

Washington Childrens' Choice Picture Book Award Nominees

2006



Agent A to Agent Z by Andy Rash

In rhyming couplets, this alphabet book offers intrigue and suspense to readers as they try to find the bogus spy along with Agent A. Given the task to find the agent who doesn't use words with their initial, Agent A skulks his way through the alphabet, from Agent B who "correctly chooses Blue, and so the Bomb defuses" through Agent I who "is Incognito, posing as a large mosquito" and on to Agent Z. Who is the spy who doesn't fit? Read Andy Rash's stylistic spy spoof to find out!

GLEs: Reading: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 Writing: 1.1, 1.3, 2.2, 2.3

Activities:

- Spies must be able to listen carefully, as readers do to discover the rogue agent. Play listening games such as "Telephone".
- Read other alphabet books that use words and sentences with initial letters in order. Books might include: A My Name is Alice by Jane Bayer, Alligators All Around by Maurice Sendak, and Animalia by Graeme Base.
- Have each student write a sentence using one letter as the initial letter of as many words as possible. Put together a class PowerPoint slideshow with a slide and illustration for each letter.
- Students create their own Agent A to Agent Z story (in PowerPoint, MS Word, or on paper). Write a sentence or rhyming couplet and create an illustration for each letter but choose a different Agent as the one who doesn't use his initial letter. Read each story to try to discover the rogue agent.
- Agent N decodes a note using a pictograph code. Learn about simple codes, such as using numbers for letters (1=A, 2=B, etc.). For more complex codes read books about codes and ciphers, such as The Code and Cipher Book by Jane Sarnoff. Read the Rookie Reader book The Secret Code by Dana Meachen Rau and learn how to write or read in Braille. Read The Patchwork Path by Bettye Stroud, a fictional tale about how quilt squares might be used as a secret code.
- Web activity for teachers: Go to <http://www.uwsp.edu/math/afelt/codes.html>, where you can create your own coded message for your students and print it out as a PDF.

Actual Size by Steve Jenkins

Colorful paper collages invite readers to compare themselves to animals depicted at actual size. Some animals are shown in their entirety if they fit on the page. Others are too big at actual size so only a part is featured, such as a Siberian tiger's face and the teeth of a great white shark. An illustrated index is included, as well as interesting facts and descriptions of each animal.

(GLEs: Reading: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 Writing: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.3)

Activities:

- Research an animal. Create a collage of the animal or a part of the animal at actual size. Write a fact on the main part of the collage. Have students guess the animal from the part of the animal, then share the name and the fact.
- Using questions generated while reading the book, extend research on animals included in the book using the information given at the back of the book as a starting point.
- Extend the concepts of measurement and comparison by reading other books, including Inch by Inch by Leo Lionni, How Big is a Foot? by Rolf Myller, and My Place in Space by Robin and Sally Hirst.
- Compare and contrast the art in this award-winning (Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books Blue Ribbon Nonfiction Award) book with other award-winning books, possible choices include Joseph Had a Little Overcoat by Simms Taback, Smoky Night by Eve Bunting, Golem by David Wisniewski, and Snowflake Bentley by Jacqueline Briggs Martin.

Alice the Fairy by David Shannon

Alice is a mischievous little girl with a magic wand and a nose for fairy business using her magic wand. She turns frogs into princes and dads into horses, makes leaves fall from trees, and sometimes even makes herself disappear!

Activity:

1. Draw a blackline master of a wand. Write on the handle: With this wand I will..... Have the children write in the star what magic they would perform if they had a magic wand. Talk about what good things they could do if they had magical powers.
2. Share stories about fairy legends such as: **Classic Flower Fairies** by **Cicely Mary Barker**; **Usborne book of Fairy Stories**; **Book of Fairy Poetry selected and illustrated** by **Michael Hague**.
3. Discuss magic in legends from many cultures, such as, Ireland, England, Native American, African, etc.
4. Brainstorm stories where some type of magic is performed and list what character in the story created the magic.

