

Book Links

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS:
CALDECOTT IN THE CLASSROOM:
MEDAL WINNERS AS MENTOR TEXTS
BY CYNDI GIORGIS

This article originally appeared in the April 2013 issue of *Book Links* magazine.



The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts contain four strands: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. In the past three issues of *Book Links*, we have highlighted previous recipients of the Caldecott Medal, which celebrates its seventy-fifth anniversary in 2013, and paired the award-winning books with instructional strategies that support the CCSS reading strand. This time, the emphasis will be on how Caldecott Medal books can serve as mentor texts in writing exercises. The writing standards in CCSS are designed to help students develop the skills necessary to offer and support opinions, demonstrate an understanding of what they are studying, and convey real and imagined experiences and events. What better books to use as mentor texts than the Caldecott Medal-winning books and related titles presented below?

1955 Caldecott Medal

Cinderella; or, The Little Glass Slipper. By Marcia Brown. Illus. by the author. 1954. 32p. Atheneum, \$17.95 (9780684126760); paper, \$7.99 (9780689814747). K–Gr. 4.

Cinderella is one of the most well-known fairy tales, with hundreds of adaptations in existence. Brown's retelling is based on the French version by Charles Perrault. A young girl's father remarries a proud and haughty woman who has two daughters with dispositions as sour as their mother's. Nicknamed Cinderella, the beautiful girl lives a wretched life tending to the household chores and to the whims of Madame and the stepsisters. When the king's son gives a ball, Cinderella attends dressed in the finest of gowns, made possible by her fairy godmother. But, alas, Cinderella must hastily depart at midnight, leaving behind one of her glass slippers. After a search of the kingdom, in which each young lady is given a chance to try on the dainty footwear, Cinderella not only slips on the shoe but also produces the matching one from her pocket. As with all good fairy tales, Cinderella and her prince live happily ever after.

Versions of Cinderella

Cinderella. By Barbara McClintock. Illus. by the author. 2005. 32p. Scholastic, \$17.99 (9780439561457). 398.2. K–Gr. 3.

McClintock's adaptation is set during the era of Louis XIV and contains smoothly paced text and charming watercolor illustrations.

Cinderella. By Jane Ray. Illus. by the author. 2012. 12p. Candlewick, \$19.99 (9780763661755). 398.2. K–Gr. 4.

Three-dimensional scenes, created by layered cut-paper artwork, are coupled with succinct text situated on side panels that retell the classic tale.

Glass Slipper, Gold Sandal: A Worldwide Cinderella. By Paul Fleischman. Illus. by Julie Paschkis. 2007. 32p. Holt, \$16.95 (9780805079531). 398.2. K–Gr. 2.

Seventeen variants of Cinderella are interwoven to create one story that honors the uniqueness of the stories' cultural origins, which include Laos, Russia, Indonesia, and China.

James Marshall's Cinderella. By Barbara Karlin. Illus. by James Marshall. 1989. 32p. Puffin, paper, \$6.99 (9780142300480). 398.2. PreS–Gr. 3.

Based on the Perrault version of the fairy tale, Karlin's retelling is paired with Marshall's hilarious cartoon-style illustrations, which feature grinning rodents, a madcap fairy godmother, and a heroine with a heart of gold.

The Orphan: A Cinderella Story from Greece. By Anthony L. Manna and Soula Mitakidou. Illus. by Giselle Potter. 2011. 40p. Random/Schwartz & Wade, \$16.99 (9780375866913). 398.2. Gr. 1–4.

Cinderella's hateful stepmother makes the orphan girl's life miserable until nature's blessings shower her with brilliance from the sun, beauty from the moon, and gracefulness from the dawn.

In the Classroom

Read aloud various versions of Cinderella, including those mentioned above. Discuss each story with students, comparing and contrasting the experiences of the characters in each. Next, have students select a version and write at least two reasons why they like or dislike that particular story and, finally, a concluding statement recommending the books (or not) to others.

Common Core Connection

- **CCSS.ELA–Literacy.W.2.1.** Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Book Links

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS:
CALDECOTT IN THE CLASSROOM:
MEDAL WINNERS AS MENTOR TEXTS
BY CYNDI GIORGIS

1977 Caldecott Medal

Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions. By Margaret Musgrove. Illus. by Leo and Diane Dillon. 1976. 32p. Dial, \$21.99 (9780803703575). 960. Gr. 2–4.

