



2001

Washington Children's Choice Picture Book Award Nominees and Activities



Amelia and Eleanor Go For a Ride

by Pam Munoz Ryan, illustrated by Brian Sleznick

One evening in April 1933, Amelia Earhart and Eleanor Roosevelt stole away from a White House dinner, commandeered an airplane and took off on a glorious adventure over Washington D.C. - while still dressed in their glamorous evening gowns! Brian Sleznick's graphite and colored pencil drawings illustrate this story, inspired by fact, shared by two strong-minded, outspoken, and courageous women in our history.



Activity: *used with permission from Peggy Sharp

- ➔ The women in this book pursued their goals, both of which had something to do with being in the clouds. Readers can identify their own goals and dreams using a cloud metaphor.

Either have the students draw cloud shapes or make a master for them. On the cloud shape write: "Goal" and "Steps to accomplish the goal." Students complete the information on the shapes with their personal goals: encourage them to identify both short term and long term goals. Remind them to think carefully about what they can do to help themselves achieve their goals. On a piece of light blue construction paper, they paste a picture of their face - students can either draw a self portrait or use an enlarged copy of their school picture. They then paste the cloud-shaped goals around their head to represent their goals, the lofty aspirations. Discuss how their heads may be "in the clouds" but the steps needed to accomplish their goals have their feet firmly planted on the ground.

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Axle Annie

by Robin Pulver, illustrated by Tedd Arnold

Axle Annie is the best school bus driver in Burskyville--especially when it comes to driving her bus up snow-covered Tiger Hill, the toughest slope in town. Because of Annie, the superintendent never has to declare a snow day. That's just why grouchy bus driver, Shifty Rhodes, hatches a plot to stop Axle Annie in her tracks!



Activity:

- ➔ Have students interview their bus driver and ask them the following questions (or brainstorm a list of questions the student's think are important.

1. Do you like being a bus driver?
2. What is your favorite part about being a bus driver?
3. Do you like driving in snow?
4. What would you (the bus driver) do if you had a problem similar to Annie's?

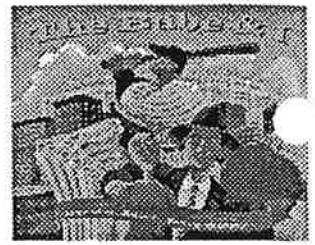
Instruct the students to end the interview stating whether they would like to be a bus driver and why or why not.

➔ Maps: Get a map of your school district. Give a copy to your bus riders, plus a red marker and have students draw their bus route on the map. Give a map to the walkers and have them draw their route walking home.

Babe and I

by David Adler, illustrated by Terry Widener

It's 1932 and everyone is struggling through the Great Depression. When the resourceful young narrator of this story discovers that his father is jobless, he decides to become a newsie. He and his friend Jacob figure how to sell more papers than the other kids. Business is soon booming and, thanks to the Babe, they even get a chance to see a Yankees game



Activity: EARL's Reading 3.1 , 3.3 Social Studies 1.1 Writing 3.

Brainstorm some ways that you might make extra money, either to help your family as the boy in this story did, or to save for something special. Take notes.

- ✦ What kinds of jobs are there for a kid your age?
- ✦ What might you be good at doing?
- ✦ What would you need to get set up in your business?
- ✦ The boy in the story found that using his neighbor's baby carriage helped him sell more papers. Would you need any special equipment to make your job better? Would you have to borrow or rent it as the boy in the story did?
- ✦ He had an amazing dream come true as a result of his job (selling a paper to Babe Ruth and making enough money to buy tickets to a game for himself and his friend Jacob). Imagine what could happen in your wildest dreams while you are doing your job - for example, your favorite TV star comes to town and one of them needs to have his dog walked...

Write a story of your perfect day on the job!

Bad Case of Stripes

by David Shannon

Obsessed with what people think about her, a young girl contracts an ailment that literally turns her into whatever anyone--classmates, doctors, etc.--decides she should be. With a little help, she learns the secret of accepting her true self, in spite of her peculiar ailment.



Activity: 6+1 Traits™ Writing connections: Ideas, Presentation

1. Camilla loved lima beans, but her friends didn't. Do a class survey to find out who likes lima beans and graph the results. Are there any other foods that many don't like?
2. Read the biography of David Shannon on Scholastic's web site: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/authorsandbooks/authors/shannon/bio.htm>
3. Examine the illustrations to watch how Camilla changes as she is more and more influenced by those around her. Notice how you can still see her facial features even when she 'becomes one with the room'.
4. While this is a farfetched story, peer pressure and conforming is a real problem. What influences your students and perhaps has them do things they don't really want to do? Have the students draw self-portraits to illustrate.