Arrowhawk by Lola M. Schaefer, Illustrated by Gabi Swiatkowska; Henry Holt and

Company. 2004

Synopsis

A poacher pierces a red-tailed hawk's upper thigh and tail with an arrow, thus the name *Arrowhawk*. The bird survives in the wild for eight weeks with the arrow lodged in it. The story tells of Arrowhawk's persistence and survival. Eventually, the hawk is captured, cared for, and release back to its environment. The story is based on real event.

Red-tailed hawks are beneficial to humans. They provide beauty in nature as they soar high in the sky looking for their prey. At the same time, they help to keep the animal population in balance, consuming small rodents that humans think of as pests. This helps the control of disease and lessens the damage to crops or plants. The investigations will provide an opportunity for students to think about the hawk's place in food webs for different habitats and the benefits of hawks in our ecosystem.

Activities:

For Grades K-2: Food Web

Before reading the story reinforce the concepts of habitat, predators and prey. In this activity, students will learn about eating habits of hawks and locations where they can be found. As students listen to the story *Arrowhawk*, make a timeline, listing sequentially, the stopping places or scenes in the hawk's adventure.

When the story is finished, discuss the timeline of the story. Discuss the different habitats, prey, and resting places of the hawk. Divide the students into small groups or pairs. Each group picks a place on the timeline.

Now the investigation begins! Ask the students to think more about the ecology in their chosen habitat or location. In some cases, they know the hawk ate its prey, but is the prey is a predator for something else and what eats the hawk? Guide the students to design a food web that represents their habitat or location.

When the groups have finished. Put the "webs" in sequential order according the book and retell the eating habits and journey of Arrowhawk.

Taken from http://www.mast.nu/Best_practice/Arrowhawk.htm

It's never too early to start bringing up the smartest baby in the whole world. So thinks the expectant Mrs. Brains, who reads to the baby inside her tummy every night and plays music and language tapes to her baby during the day. And soon enough, Mr. and Mrs. Brains have their very own Baby Brains! He reads the paper, fixes the family car, and works as a doctor in the local hospital. Now even the space program is calling on him. Is there anything Baby Brains can't do?

Activities:

Have students research what is required to learn for each of the jobs that Baby Brains does.

Find an 'interview' with Simon James about Baby Brains at http://www.bookpage.com/0411bp/meet_simon_james.html

Sequel – *Baby Brains Superstar* (published October 28, 2005)

Other books by Simon James:

Dear Mr. Blueberry

Sally and the Limpet

The Wild Woods

Check to see if his new website is functioning! <http://www.simonjamesbooks.com/>

Beatrice Doesn't Want To by Laura Numeroff, illustrated by Lynn Munsinger

Beatrice doesn't want to accompany her brother to the library especially since she doesn't like reading. Day one in the library, she watches her brother. Day two she finds a comfy chair. Day three brings about a new opportunity but will Beatrice want to take a chance?

EALRS Reading 2.1.5, 2.1.6, 2.2.3, 2.3.1

Activities:

- Compare and contrast with the book Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss
- Retell the important events in the story
- Generate ideas about what the students can do when they are bored.
- List Day #1, Day #2, and Day #3 on a board. After reading about day one stop and list what Beatrice did in the library. Continue reading and repeat for day two. Read up to the ending student predict what Beatrice will do on day three.

The Blizzard by Betty Ren Wright

Although a blizzard prevents his cousins from visiting for his birthday, a disappointed Billy ends up having a very special day when his teacher and classmates who must stay overnight at his family's house to wait out the snowstorm.

EALRS Reading 2.1, 2.3, 3.1 Writing 2.2, 2.3, 3

Activities:

- Talk about a special birthday- Why was it special?
- Invite a weatherman to speak. Research record snowstorms in your area- Chart them.
- Visit a bakery-write thank you notes
- List the sequential steps for making a cake.
- Decorate cupcakes

Catalina Magdalena Hoopensteiner Wallendiner Hogan Logan Bogan Was Her Name by Tedd Arnold

Meet Catalina Magdalena Whoopensteiner Wallendiner Hogan Logan Bogan. She had two holes on the bottom of her nose-- One for her fingers, and one for her toes! Though she has two arms that drag along the ground, two feet bigger than a bathroom mat, and just two teeth in her mouth, life for Catalina is full and fun! Best-selling author/illustrator Tedd Arnold has transformed a popular camp song into a wild, wacky, happy book--with a wonderful message of making the most of life and finding joy where one can!