This Caldecott Medal–winning title presents the culture and customs of 26 African tribes, from *A* to *Z*. The author and illustrators engaged in extensive research to ensure accuracy and authenticity of the text and illustrations. Brief, informative paragraphs about each tribe, including a pronunciation of the tribe’s name, are enhanced by stunning illustrations prepared in pastels, watercolors, and acrylics. This is an excellent example of using an alphabet format to present information rather than to teach sound and symbol relationships.

Alphabet Books

A Is for Musk Ox. By Erin Cabatingan. Illus. by Matthew Myers. 2012. 36p. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter, \$16.99 (9781596436763). Gr. 1–3.

A self-centered musk ox argues with a no-nonsense zebra, resulting in the proliferation of adjectives and nouns within the context of a hilarious story line.

ABC3D. By Marion Bataille. Illus. by the author. 2008. 36p. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter, \$19.95 (9781596434257). 428.1. Gr. 1–4.

Twenty-six three-dimensional letters in black, red, and white move and change before readers’ eyes.

Gone Wild: An Endangered Animal Alphabet. By David McLimans. Illus. by the author. 2006. 40p. Walker, \$17.99 (9780802795632). 591.68. Gr. 2–5.

McLimans’ black-and-white graphic representations of 26 endangered animals provide information and eye-catching images in this Caldecott Honor Book.

Z Is for Moose. By Kelly Bingham. Illus. by Paul O. Zelinsky. 2012. 32p. Greenwillow, \$16.99 (9780060799847). K–Gr. 2.

Moose is impatient and cannot wait for his turn in the alphabet. He propels himself onstage time and again, forcing the other animals to share the spotlight. But when “M is for Mouse,” Zebra comes up with a creative solution to appease the sobbing, furious Moose.

A Zeal of Zebras: An Alphabet of Collective Nouns. By Woop Studios. 2011. 56p. illus. Chronicle, \$17.99 (9781452104928). 590. Gr. 1–4.

Quirky phrases, such as “a shiver of sharks,” “a galaxy of starfish,” and “an embarrassment of pandas,” are paired with whimsical art in this alphabet book featuring clever wordplay.

In the Classroom

Alphabet books such as those described above serve as models for providing information about a topic using an ABC format. Have a small group or a whole class select a topic to research. This topic could be from any area of the curriculum, such as science, social studies, or language arts. Next, generate a list of words for each letter of the alphabet. Students can then select which letter and word they want to write about and follow up with additional research. Finally, determine the format for each page, which might include pop-ups, panels, text boxes, or other storytelling devices used by authors and illustrators.

Common Core Connection

- **CCSS.ELA–Literacy.W.3.2.** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

2006 Caldecott Medal

The Hello, Goodbye Window. By Norton Juster. Illus. by Chris Raschka. 2005. 32p. Hyperion, \$18.99 (9780786809141). PreS–Gr. 2.

The window in Nanna and Poppy’s kitchen is the first place a young girl stops when she visits her doting grandparents—that is where she receives the first hellos before she enters the house. The window is also where the three gaze at the stars, view the flower garden, and watch for the pizza delivery guy. When the girl spies her parents coming to pick her up, it now becomes the window where good-bye kisses are exchanged between grandparents and granddaughter. But as the girl states, “You can be happy and sad at the same time, you know. It just happens that way sometimes.” Raschka’s impressionistic mixed-media illustrations portray a loving family and the joy of being together.

Personal Narratives

Big Red Lollipop. By Rukhsana Khan. Illus. by Sophie Blackall. 2010. 40p. Viking, \$16.99 (9780670062874). PreS–Gr. 2.

Rubina’s immigrant mother doesn’t understand why Sana, the younger sister, can’t go to a birthday party with her sibling. “I can’t take her! She’s not invited,” Rubina protests, but her mother insists, and the party turns out as badly as Rubina predicted.

Charley’s First Night. By Amy Hest. Illus. by Helen Oxenbury. 2012. 32p. Candlewick, \$15.99 (9780763640552). PreS–Gr. 1.