Cook-a-Doodle-Do!

by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel

With the questionable help of his friends, Big Brown Rooster manages to bake a strawberry shortcake which would have pleased his great-grandmother, Little Red Hen. Will they finish cooking a meal before Pig gobbles up all the ingredients in this book loaded with puns, nonsense and farmyard fun?



Activity:

1. Compare and contrast the original story of the Little Red Hen and this 'sequel'. Consider their names, animals involved, and the amount of help each of the main characters received. Does Iguana remind the students of Amelia Bedelia?
2. Illustrators often use different materials to create their illustrations. Visit Janet Steven's web site <http://www.janetstevens.com/> to learn how she use a computer to create this book! Also look at the author information on the back flap about the creation of the paper it was printed on.
3. Make the strawberry shortcake.
4. Create a classroom cookbook of recipes from the student's grandmothers.

Each One Special

by Frieda Wishinsky, illustrated by Zimmerman

Ben's pal Harry is a cake decorator extraordinaire, revered for his fabulous creations. Every cake is a work of art; no two are alike. Harry loves every minute of his job. But one day the bakery is sold and the new owners don't want Harry or his unique creations. They want lots and fast, not different and special. Despondent, Harry accepts his forced retirement and sinks into a chair in front of the TV. Ben, however, is not about to see Harry become a couch potato. When his first efforts at clay modeling fail, Ben seeks out Harry's advice, determined to help his older friend discover another outlet for his amazing talent.



Activity: EARLS: Reading 2.1, 2.2, 3.1

Think about these topics for discussion:

1. Inter-generational friendships
2. Senior Citizen partnerships
3. Grandparent's Day
4. Careers
5. Diversification of jobs

Writing 2.2 Art 1.2, 1.4

Try these projects:

1. Bakeries - visit one, then write thank-you notes
2. Decorate cookies with frosting tubes after sharing the story
3. Pass out modeling clay and create
4. Next week - share craft books from the nonfiction section

Easy Work: an Old Tale

by Eric A. Kimmel, illustrated by Andrew Glass

Mr. and Mrs. McTeague have decided to change jobs for a day because Mr. McTeague is sure that minding the house chores and child all day is "easy work". He's going to quickly finish off the few household chores while Mrs. McTeague goes off to the woods to do the real work. It will be practically like a day off for him!! Or will it? Each shortcut Mr. McTeague tries leads to a progressively bigger disaster. When Mrs. McTeague returns from her day in the woods the house has burned to the ground, the cow has run off and Mr. McTeague has decided that it was not such "easy work" after all.



Activity:

Listen to "Little Brown Jug" tune.

After singing the version Mr. McTeague played on his banjo (see below) ask the students to write the verse he would sing at the end of the day or the verse Mrs. McTeague could sing about the disaster.

"I work my fingers to the bone.
Mother sits at home alone.
Loafs around the livelong day.
Mighty easy work, I say."

"Ha, ha, ha! I do say.
Women's work is child's play.
Ha, ha, ha! I can see
That's the kind-of work for me!"

Gingerbread Baby

by Jan Brett

Gingerbread Baby is a delicious twist to a favorite old tale. It all begins when Matti opens the oven too soon and out jumps a cheeky little Gingerbread Baby. He leads Matti's mother and father, the dog and the cat, and a whole colorful cast of characters on a rollicking chase through the village and into the forest, staying just out of reach, daring them to catch him all along the way. The expressive human and animal forms carry this rollicking tale along to its surprise conclusion.



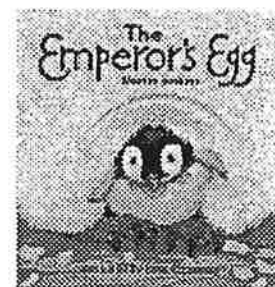
Activity: EALRS: 1. Writing 2.2 (Creative Dramatics alternative Art 1.1) 2. Art 4.1

1. Create a "_____Elementary School Gingerbread Boy" book. As a whole class brainstorm the basic elements of the story: Our classroom will bake the gingerbread boy (baby, girl, pancake....) It will run away. Where in the school (or in the neighborhood) will it run ? Who will chase after it at each stop along the way? /Who is the trickiest person in the school--who will be "the fox"? Will our boy/baby get eaten in the end? When plot outline is complete, students can write and illustrate story either individual or in groups. Final product could be a multimedia presentation such as Slide Show. Creative Dramatic version: Final product will be a multimedia product will be an enactment of the story.
2. Create a peekaboo gingerbread baby illustration. If your school has a die-cut machine and if one of the dies is a gingerbread boy, make one die cut per student on brown construction paper. Students will illustrate their favorite part of the story on a separate sheet of paper using whatever media the teacher chooses. Then the rectangle or square containing the negative of the die (which will be the same size as the illustration) will be placed on top of the illustration and hinged at the bottom or side to create a peekaboo effect.