Activities:

There are many variations to this old camp song. See what versions the students know. There are some listed in the back of the book; see what other versions (and even additional verses) readers have contributed:

<http://www.geocities.com/~teddarnold/catalinaname.html>

Using this page on his website, <http://www.geocities.com/~teddarnold/drawing.html>, show children how he creates his illustrations. Then invite students to create illustrations for the additional verses on the page listed above.

Some other books by Tedd Arnold

Parts, More Parts, Even More Parts

No Jumping on the Bed!(starring his son, Walter)

No More Water in the Tub! (starring his son, William)

Visit his website: <http://www.geocities.com/~teddarnold/>

Crazy Hair Day by Barney Saltzberg

Stanley is excited about “Crazy Hair Day” at his school, until he discovers that he has gotten the date wrong.

EARLS: Reading 2.1, 3.3, 3.1 Writing 2.2, 2.3, 3

Activities:

- Visit the web site, copy and learn song. www.crazyhairday.com
- Learn how to draw Stanley www.barneysaltzberg.com
- Plan a crazy hair day for your school. Meet for an assembly. Take pictures of each classroom.
- Invite a barber and a beautician to visit.

Elves and the Shoemaker by Brother’s Grimm, illustrated by LaMarche

Classic Grimm Fairy Tale of two elves who come in the night to help a poor shoemaker and his wife change from penniless to wealthy. Leaving out the makings for a pair of shoes the elves come the first night and create a pair of beautiful shoes for which a customer pays double. For several nights the elves create beautiful shoes with the cut out leather left by the shoemaker. One night in appreciation the shoemaker and his wife leave a suit of clothes for each of the poorly dressed elves and they are never seen again. But, leave behind a comfortable and successful couple.

Activity:

1. Go to the Complete Grimm Fairy Tale website: <http://oaks.nvg.org/re1ra2.html>. Have the children select one of the other Grimm tales, read it online or the book if it is in the library. Children may work in groups or alone
 - a. Summarize the story and make an illustration
 - b. List setting, characters, plot and make an illustration
 - c. Find copies of the other stories in the library and share
 - d. Act out the story
 - e. Create a Reader’s Theatre from the story
 - f. Compare and contrast elements of the stories

Forest Explorer: A Life-Size Field Guide by Nic Bishop

Explore the wilderness of the forest with close-up detail in this unique, life-sized, photographic nature guide.

EALR's: **Reading 3.1, 3.2, 3.4**
Activity **HABITAT EXPLORER**

Objective: Individual students will create pages for a classroom book or a classroom poster in a “Where’s Waldo” style in which small animals and creatures are hidden within a variety of illustrated habitats.

Process (option #1 – individual student pages):

- Each student will select a habitat to illustrate. (suggested habitats: wetlands, grasslands, tundra, ocean, desert, rainforest, forest)
- Each student will illustrate their habitat on a standard piece of drawing paper (9x12 or 12x18)-the habitat may be illustrated by drawing, coloring, painting, cut paper, pictures cut from magazines, or photos downloaded from the internet (select the best option for you & your class)
- Each student will select one small animal or creature that lives in their selected habitat
- Each student will illustrate their animal/creature by coloring, drawing, cutting pictures from magazines etc.
- Using glue sticks or other appropriate adhesive devices, the students will place their illustrated small animal/creature onto their illustrated habitat background.
- By adding some additional coloring, painting, cut-outs, etc. to the illustrated habitat background the students will attempt to “camouflage” their small animal/creature.
- Each student will fill out a small text slip with the following information that will be attached to their illustration; **Come find me! I’m a (*name of animal/creature*). I live in the (*name of habitat*). I ...(*1 fascinating fact about your animal/creature*)**
- All student pages are bound together into a classroom book .

