Literature and Literacy

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Introduction

This annotated bibliography includes fifty books in the narrative genre that were selected for young readers. Each book or author is the recipient of one or more of the following awards: Caldecott and Newbery Awards, the American Library Association Notable Book Award, and the Coretta Scott King Award. The books are appropriate for readers in the first through sixth grades, with an approximately even distribution among the levels.

Each entry in the bibliography includes: the complete reference; the level, as determined by *The Fountas-Pinnell Leveled Book List K-8* (Heinneman, 2006) or the Fry Readability Formula (Fry, 1977); the awards; and three teaching ideas that are coded to selected standards in the *Massachusetts English Language Arts Frameworks*. A list of these standards is provided on page 52. In the few instances where the language and the structure of the text are more complex than the concepts, there is a note in the annotation to suggest that the book is suitable for reading aloud to younger learners.

One of the teaching ideas for each book focuses on poetry. The number in parentheses that follows refers to the poetry anthology where the poem is published. The list of poetry anthologies is on pages 53-54.

The author acknowledges, with gratitude, the assistance of Irene Papadopoulos Duros and Christine Leighton. Ms. Papadopoulos Duros reviewed the manuscript and computed the Fry readability formula for books that were not entered on the Fountas-Pinnell list. Ms. Leighton reviewed and summarized the literature on children’s reading interests that informed the selection of the books.
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Amos and Boris

William Steig, author and illustrator
Published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1971

Fiction. Grade Level 6

The story of the friendship of Amos, a mouse, and Boris, a whale, illustrated with humor and charm. This book is suitable for reading aloud to younger learners.

ALA Notable Book, Caldecott award winning author/illustrator

English Language Arts Frameworks: ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1, 9, 14, and 15: The poetic language (“phosphorescent sea”, “whales spouting luminous water”, “a little speck of a living thing in the vast sea of a living universe”) can motivate students to listen to the sounds of the words and to compare this language with the words in a poem on the same theme: “maggie and milly and molly and may” by e.e. cummings. (11)

Standards 1, 8, 9, and 11: The universal theme of the small creature who comes to the aid of a larger more powerful friend invites comparison to other stories with the same theme, for example, Charlotte’s Web.

Standard 12 and 19: A study of the author/illustrator’s use of language and illustrations to show how changes in the single setting affect the plot can lead to writing and illustrating other stories with the same text features.
The story of Amos Fortune, the son of an African king, who is captured, transported to New England, and sold as a slave. Later, Amos buys his freedom, begins a business, and uses the profits to purchase and free other slaves.

Newbery Honor Book, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 1, 8, and 12: Amos’s journeys, first as a slave in New England, and then as a free man, can serve as the theme of a discussion of the personal qualities that made it possible for Amos to gain his own freedom and to free others from lives of slavery.

Standards 1, 9, and 24: The responsibility of authors of historical fiction to factual accuracy, as exemplified by Elizabeth Yates’ knowledge of the history of slavery, can be discussed with specific references to the text and to the history of the period.

Standards 1, 9, and 14: Langston Hughes’ poem, “I Dream a World” affords another opportunity to consider the long struggle for freedom and equality. (20)
Annie and the Old One

Miska Miles, author; Peter Parnall, illustrator.
Published by Little, Brown, 1971

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 4

Newbery Honor Book, ALA Notable Book

The exquisitely illustrated story of Annie, a Navajo, who lives in the family hogan with her beloved grandmother, the wise “Old One” who helps her to understand and accept the cycle of life.

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 1, 8, 15, and 19: The descriptive language that brings the illustrations of the settings and characters to life (“a world of rippling sand, of high copper-red bluffs in the distance of the low mesa near her own snug hogan”; “the web of wrinkles that criss-crossed her grandmother’s face”) can lead to a discussion of the ways the text and the illustrations convey vivid images to the reader. In the future, students can be reminded of these ideas as they write about the setting and characters in their own stories.

Standards 2, 11, and 16: A discussion of The Old One’s foreshadowing of the end of her life and the ways she helps Annie by passing traditions from her generation to the next (the artistic, weaving a rug; and the philosophical, the continuity of life) can motivate students to elicit oral histories from their grandparents and other members of their families.