Emperor's Egg

by Martin Jenkins, illustrated by Chapman

Martin Jenkins, a Conservation Biologist, introduces young children to numerous astonishing facts about the Emperor penguin. Using engaging and lively language, he describes their physical features, diet, and behaviors. Children will be intrigued to learn how female Emperor penguins lay their eggs in Antarctica during the winter and father penguins keep the eggs warm for two entire months until they hatch.

**Activity:**

1. Discuss nonfiction is sometimes illustrated with photographs and at other times with drawings or painting. Find photographs of Emperor penguins to show how Jane Chapman has accurately presented them.
2. Prior to reading the book, have students brainstorm and web their knowledge of penguins. After listening to the book, have them create a new web to illustrate what they have learned. Discuss their misconceptions about penguins.
3. Model how to use the index found on the back end page. Invite students to select topics of interest and then read the corresponding pages to find the desired information.
4. Discuss the two different types of print used in the book. Help students see the effect of using both types of print. Do the same thing with the different font sizes.
5. Encourage students to learn about other types of penguins by reading books such as Penguins by Gail Gibbons, on-line sources, and reference books. Then, create a data retrieval chart to compare and contrast the different types of penguins. Topics may include size, home, food, and hatching/chick rearing.

Honk!

by Pamela Duncan Edwards, illustrated by Cole

A lighthearted, winning tale of a wannabe-ballerina named Mimi, whose dream is to attend a ballet at the Paris Opera House. Trouble is, she's a swan, and all her efforts to gain entry are greeted with an angry "no birds allowed!" Mimi shows great determination and wins acclaim when she manages to join the other dancers in a performance of Swan Lake

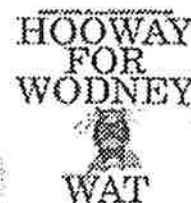
**Activity:** EARLS: Reading 3.1 Art 2.1, 4.1

1. Research swans. Why are they considered graceful birds?
2. Listen to the music "Swan Lake" by Peter Tchaikovsky and/or watch excerpts from the ballet "Swan Lake" on video.
3. Ask an older ballet student in intermediate, middle or high school to demonstrate some ballet moves such as pirouettes and plies for your students.

Supplemental Books:Hen Lake by Mary Jane AuchSwans by Lynn StonePeeping Beauty by Mary Jane AuchIf You Were a Ballet Dancer by Virginia SchompSwan Lake by Rachel IsadoraThe Ugly Duckling by H.C. Andersen; illus. by Jerry Pinkney

Hooway for Wodney Wat

by Helen Lester, illustrated by Lynn Munsinger



Poor Rodney Rat cannot pronounce his r's, and the other rodents tease him mercilessly. All of the rodents in school became afraid when Camilla Capybara joins their class. She announces she is bigger, meaner, and smarter than the rest of them. It is Rodney's speech that saves his classmates from this new bully and gives him a new found confidence.

Activity:

1. Ask the children to imagine they are rodents and to discuss how they could show they are Wodney's friends even before Camilla goes west.
2. Invite student to learn about Helen Lester by reading her autobiography: Author: A True Story.
3. Read other books by Helen Lester and look for common themes and ways the books relate to one another. Some of her other books include: Tacky the Penguin; Three Cheers for Tacky; Tacky and the Emperor; Tacky in Trouble, Listen, Buddy, A Porcupine Named Fluffy; and Me First.

Horace and Morris but Mostly Dolores

by James Howe, illustrated by Amy Walrod

Horace, Morris and Dolores are fast friends, that is, they were until the day that Horace and Morris decided to join a "no girls allowed" club. Dolores reluctantly strikes out on her own and joins a girls-only club. The friends finally come to their senses (joined by new pals Chloris and Boris) and form an "everyone invited" club.