Process (option #2 – classroom poster):

- The class selects a specific habitat to illustrate.
- The teacher, or the class working together illustrates their habitat on a large piece of butcher paper
- Each student selects one small animal or creature that lives in the chosen habitat and illustrates it in some manner
- Each student places their animal/creature onto the habitat background in different locations
- The students and teacher working together add other items to the habitat background to help “camouflage” the animals/creatures.
- An accompanying text poster is created with the following information:
- **Welcome to the (*name of habitat*). Many fascinating small animals and creatures live here. See if you can find us. (*followed by a list of each illustrated animal/creature and 1 fascinating fact about them*)**
- Hang poster in the classroom or hallway
- ***HINT: TO FIND MANY HELPFUL ILLUSTRATIONS OF ANIMALS/CREATURES AND HABITATS, DO A “GOOGLE” SEARCH BY “IMAGES”***

Gator Gumbo by Candace Fleming, illustrated by Sally Anne Lambert

Monsieur Gator is getting old, gray and he is moving very slowly and because of this he cannot catch any animals to eat and they know it and torment him. At every meal he wipes away his tears over his “vegetables again”. Until he finally gets mad enough to come up with a plan to cook some gumbo just like his mother used to make. The story then follows along in “*Little Red Hen*” style where the Gator asks for help with the preparations and the animals all reply that they “ain’t” going to help. Gator ends up doing it all himself, until it is time to eat the gumbo and then they are all willing to help. In a strange turn of events they end up in the pot and Gator ends up with gumbo “just like Maman used to make”.

Activities:

1. Compare and contrast “*Little Red Hen*” stories from different areas. Have the students write the similarities and the differences in the various stories. *(See black line example)
2. Find other Cajun and Bayou stories to read aloud. Alligator is usually the “bad guy” in the traditional stories. *Petite Rouge a Cajun Red Riding Hood* by Mike Artell (is an example), there are many others.
3. Listen to zydeco music.
4. Find out additional information about Cajun culture, language, cooking and bayou living.
5. Look up Louisiana, alligators, swamps and become more familiar with the area the stories are written from and the animals they are written about.
6. Find an authentic “Cajun” recording of a story so that students can hear the stories told from a “native speaker”.

Name: _____

List the things that were the same in Gator Gumbo as in the traditional version of

The Little Red Hen story that you are familiar with.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

List the things that were different between Gator Gumbo and the traditional Little Red Hen story.

Gator Gumbo Little Red Hen

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

Goldie and the Three Bears by Diane Stanley

Art extension

- Show students the illustration on the third to the last page which show Goldie and Baby Bear playing together.
- Ask students to imagine other “play-date” activities the two friends could be engaged in. Brainstorm a list with students.
- Using whatever art materials are available, students will create an extension to the story titled: ***Goldie and Baby Bear Playing Together***. For the youngest students, an adult can write down a caption for the illustration. More capable students can write down their own caption.

Fiction/Nonfiction Bears

Students will notice that Goldie and Baby Bear have a favorite book in common: a non-fiction book about bears. Here is a good opportunity to reinforce the difference between fiction and non-fiction by pairing this book with a non-fiction “bear” book from your library.

- After reading both books, ask students to come up with a list of **Things Real Bears Do** and a contrasting list of **Things Fiction Bears Do**. This can take the form of two-column notes or of a Venn diagram or Double Bubble note taking.
- Fold or divide a blank paper in half. On one side ask students to illustrate a fictional bear; on the other side a non-fiction bear.
- If time allows, project student work on screen (or have them hold it up to the group.) Students will explain what it is about their illustration that makes the bear “fiction” or “non-fiction.”

Compare/Contrast

Much of the fun of this book is how it compares and contrasts with the traditional telling of “The Three Bears.” Guide students through a compare/contrast discussion of the two stories. (Venn diagram or Double Bubble may be used for note taking.)

I Wanna Iguana by Karen Kaufman Orloff

Alex and his mother write notes back and forth in which Alex tries to persuade her to let him have a baby iguana for a pet.