Standards 2, 10 and 14: Focus: Byrd Baylor’s book-length poem, I’m in Charge of Celebrations, describes other American Indian traditions, the celebrations of the seasons in the southwest. Students can recount the celebrations in their families’ oral histories that are related to specific holidays and seasons of the year, and note the similarities and the differences. (1)
Bridge to Terabithia

Katherine Paterson, author; Donna Diamond, illustrator
Published by HarperCollins, 1977

Fiction. Grade Level 5

The poignant story of a friendship that changes the lives of a talented girl and a shy boy when they create a mythical kingdom, a place of solace and of tragedy.

Newbery Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Honor Book

Standards 1, 4, 9, and 14: Jess’ statement, “I just can’t get the poetry out of the trees.” in response to Leslie’s suggestion that he draw a picture of Terabithia, can lead to a discussion of the denotative and connotative meanings of the word, poetry, and to read Emily Dickinson’s poem, “A word is dead”. (3)

Standards 1, 8, 9, and 12: The instances when Leslie refers to books she has read can lead to a discussion of books with similar themes: complex relationships among the characters, difficult situations like those Jess’ family experiences, and the tragedy of Leslie’s death, for example, Number the Stars.

Standard 10, 11, and 19: The imaginary world created by Jess and Leslie, inspired by classic tales, can initiate a discussion of reality and fantasy, and the ways stories affect the imagination of readers and writers. Students can create an imaginary world as the setting for an original story.
The biography of a self-taught mathematician and navigator who sailed as a second mate, but taught the crew to navigate, and later, rewrote the navigational tables that became the standard.

Newbery Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 2, 19, and 24: A discussion of the ways a biography helps readers to learn the history of an era can lead to students’ selecting a historical figure, researching the history of the times in which he/she lived, and writing a biographical sketch.

Standards 4, 11, and 19: Focus: Noting the ways the context helps the reader to understand the language of mathematics and navigation can prepare students to write a journal entry that might have been written by Colonial Bowditch during a day at sea.

Standards 9, 10 and 14: Focus: John Masefield’s classic poem, “Sea-Fever” describes the call of the sea across the centuries. (11)
Colorful illustrations depict the sequence of steps for making a cloak from shearing the sheep to sewing a fine red garment. Includes a glossary of terms.

ALA Notable Book, Caldecott/Newbery award winning author/illustrator

English Language Arts Frameworks: Recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1 and 19: A discussion of the glossary that includes definitions and simple illustrations can introduce students to a model for their personal dictionaries.

Standards 8 and 18: The clear chronology of events provides a structure for planning a dramatic reading, with the illustrations serving as models for the props.

Standard 9, 14, and 19: The story progresses within the four seasons of the year, ending with winter when the cloak is finished. After learning the meaning of the words, “filigree” and “crystals”, students can listen to the poem, “The Snowflake” by Walter de la Mare, and write a group story about what Charlie saw when he wore his new cloak on a snowy day. (24)
Charlotte’s Web

E.B. White, author; Garth Williams, illustrator
Published by Harper Trophy, 1952

Fantasy. Grade Level 4

A classic work that blends reality with fantasy in a story of friendship told through the actions of a young girl, her animal friends, and a spider named Charlotte.

Newbery Honor Book, ALA Honor Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Honor Book, recommended author,

Standards 1, 4, 9, and 14: The descriptive language written into the spider’s web can suggest other words that might have been added to the web. To introduce the activity, Mary O’Neill’s poem, “The Wonderful Words” can be read and discussed. (17)

Standards 8, 10, and 11: The actions of the characters provide insights into the gifts and obligations of friendship and can lead to a discussion of E. B. White’s personification of the animals to tell the story of these friendships. Students can be reminded of this discussion when they prepare to write stories with personified animals as characters.

Standards 12 and 19: Exemplars of setting and dialogue can be identified and bookmarked for future reference as mentor texts for writing. Guided by the mentor texts, students can compose a story of friendship among animals in a different setting, for example, a zoo or a forest,
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

Bill Martin, Jr. & John Archambault, authors; Lois Ehlert, illustrator
Published by Simon & Schuster, 1989

Picture Book

A brightly illustrated poem that describes the adventures of the letters of the alphabet.

ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Recommended author

Standards 1 and 4: The ambiguous title invites students to discuss the possible meanings of Chicka Chicka Boom Boom and to suggest different titles for the book.

Standards 1, 7, and 19: The students can match the capitals to the lower case letters in the illustrations and dictate a group story to explain why the letters fell off the coconut tree.