Activity: EALR's: Math 4.1, 4.2, 4.3

- ✦ Horace, Morris, and Delores had fun doing things together. They were friends because they shared many of the same interests. After reading the story use it as a way to introduce the concept of data collection and the illustration of data using diagrams and graphs. Brainstorm with your class a list of common interests and activities enjoyed by students their age. Conduct a survey to find out exactly how many students enjoy or participate in each of the activities that have been listed. Write down the survey results. Demonstrate how to chart the data using column graphs, bar graphs, line graphs, pie charts, or Venn diagrams. Have each student or small groups of students create their own surveys about items of interest such as favorite color, dessert, ice cream flavor, etc. Instruct each group to collect and record data for their survey and then illustrate the results using whatever style of graph or chart you have taught or instructed them to use. Share the survey results and graphs with the class and bind them together into a class book entitled: "Things Our Class Likes."
- ✦ Another activity would be for individuals or small groups to invent their own "club" based on favorite interests. Students would have to create a name for the club, a motto or goal for the club, a logo, a list of rules, and suggested club activities. A clubhouse could also be designed and either drawn or constructed as a model.

John Willy and Freddy McGee

by Holly Meade

Guinea pigs John Willy and Freddy McGee find their seemingly perfect life "BOR-ING." So when the cage door is left open, they make a run for it, chasing through the house, until "with a grunt and a squeak, they climbed up and into the pool table!" With its many holes and tunnels, the pool table seems like guinea pig heaven until the family cat begins batting the balls into the pockets, frightening the intruders away and back to their cage—but not for long.



Activity: EALR's: Geography 1.1

After sharing this story use it as a way to introduce or review basic map skills with your primary students. Together as a class make a list of the rooms mentioned or shown in the story. Also make a list of the important objects mentioned such as John Willy and Freddy McGee's cage, hassock, dining table, etc. On a board, overhead, or large sheet of paper draw a simple outline map of the house that John Willy and Freddy McGee live in. Have students help locate and identify the position of the various rooms and objects. Don't forget to discuss and label the four basic directions: North, South, East, West, or perhaps include a compass rose on your map. After the map has been drawn have students discuss and trace the path that John Willy and Freddy McGee took on their adventure. The tracing of JW and FM's path could be done as a whole class or students could be given a photocopy of the map outline and be asked to fill in details and indicate the path of the adventure individually. As a further activity students could be given a photocopy of the map outline and be asked to fill in details and draw a path that JW and FM might have taken on their second adventure. These maps would then be shared with the class. This could of course lead to a writing activity in which students describe "The Further Adventures of John Willy and Freddy McGee." For an additional map activity students could be asked to draw a simple map of their own home and show a path that a personal pet might take on an adventure through their own house. This could lead to the writing of an original adventure story.

Lost and Found

by Mark Teague

Wendell and Floyd team up in another lusciously illustrated adventure by Mark Teague. When Wendell, Floyd, and Mona search through the lost-and-found bin, they are sucked into a deep cave filled with all kinds of lost items, including mummies and dinosaur bones. Will they ever find Mona's lucky hat and make it safely back to school?



Activity:

- ➔ Using the blackline master play the "Lost and Found Game" in groups of 2-4 players. Make as many copies of the game as you need, mount it on colored paper and laminate to preserve. You will also need a pair of dice for each team of players and something to move around the board.

Mole Music

by David McPhail

Mole spends his days alone until one night on television he hears someone playing a violin. He sends away for a violin of his own. As he learns to play, from the first screech to the beautiful symphony of sounds he practices, the underground practice has far-reaching above ground effects. These can be seen only to the reader in the illustrations.



Activity:

1. Make a musical instrument collage in the style of Matisse.
2. Thumb nail sketches of a sequence of events. Talk to the students about thumb nail sketches, how the sketch on the verso of the title page and how it relates to the story.
3. Listening activity: Check a variety of CDs from the library that feature violin music in different styles, from old time fiddling to symphony so that students have an awareness of what violin music sounds like.

Northwest Animal Babies

by Andrea Helman, illustrated by Wolfe

Fabulous up-close photos introduce some of the baby animals found in the Pacific Northwest, including raccoon kits, a bison calf, grey wolf pups, Coho salmon fry, Western Sandpiper chicks, and a cougar kitten. . Animal lovers won't be able to resist this natural history treat, with photos that catch animal babies in their most endearing poses.