EARLS Reading 2.1, 2.3, 3.1 Writing 2.2, 2.3, 3

Activities:

Compare and Contrast an iguana, a gecko and or a chameleon

Contact a pet store to bring in animals to share

Chose a pet, write a persuasive letter to a parent requesting permission to keep it.

Karate Hour by Carol Nevus, illustrated by Bill Thomson

An hour-long karate class is described in rhyming text. Students come in uniform, stretch, practice, and chant. Stunning illustration will draw students in. There is information about karate and the different colors of belts in the back of the book.

EALRS: Health & Fitness 1.1, 1.2; Reading 1.3

Activity: Have the class spread out (as much as possible), put on some calming music and practice stretching. Some stretches to try: head roll, side stretch, toe touch (in book), calf stretch, inner thigh stretch (in book), and hamstring stretch. Your physical education teacher might be able to suggest some other stretches (Do you smell collaboration?). Students might also suggest stretches from their sport activities. Most sources agree that when stretching one should move slowly in and out of each stretch, breathe evenly, keep air flowing (no breath holding), and no jerking movements.

Additional web-sites on stretching and children:

www.dolfzine.com/page658.htm

www.Gardenandhearth.com/FamilyFitness/stretching.htm

Additional readings

Best Book of Martial Arts by Lauren Robinson

Martial Arts in Action by Heather Levigne

King o' the Cats by Aaron Shepard

Aaron Shepard's website has a number of great "extras" that go along with his stories.

Go to www.aaronshep.com/extras/index.html#KingCats. Here you will find a

- Reproducible reader's theatre script of the folktale
- Two reproducible posters of illustrations from the book
- Background sources that trace the folktale to the death of Pan in Plutarch's *Moralia*. Shepard gives us a synopsis of the Plutarch reference. For older students this might be a good opportunity to show how a story in one culture can have its origin in an earlier story from another culture.
- In his forward, Shepard tells us that his story is "a much expanded re-telling" of a story told by Joseph Jacobs in *More English Fairy Tales* (1894). Read to students the Jacob's version. Discuss how Shepard "expanded" the Jacob's story. Discuss what the essential elements of the story are. Ask students to write their own version of the Jacob's story, retelling it in such a way that they keep the essentials

while making it their own creation. For example, one person might decide to change the setting of the story from a church to a school. Another might decide to change the main characters from cats to squirrels. The possibilities are limitless.

Manana, Iguana by Ann Whitford Paul, illustrated by Ethan Long

Iguana is planning a fiesta and she asks Rabbit, Snake and Tortoise for help with the preparations. In the tradition of *Little Red Hen*, they have many excuses for why they cannot help her prepare for the fiesta, but they might help her manana (tomorrow) so when it is time for the party to begin she tells them they are not welcome at the fiesta since she did all the work. So it is she and she alone that greet the guests at the fiesta and the Rabbit, Snake and Tortoise hide out and watch. When the fiesta is over the guests all remark about what a fine time they have had and the Iguana is so exhausted that she goes to bed without cleaning up. Feeling guilty about not helping her before the Rabbit, the Snake and the Tortoise decide that they should clean up to surprise their friend Iguana. So on Sunday they all share the leftovers. This story has many Spanish words interspersed in the text and a glossary to explain the Spanish terms. The desert setting and Southwestern art add to the multicultural appeal of the story.

Activities:

1. Compare this story with a traditional *Little Red Hen* story. Use the black line master for comparing Little Red Hen stories.
2. Find other versions of traditional stories that are Southwestern or Mexican adaptations. *Three Little Javelinas* or *Domitila* are two examples that can also be compared with the traditional stories.
3. Look up Mexican fiesta or holiday traditions.
4. Make a piñata.
5. Find out additional information about Mexican culture, cooking, traditions, dress and living.
6. Find out additional information about the animals of the desert.
7. What characteristics were taken from other traditional stories for the Rabbit, the Snake, and the Tortoise.

COMPARING LITTLE RED HEN STORIES

Name:

1. List the things that were the same in Manana Iguana as in the traditional version of The Little Red Hen story that you are familiar with.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.