It’s Charley’s first night in his new home, and his owner,

Book Links

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS:
CALDECOTT IN THE CLASSROOM:
MEDAL WINNERS AS MENTOR TEXTS
BY CYNDI GIORGIS

Henry, makes sure that the puppy feels safe and secure: “Charley wants to sleep in my room.” Despite parental objections to Henry’s requests, the impish puppy eventually gets his way.

Every Friday. By Dan Yaccarino. Illus. by the author. 2007. 32p. Holt, \$16.95 (9780805077247); Square Fish, paper, \$6.99 (9781250004734); e-book, \$6.99 (9781466821651). PreS–K.

“Friday is my favorite day.” So begins the heartwarming story of a boy and his father’s weekly date for breakfast at a nearby diner.

Mom, It’s My First Day of Kindergarten! By Hyewon Yum. Illus. by the author. 2012. 36p. Farrar/Frances Foster, \$16.99 (9780374350048); e-book, \$9.99 (9781466816602). PreS–Gr. 2.

It’s a little boy’s first day of kindergarten, but it’s his mother who is apprehensive. She wonders, “Will you be okay in the big kids’ school? You’re still so little,” but the boy reassures her, “Mom, don’t worry. I’ll be fine. I am already five!”

Owl Moon. By Jane Yolen. Illus. by John Schoenherr. 1987. 32p. Philomel, \$16.99 (9780399214578). PreS–Gr. 2.

“It was late one winter night, long past my bedtime, when Pa and I went owling.” As the girl and her father trudge through the snow, they see a variety of animals, but the one that they seek is the great horned owl.

In the Classroom

Provide students with a variety of books that are written as personal narratives. Have them write down on sticky notes what they notice about each story and then place the notes on the book’s cover or appropriate pages. Be sure to discuss what makes each book a personal narrative. Next, have each student generate a “Things I Have Done” list about their own lives and then star the experience that they want to write about in-depth. Encourage the students to revisit the books and use them as models of how to create a sequence of events as well as a beginning, middle, and end of the story, all with appropriate punctuation.

Common Core Connections

- **CCSS.ELA–Literacy.W.1.3.** Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
- **CCSS.ELA–Literacy.W.2.3.** Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

2009 Caldecott Medal

The House in the Night. By Susan Marie Swanson. Illus. by Beth Krommes. 2008. 40p. Houghton, \$17 (9780618862443); e-book, \$16.99 (9780547744896). PreS–K.

Swanson’s spare, simple text was inspired by a nursery rhyme, and it is beautifully illustrated by Krommes. A young girl is given a golden key to a house. “In the house / burns a light. / In that light / rests a bed. / On that bed / waits a book.” And so the patterned-language story continues into the night with shining stars and moonbeams. The effective use of gold throughout the book assists in creating a warm glow on the pages.

Patterned-Language Books

Little White Rabbit. By Kevin Henkes. Illus. by the author. 2011. 40p. Greenwillow, \$16.99 (9780062006424); e-book, \$11.99 (9780062095602). PreS–Gr. 1.

A little bunny has a big imagination and wonders what it would be like to be green, to be tall, and to flutter through the air. Simple repetitive phrasing and cheery pastel illustrations celebrate awe and curiosity.

The Napping House. By Audrey Wood. Illus. by Don Wood. 1984. 32p. Harcourt, \$17.99 (9780152567088). PreS–Gr. 1.

“There is a house, / a napping house, / where everyone is sleeping.” Everyone includes a snoring granny, a dreaming child, a dozing dog, a snoozing cat, and a slumbering mouse who are all awakened by a flea.

Oh, No! By Candace Fleming. Illus. by Eric Rohmann. 2012. 40p. Random/Schwartz & Wade, \$17.99 (9780375842719). PreS–K.

When a frog falls into a deep hole, he implores the other animals to rescue him, but they soon encounter the same fate. Bouncing rhymes and a repeated refrain of “Oh, no!” will engage young audiences.

Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes. By Eric Litwin. Illus. by James Dean. 2010. 40p. HarperCollins, \$16.99 (9780061906237); e-book, \$11.99 (9780062065605). PreS–Gr. 2.

Pete the cat goes walking down the street wearing his brand new white shoes. When he steps in strawberries, the shoes turn red. “Did Pete cry? Goodness, no!” And so it goes each time Pete’s shoes change colors.