Activity: EALRS: 1. Reading 2.1 2.2 1.5 2. Art 1.1 1.3 4.1 Writing 2.2

1. Research for nonreaders or beginning readers: Teacher/Librarian prepares by making a list of animal babies for which there is pictorial information in the library, then gather the materials together. Each student will be assigned an animal baby and given the appropriate materials. Students will be asked to find out the name of the baby and tell something that particular baby does. Even if they are unable to read the text, they should be able to gain information from the pictures. Adults or older students can take dictation from the students (post-it notes work great). Students illustrate their baby animal on the given blackline master. Students could be paired up for the activity or it could be done in a large group then later each student select animal from the group information and complete the activity.
2. Animals in my Neighborhood Mural: As a large group students brainstorm a list of animals that live in their neighborhood. (Decide ahead of time whether you want to include pets) Each student will be assigned an animal to "research" as to appearance and habitat. Students will then create their animal using a variety of media, my suggestion would be construction paper collage. A separate group of students will create a butcher paper background or habitat. More advanced students can write a paragraph describing where and when they see that animal in their neighborhood relating any stories they have heard about that animal in their neighborhood.

Stella Louella's Runaway Book

by Lisa Campbell Ernst



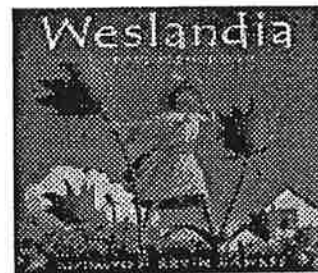
As she tries to find the book that she must return to the library that day, Stella gathers a growing group of people who have all enjoyed reading the book. In this cumulative tale all join in the fun of trying to find the book. When they all arrive at the library the librarian has a surprise for all.

Activity:

- ➔ After sharing the book with your class have the students write or draw the story of their own runaway book on the blackline master.

Weslandia

Paul Fleischman, illustrated by Hawkes



Wesley is a studious loner. Like many studious loners, he is clever. With a little magical help, his summer project blossoms - literally - into his own civilization dubbed, "Weslandia." This alternate world is thoroughly beguiling - even to former tormentors.

Activity:

- ➔ Share the book with your students and discuss what are basic conditions for civilization (define civilization). Using the blackline master have them write what they think are the four basics for civilization.

Wolf!

by Becky Bloom, illustrated by Biet



With a pinch of the tongue-in-cheek and a pound of perseverance, this droll wolf story is a charmer. When a hungry, itinerant wolf decides to make a meal of some barnyard animals, he finds that they won't even look up from their books....The wry humor of both text and illustrations wisely offsets the book's underlying message about the determination needed to learn to read well..

Activity: EALRS: Reading 4.3 Writing 1.1, 2.1, 2.2

Reading Posters:

Students can create reading posters to advertise the importance of reading. Messages and phrases about the importance of reading everyday and not giving up would be the highlight of the posters. Posters may be displayed around the school and in the library. Sample message: "Read Every Chance You Get!."

Supplemental Books: These books have the underlining message of determination and perseverance of learning to read well:

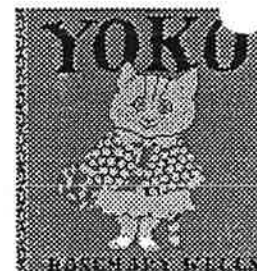
More Than Anything Else by Marie Bradby

Tomas and the Library Lady by Pat Mora

Thank You, Mr. Falker by Patricia Polacco

Yoko

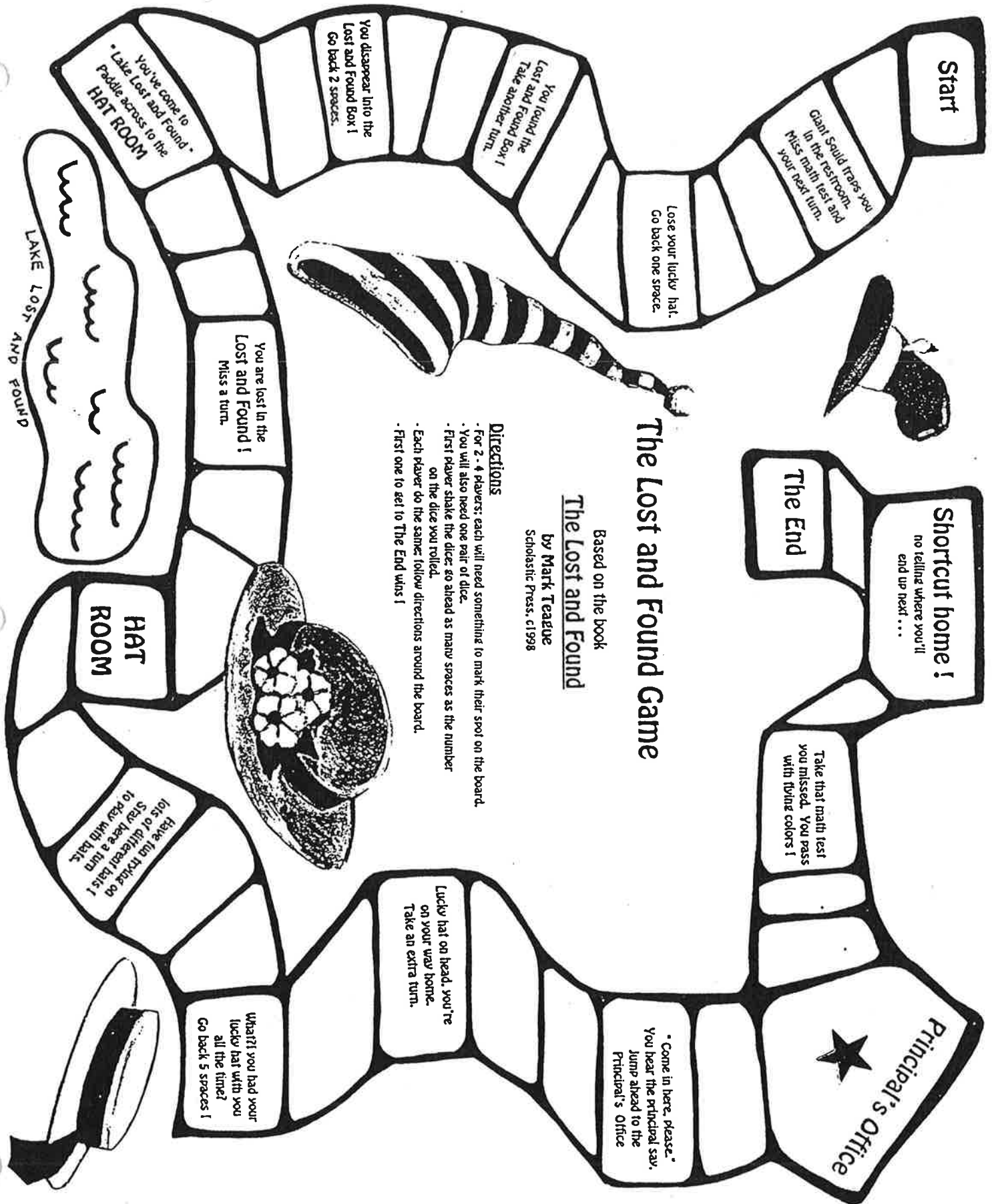
by Rosemary Wells



A thoughtful teacher, a hungry friend, and International Food Day solve little Yoko's dilemma when her classmates begin making fun of her sushi lunch she so eagerly brings to school.

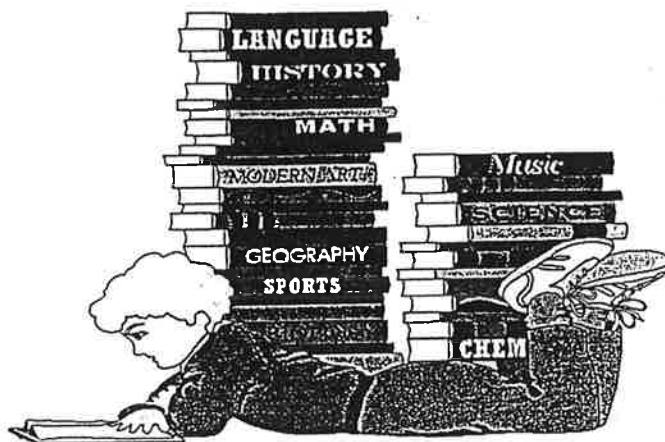
Activity:

1. The students can tell about a food or dish they thought they weren't going to like, but ended up liking. Or just the opposite, where they thought they were going to like the food, but didn't when they tasted it.
2. The students can create a T-chart. The name of the food goes at the top of the T. On the left side have students write adjectives describing how they thought the particular food was going to taste. ON the right side, students list adjectives describing how the food actually tasted.
3. The students can work with a partner and create a menu for a meal they would both like to eat. Have them consider the main entree, dessert, and beverage. They could include the four food groups or use the food pyramid.
4. The students can make a fold-out book (instructions for constructing book included in this packet). They can draw a picture (or cut out photos from magazines) of one favorite food on each page. Write name of the food and one adjective to describe it. Must use a different adjective for each item. Share with a friend, remembering to respect others' likes and dislikes.



A baby _____ is called a _____

A _____ (Name of baby animal) _____ something particular the baby animal does...)