2. List the things that were different between Manana Iguana and the traditional Little Red Hen story.

Manana Iguana

Little Red Hen

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

Mighty Jackie: The Strike-Out Queen, by Marissa Moss, illustrated by, C.F. Payne

Jackie Mitchell's father told her she could be good at whatever she wanted, as long as she worked at it. Jackie worked hard at baseball, but nobody could believe that at age 17, Jackie, a girl, would strikeout Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig back-to-back.

Activity: HEADLINES **EALR's: Reading 3.1, Writing 1.2, 2.2, 2.3**

Objective: Students will write two different headlines that might have appeared in the Chattanooga News newspaper on April 3rd, 1931, the day after Jackie Mitchell struck out Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. The headlines should demonstrate the feelings of the times. One headline should be from the perspective of people supportive and encouraging of Jackie and what she did, the other from the perspective of those who felt it was wrong – that women didn't belong in baseball.

Process:

- After reading the book, show some of the following websites, or share information from them with your class to give more background information about the life of Jackie Mitchell, what people said about the game, and what happened afterwards.
<http://www.exploratorium.edu/baseball/mitchell.html>
<http://www.jeanpatrick.com/jackiemitchell.htm>
<http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tlresources/units/champions/JackieMitchell.pdf>
www.baseball-almanac.com/articles/aubrecht8.shtml
- Show your students samples of newspapers. Look at the headlines and discuss the purpose of headlines and how they are used and written. For more examples of headlines you may go online to some of the following sites:
<http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/content/news/>
<http://news.google.com/>
<http://news.yahoo.com/>

Give each student 2 copies of the Chattanooga News handout (see blackline master)

- Each student is to create 2 headlines for the Chattanooga Times story about Jackie Mitchell
 - one headline should reflect the opinion that what Jackie did was a **great** thing
 - one headline should reflect the opinion that what Jackie did was a **terrible** thing
- Depending on grade and ability level, students may write in their own headlines or dictate to the teacher or an assistant to write down.
- Have the students share their headlines with one another and post the completed forms on a bulletin board
- You may want to take this a step further by dividing the class in half and having a classroom debate on the Jackie Mitchell "issue", whether it is right or wrong for women to play in professional baseball. Half of the class would be assigned to be

people who disapprove of what Jackie did, and the other half, people who approve of what she did.

- For interesting information on other women involved in the history of baseball, <http://www.exploratorium.edu/baseball/girlsofsummer.html>

Mrs. Watson Wants Your Teeth by Alison Mc Ghee

A first grader is frightened on her first day of school after hearing a rumor that her teacher is a 300 year-old alien with a purple tongue who steals baby teeth from her students.

EALRS: Reading 2.1, 2.3, 3.1 Writing 2.2, 2.3

Activities:

Talk about dental hygiene—review the story Open Wide

Tour a dentist’s office or invite a dentist or assistant to visit school.

Discuss what students do with their missing teeth.

Make a classroom chart of missing teeth for the school year.

Check out the author’s website www.alisonmcghee.com

Superdog The Heart of a Hero by Caralyn Buehner, illustrated by Mark Buehner

Dexter is a little dog that is overlooked by friends and the favorite target of Clevis the tomcat who bullies him. Everything about Dexter is small but he has BIG DREAMS. He is determined to become a SUPERHERO! Dexter doesn’t just wish and dream he reads everything he can get his paws on about superheroes. He trains until the day comes when all he needs is a hero suit and an opportunity to prove himself. Is Dexter really faster than a rolling ball, stronger than the toughest rawhide, able to leap tall fences in a single bound? Read Superdog and find out!

EALRS Reading 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.2, 2.3.1, 2.4.1

Activities:

- Introduce the comic book superheroes of the 50’s ...Superman, Wonder Woman, Flash Gordon, Spiderman etc. Identify each of their special super powers.
- Write about the everyday “superhero” activities you could do to help in your neighborhood.
- Read, The Hallo-Wiener by Dav Pilkey
List the similarities and the differences between to two texts.
- Have each student create their own superhero and design their costume.