory vs. Max
Laurie Friedman. Ill. Tamara Schmitz.

Mallory worries that her brother’s dog will overshadow her cat. The illustrator’s fun style and the big print of the text add to readers’ enjoyment of the story. (Team 5)


Mercy Watson to the Rescue
Kate DiCamillo. Ill. Chris Van Dusen.

Mercy is the beloved pet of the Watsons. When the Watsons are in trouble, Mercy runs out to find buttery toast and cookies. Mercy rescues his masters when he is simply doing what a lovable pig does best. (Team 5)


Morgy Coast to Coast
Maggie Lewis. Ill. Michael Chesworth.

Morgy has to cope with moving from California to Massachusetts. This is a warm and fun story about how Morgy tries to care for a greyhound and learn how to play trumpet as he deals with life in fourth grade. (Team 5)

Houghton Mifflin Company. 132 pp. US$15.00 (trade).

Paint Me a Poem: Poems Inspired by Masterpieces of Art
Justine Rowden. Ill. by the author.

Readers get a personal tour of 14 exceptional paintings from the National Gallery of Art in Washington along with an opportunity to see how one poet used a variety of styles to interpret them. (Team 3)

Boyds Mills Press. 32 pp. US$16.95 (trade).

Police Dogs
Frances E. Ruffin. Ill. with photographs.

This nonfiction book is filled with facts and photographic illustrations explaining how police dogs help in law enforcement. After taking the “puppy test” to determine if they will make good police dogs, they are specially trained to join in catching criminals. (Team 4)

Bearport Publishing. 32 pp. US$23.96 (library).

Runny Babbit: A Billy Sook
Shel Silverstein. Ill. by the author.

Nonsensical word play will entice readers to try reading this poetry aloud. A simple switch in the beginning letters of certain words makes language fun and the resulting sounds smile-crackingly funny. (Team 3)

Thanksgiving Day Crafts
Arlene and Herbert Erlbach. Ill. with photographs.
Children will be pleased to find a book of crafts that are pretty and easy to make. Pumpkin napkin rings for the Thanksgiving dinner and a glitter globe brighten up the dark winter days. (Team 5)
Enslow Publishers. 32 pp. US$22.60 (library).

TIME for Kids: Jackie Robinson: Strong Inside and Out
The editors of TIME for Kids with Denise Lewis Patrick. Ill. with photographs.
This book will appeal to young readers simply for the content matter. It provides children with a well-written and pictorial account of Jackie Robinson’s life and accomplishments. (Team 2)

Very Funny Elizabeth!
Valerie Tripp. Ill. Dan Andreasen.
Colonial American girls Felicity and Elizabeth have a new adventure, until their pranks land them in hot water. Children will connect with the book, seeing that children of all eras have been forever playing pranks on others. (Team 2)

Walter the Giant Storyteller’s Giant Book of Giant Stories
Using both tall-tale and fairy-tale giants, this book tells short stories from each giant’s point of view. The author provides personality and humor for each of the characters as they plead their case to the readers. (Team 2)

Walter, the Story of a Rat
Barbara Wersba. Ill. Donna Diamond.
Walter is a lonely but literate rat. He lives in the home of Miss Pomeroy, an elderly, reclusive children’s book author. A quiet friendship develops between the writer and this furry reader as they pen notes back and forth. (Team 3)
Front Street Books. 64 pp. US$16.95 (trade).

Wild Dogs: Past and Present
Kelly Milner Halls. Ill. with photographs.
This nonfiction book is beautifully photographed with information on dogs from prehistoric times until today. Readers will enjoy looking at and learning about the fascinating world of wild dogs. (Team 2)
Darby Creek. 64 pp. US$18.95 (trade). CAN$28.95.

Advanced readers

Abner and Me
Dan Gutman.
Accompanied by his mother, Joe Stoshack time travels to the middle of the U.S. Civil War to meet Abner Doubleday and discover whether he invented baseball. Then the pair attempts to alter history and save President Abraham Lincoln. (Team 4)

Bone #1: Out From Boneville
Jeff Smith. Ill. by the author.
The first book of this humorous full-color graphic novel series describes the misadventures of the three Bone cousins, as they explore a forested valley populated with frightening creatures. As the plot unfolds, the Bones meet strange characters and forces of evil. (Team 4)

Capt. Hook: The Adventures of a Notorious Youth
This action-packed adventure is the story of Captain Hook’s childhood and his search for Neverland with
his best friend Jolly R. and a pet spider. The trio must overcome societal expectations, rules, and injustice to pursue their dreams. (Team 3)


Clarice Bean Spells Trouble
Lauren Child. Ill. by the author.
Clarice Bean has big plans to be discovered in the school play. But then Mrs. Wilberton announces a spelling bee, and Clarice lands in a load of trouble. Readers learn that sometimes bad luck isn’t so bad after all. (Team 3)


Clemency Pogue: Fairy Killer
J.T. Petty. Ill. by Will Davis.
This story is one of a child’s redemption. Clemency unwittingly kills good fairies in her quest to rid herself of one bad fairy. Now, to make things right, she must try to correct her misdeeds. Children will love the plot and humor in this fanciful story. (Team 2)

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 120 pp. US$9.95 (trade).