Stella Louella's Runaway Book
By
Lisa Campbell Ernst

Write or draw the story of
your runaway book.





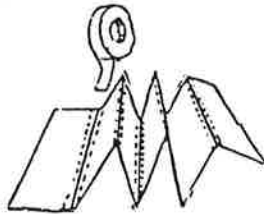
Weslandia
by
Paul Fleischman

**WHAT ARE THE 4
BASICS FOR
CIVILIZATION?**

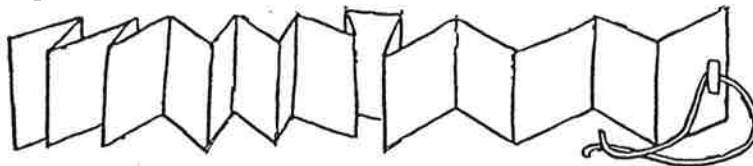


Fold-Out Book Directions

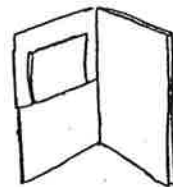
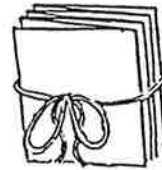
1. Arrange several pieces of the same-sized construction paper in a row. These will be the pages of the book.
2. Tape the pages together along the edges of the paper.



3. Fold the pages together accordion style.



4. Cut a piece of yarn long enough to tie around the folded book pages, and tape it to the back of the book. Tie the yarn at the front of the book to keep the pages together.



**Library or
School Name:**

District:

Town:

Washington Children's Choice Picture Book Award

2001 Ballot

Title	Tally	Total
Amelia and Eleanor go for a Ride		
Axle Annie		
The Babe and I		
A Bad Case of Stripes		
Cook-a-doodle-doo!		
Each One Special		
Easy Work: an old tale		
The Emperor's Egg		
Gingerbread Baby		
Honk!		
Hooway for Wodney Wat		
Horace and Morris but mostly Dolores		
John Willy and Freddy McGee		
The Lost and Found		
Mole Music		
Northwest Animal Babies		
Stella Louella's Runaway Book		
Weslandia		
Wolf!		
Yoko		
	Total Votes	

Please mail this ballot by April 1, 2001 to:

Kristin Galante

C/o WCCPBA

P.O. Box 16084

Seattle, WA 98116

Or email results (include school name, district and city) in the above title order to:

galantek@edmonds.wednet.edu

❖ Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for results or check WLMA webpage mid-April

Reading Levels and Lexile Levels for 2001 WCCPBA using Accelerated Reader and Reading Counts!

As of June 29, 2000

Title	Author	AR Level (ATOS)	RC Level	RC Lexile
Amelia and Eleanor go for a ride	Ryan	4.2	3.4	600
Axle Annie	Pulver	3.6		
Babe and I	Adler	3.2		
Bad case of stripes	Shannon	3.8	3.5	540
Cook-a-doodle-do	Stevens	2.7	2.8	420
Each one special	Wishinsky	2.7	1.8	280
Easy work: an old tale	Kimmel	3.5	2.8	530
Emperor's egg	Jenkins	4.1		
Gingerbread baby	Brett	3.5	2.0	430
Honk!	Edwards	2.5	2.8	280
Hooway for Wodney Wat	Lester	3.1	2.5	360
Horace and Morris but mostly Delores	Howe	2.6	2.1	410
John Willy and Freddy McGee	Meade	2.8	2.1	580
Lost and found	Teague	2.7	4.2	420
Mole music	McPhail	2.7	2.8	380
Northwest animal babies	Helman	4.6		
Stella Louella's runaway book	Ernst	3.7	3.9	640
Weslandia	Fleischman	4.8	3.5	820
Wolf!	Bloom	3.5		
Yoko	Wells	.9	2.5	470

- ➡ A special thanks for all the WCCPBA committe members for creating the activities that accompany this year's titles: Jerry Allridge, Pat Bliquez, Barb Engvall, Kay Evey, Kristin Galante, Carol Hattemer, Ann Hill, Jennifer Nelson, Mary Lynn Potter, Marilyn Rottle, Karen Rucker, Pat Youngman Smith, Terry Young
- ➡ We want to give extra special thanks to Shields Printing in Yakima for making it possible to produce our full color poster once again this year. This is the third year they have produced our poster.

WCCPBA address, email add.....