Two Little Monkeys. By Mem Fox. Illus. by Jill Barton. 2012. 32p. Simon & Schuster/Beach Lane, \$16.99 (9781416986874); e-book, \$11.76 (9781442435773). PreS.

Based on a nursery-rhyme pattern, Fox’s peppy text, along

Book Links

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS:
CALDECOTT IN THE CLASSROOM:
MEDAL WINNERS AS MENTOR TEXTS
BY CYNDI GIORGIS

with Barton's watercolor illustrations, highlights the antics of monkeys Cheeky and Chee as they scramble up a big old tree to avoid a menacing prowler.

In the Classroom

Many patterned-language stories contain a circular plot structure—a story that ends almost the same way it began. As a book is read aloud, have students predict what will happen next and cite the reasons why they think that. This will assist them in recognizing and understanding the circular story structure. As a class, diagram the plot of a book, indicating what happened first, next, and so on. Have students eventually plot out their own circle stories, either by creating one of their own or using one they can retell from a book.

Common Core Connection

- **CCSS.ELA–Literacy.W.K.3.** Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

2012 Caldecott Medal

A Ball for Daisy. By Chris Raschka. Illus. by the author. 2011. 32p. Random/Schwartz & Wade, \$16.99 (9780375858611); lib. ed., \$19.99 (9780375958618). PreS–K.

Daisy loves to play and sleep with her big red ball. Unfortunately, a playful romp in the park with another dog results in the disastrous demise of the cherished toy. Daisy's sadness is palpable through Raschka's expressive watercolor illustrations. A return to the park results in the gift of a bright-blue ball, and Daisy immediately returns to her joyful doggy self in this fetching wordless winner.

Wordless Books

Last Night. By Hyewon Yum. Illus. by the author. 2008. 40p. Farrar/Frances Foster, \$15.95 (9780374343583). PreS–Gr. 1.

A young girl is sent to her room after refusing to eat her dinner. Soon, she drifts off to sleep clutching a stuffed bear that magically becomes real and takes the two on a fantastical journey.

The Red Book. By Barbara Lehman. Illus. by the author. 2004. 32p. Houghton, \$14.99 (9780618428588); e-book, \$14.99 (9780547771526). PreS–Gr. 2.

A series of panels in this Caldecott Honor Book relate the experiences of characters who stumble across enchanted red books and discover not only the power of generating their own storybook narratives but also the reward of forging new friendships.

Time Flies. By Eric Rohmann. Illus. by the author. 1994. 32p. Crown, \$17 (9780517595985); Dragonfly, paper, \$6.99 (9780517885550); lib. ed., \$17.99 (9780517595992). K–Gr. 3.

In this Caldecott Honor Book, a bird flies into a museum filled with dinosaur skeletons on a dark and stormy night. When the bird is swallowed by a prehistoric predator that is now curiously covered in flesh, escape becomes possible only when the dinosaur's skeletal form returns.

Where's Walrus? By Stephen Savage. Illus. by the author. 2011. 32p. Scholastic, \$16.99 (9780439700498). PreS–K.

It's a quiet day at the zoo—that is, until the zookeeper falls asleep and an enterprising walrus escapes. A pursuit ensues as the zookeeper searches high and low for the clever walrus, which hides in plain sight.

Wonder Bear. By Tao Nyeu. Illus. by the author. 2008. 48p. Dial, \$17.99 (9780803733282). PreS–Gr. 1.

A towering tangle of flowering blue and green vines sprouts overnight after a young boy and girl plant a garden. Soon an enormous white bear with a magical blue top hat emerges from a magnificent blossom and begins to conjure up a variety of other creatures.

In the Classroom

Wordless picture books provide an opportunity for students to create their own text to accompany illustrations. Provide each student with a different color of sticky notes. Have students write down dialogue for the characters, narrative story lines, or even questions about what is happening in the story on the sticky notes, and then place the notes on the appropriate pages. Repeat the exercise, having students layer their sticky notes on the pages. Once all the students have posted their notes, have them discuss their notes in groups, or as a whole class, to gain feedback and possibly revise their stories.

Common Core Connections

- **CCSS.ELA–Literacy.W.K.5.** With guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed.
- **CCSS.ELA–Literacy.W.1.5.** With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.
- **CCSS.ELA–Literacy.W.2.5.** With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

Cyndi Giorgis is a professor of children's and young adult literature at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.