Confessions of a Closet Catholic
Sarah Darer Littman.
Justine wants to give up her Jewish faith and be like her Catholic friend, Mary Catherine. But family ties become significant when her much-loved grandmother dies. To honor her memory, Justine has to find her own Judaism. (Team 1)


Dale Earnhardt, Jr.: Born to Race
Ken Garfield. Ill. with photographs.
NASCAR enthusiasts learn how legends are created when reading about Dale Earnhardt, Jr.’s climb to fame. He began with sweeping floors, then gained car racing experience over time. Thorough knowledge is imperative when survival depends on the right split-second decision. (Team 3)


Each Little Bird That Sings
Deborah Wiles.
Comfort’s family business has helped her devise the Top Ten Tips for First-rate Funeral Behavior (e.g., what casseroles not to bring), but it hasn’t helped her with the crises she faces with her cousin and her best friend. (Team 4)


Egyptian Diary: The Journal of Nakht
This story takes place in 1465 B.C. as a family moves to Memphis, Egypt. The perspective is that of a 9-year-old boy named Nakht. Nakht and his sister Tamyt visit the royal palace in Thebes and finally get to meet the king. Read about their adventures. (Team 2)


The Emerald Wand of Oz
This book transports the reader back to the enchanted land of Oz, but it is a much different Oz than the one to which Dorothy traveled. Two girls named Dori and Em will try to save Oz from yet another wicked witch. (Team 2)


High Rhulain
Brian Jacques.
Tiria, an ottermaid, goes on a quest and follows in the steps of the High Rhulain, the otter queen. This is another high-adventure book in the Redwall series. (Team 5)

Magyk: Septimus Heap Book One
Angie Sage.
This story of a baby switch is complete with midwives, wizards, witches, spells, and mischief. It is a fun read full of imagination and intrigue. Students will enjoy getting to know Sage’s characters. (Team 2)

May Bird and the Ever After: Book One
Shy May is lured to a forbidding lake after finding an old, mysterious letter. When she is dragged down through the water into the Ever After she must battle disturbing creatures that could prevent her from returning home. (Team 3)

The Mistmantle Chronicles Book One: Urchin of the Riding Stars
M.I. McAllister.
Urchin, a foundling, was found on the shore of Mistmantle Island. Leaving the peaceful life of his adopted parents, Urchin is caught in the intrigue of the court when the King’s son is murdered. (Team 5)

Molly Moon’s Hypnotic Time Travel Adventure
Georgia Byng. Ill. Mark Zug.
Molly’s time travels take her to India in the late 1800s. The high-speed novel fascinates readers as the nasty Maharaja of Waqt sets about kidnapping Molly at ages 10, 6, and 3, and as a baby. (Team 5)

Princess From Another Planet
Mindy Schanback.
Being 14 and poor is hard enough, but for Gracie the real challenge is the fact that her mother thinks she is a queen from another planet. Wild events show her that her family really is “out of this world.” (Team 3)

Ranger’s Apprentice Book One: The Ruins of Gorlan
John Flanagan.
Will wants to attend Battleschool to serve the kingdom. His small size leads him to be assigned as a Ranger’s apprentice. His bravery and skills eventually fulfill his dream of protecting the kingdom. (Team 5)

The Scarecrow and His Servant
Philip Pullman. Ill. Peter Bailey.
This scarecrow is not from a cornfield in Oz. He is from a real cornfield, but he springs to life and goes on many dangerous adventures. The biggest danger is from a family that the reader is sure to find exciting. (Team 2)

The Silent Stranger: A Kaya Mystery
Janet Shaw.
This American Girl adventure is about a young Nez Perce Indian girl named Kaya. She finds a stranger with injured hands. Her encounter with this stranger takes Kaya down a different path than she would have otherwise taken. Kaya shows courage and triumph in this moving story. (Team 2)
The Silver Spoon of Solomon Snow
Kaye Umansky.

*Solly Snow, an abandoned orphan, takes off to find his real parents. The only clue he has is a mysterious silver spoon that came with him years ago. (Team 5)*


Spy Force Mission: In Search of the Time and Space Machine
Deborah Abela. Ill. George O’Connor.

An 11-year old girl discovers boredom is the least of her problems during the summer she spends at her aunt’s farm. Her secret-agent stories take on a new reality when she happens upon a real spy ring. This story is the ultimate thriller for our age. (Team 1)


Three of Diamonds: Three Diamond Brothers Mysteries
Anthony Horowitz.

*This book provides three different mysteries. Young brothers Tim and Nick lead the reader through exciting, edge-of-your-seat, can’t-put-the-book-down adventures that are sure to appeal to children and keep them guessing. (Team 2)*


Toad Heaven
Morris Gleitzman.

*This stirring saga of a toad’s dream is the second adventure for Limp. He longs for a safe place where cane toads can live. As he struggles through mishap after mishap, he finds his piece of heaven in the murky swamp. (Team 4)*


Wizardology: The Book of the Secrets of Merlin
Dugald A. Steer. Ill. Anne Yvonne Gilbert, John Howe, and Helen Ward.

*This book is chock full of information presented in somewhat old English. The fascinating thing about this book is all the manipulatives it has on each page. These manipulatives give added depth to the spells, diagrams, and ultimately to the learning. (Team 2)*

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