Washington Children's Choice
Picture Book Award
2001 Nominees

Amelia and Eleanor...

by Ryan

Axle Annie

by Pulver

The Babe and I

by Adler

A Bad Case of Stripes

by Shannon

Cook-a-doodle-do

by Stevens

Each One Special

by Wishinsky

Easy Work: an old tale

by Kimmel

The Emperor's Egg

by Jenkins

Gingerbread Baby

by Brett

Honk!

by Edwards

Hooway for Wodney Wat

by Lester

Horace and Morris but...

by Howe

John Willy and Freddy McGee

by Meade

The Lost and Found

by Teague

Mole Music

by McPhail

Northwest Animal Babies

by Helman

Stella Louella's Runaway Book

by Ernst

Weslandia

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Wolf!

by Bloom

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by Shannon

Cook-a-doodle-do

by Stevens

Each One Special

by Wishinsky

Easy Work: an old tale

by Kimmel

The Emperor's Egg

by Jenkins

Gingerbread Baby

by Brett

Honk!

by Edwards

Hooway for Wodney Wat

by Lester

Horace and Morris but...

by Howe

John Willy and Freddy McGee

by Meade

The Lost and Found

by Teague

Mole Music

by McPhail

Northwest Animal Babies

by Helman

Stella Louella's Runaway Book

by Ernst

Weslandia

by Fleischman

Wolf!

by Bloom

Yoko

by Wells

Washington Children's Choice
Picture Book Award
2001 Nominees

Amelia and Eleanor...

by Ryan

Axle Annie

by Pulver

The Babe and I

by Adler

A Bad Case of Stripes

by Shannon

Cook-a-doodle-do

by Stevens

Each One Special

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Easy Work: an old tale

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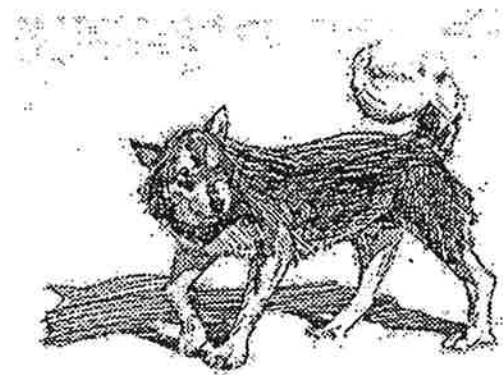
To All The Readers Of Washington State,

Thank you for reading my book AKIAK. And thank you, thank you, double thank you, to those who selected my book for your Children's Choice Award. I had a wonderful time making this book- traveling to Alaska, getting to know the mushers, making many sketches and notes in my sketchbook and coming back home to create the paintings. The entire book was a pleasure from beginning to end. But now the best part has come. Acceptance. I am humbled, delighted and honored.

All my life I have wanted to write and illustrate books. Real books, books that allowed me to travel to far away places and meet interesting people. And, of course, my dream was that readers might actually like them. Follow your dreams, my new friends, they really can come true.

Many heartfelt thanks to you,

Robert J. Blake



Robert J. Blake

As a boy growing up, my talent was pretending. I pretended I was just about everything I could see. In school I had a very special teacher who recognized this and taught me how to really read, how to pretend with words, and how to feel the words. The more I read, the more "what ifs" came to mind. And the more I asked, "What if?" the more I felt like writing. So I began to draw and write in a sketchbook. To "what if" I was now adding: "Once upon a time..." I have been keeping sketchbooks ever since.

Inevitably, one day I said to myself, "What if, once upon a time, I made my own books?" I would try to live the character, I would go to the places where the stories take place, and I would write and paint right there. That dream has become my reality. I have sketched on Riptide's Nauset Beach, painted in front of a real fox's den, stood under a waterfall with my son, and shared stories with an Irishman in his humble Irish cottage before a glowing peat fire. For me, that is living a story, and I hope it makes my stories feel real.

Robert J. Blake was born and raised in New Jersey. As a boy he made "tons of drawings" and used up thousands of crayons. He says, "I even did a huge crayon mural on our hallway that was not artistically appreciated by my parents."

"Sharing one large room with two older brothers was 'chaos,'" he recalls. "We had lots of animals—dogs, ducks, hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, lizards, turtles, snakes, birds, fish, and even two flying squirrels. And, oh yes, a tarantula. I think my parents were afraid to come up to our room."

Mr. Blake now resides in New Jersey with his wife and son. He works in his studio, a renovated barn on his property. Mr. Blake says, "I would like to paint in every state in the United States and in every country in the world."

"I hope my books lend the reader a feeling, an emotion, a new point of view, a new way to look at something that they might not have experienced otherwise."