Standards 1, 9 and 14: After listening to the poem, “Alphabet”, by Mary O’Neill, students can discuss the ways letters make it possible for them to read and write.

(17)
Freight Train

Donald Crews, author and illustrator
Published by Greenwillow, 1978

Picture Book

The journey of a train described in simple language and enhanced by vivid, detailed illustrations.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Honor Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Honor Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1, 4, and 7: After identifying and discussing the vocabulary of the text, students can classify the words in categories: colors, types of trains, and actions. Captions might be added to identify the categories and to initiate or add to a word wall organized by categories.

Standard 1, 8, and 19: The text can be used as a model to create another book about trains, adding the freight that is carried in each type of train and using the words that were categorized to write labels for each drawing.

Standard 1, 9, 14, and 19: After listening to David McCord’s Poem, “Song of the Train” students can discuss passenger trains and add this type of train to the book they are writing. (15)
Frog and Toad are Friends
Arnold Lobel, author and illustrator
Published by Harper/Collins, 1970

Fiction. Grade Level 1

Four short stories of the springtime adventures of Frog and Toad.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1, 8, and 19: The Story: Students can discuss the content of Frog’s story and the events that occurred when Toad could not think of a story to tell. Understanding that many stories begin with retelling the events experienced by an author can help students to write a group story about an event they have experienced.

Standards 1, 10, and 19: The Letter: Students can discuss the parts of a letter and compose the letter Toad might have written to Frog in response to his letter.

Standards 4, 9, and 14: After learning the meanings of the words, “pelt”, “plod”, and “scorn”, students can listen to the poem, “Frog and Toad” by Christina Rossetti and discuss the ways real frogs and toads look and act. (9)
**Grandfather's Journey**

Allen Say, author and illustrator
Published by Houghton Mifflin, 1993

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 5

The story of an immigrant whose life is reminiscent of others who leave their homeland to journey to the United States, and forever after, are devoted to two countries, the old and the new

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Honor Book

Standards 1, 4, and 8: The grandfather’s statement, “The funny thing is, the moment I am in one country I am lonesome for the other.” can motivate students who are immigrants to discuss their own experiences.

Standard 8, 11, and 12: At the end of the book, Allen Say comments, “I think I know my grandfather now.” Students can select one of Grandfather’s journeys (the first journey to the United States, the journey through the United States, the return journey to Japan with the family) and describe what the grandson learned about his grandfather from reading about this journey.

Standards 9, and 14: Robert Burns’ poem, “My heart’s in the Highlands, my heart is not here” can inspire students to consider the thoughts and feelings of a poet who has left home for another place. (26)
The House of Dies Drear

Virginia Hamilton, author; Eros Keith, illustrator
Published by Simon and Schuster, 1968

Historical Fiction. Grade Level 6

A legend of the Underground Railroad told within the story of a family who move from the south to a large house in Ohio.

ALA Notable Book, Newbery award winning author

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author.

Standards 1, 9, 14, and 15: The use of language to convey meaning and mood in the descriptions in the main story and in the legend can be compared to the language and sentiments in the poem, “The Dream Keeper” by Langston Hughes. (10)

Standards 1, 10, and 19: A discussion of the techniques used by Virginia Hamilton to tell a story within a story can enrich readers’ understanding of each type of plot and inform students’ use of this genre when they write about another historic event.

Standards 19, and 24: The goals and achievements of the people who were responsible for the Underground Railroad can be researched and a report can be written to be included with the text in the classroom library,
A lullaby in the form of a mother’s pleas to the creatures to “hush” so her baby can sleep is illustrated in the style of a collage.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 1 and 7: The patterns of rhyming words and repeated phrases can be used to discuss the common patterns in the words and text, and to read the text aloud.

Standards 1, 15, and 19: Students can reread the text aloud, discuss the ways the words create a soothing lullaby, and write a lullaby as a group.

Standards 1, 9, and 14: “Bed in Summer”, by Robert Louis Stevenson conveys another view of bedtime. (23)
In the Small, Small Pond

Denise Fleming, author and illustrator
Published by Henry Holt, 1993

Picture Book

A playful poetic description of life in a pond, illustrated with vivid paintings.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book

Standard 1, 4, and 8: A discussion of the colorful illustrations can prepare students to add words to describe color and size to various lines in the text. For example, “drowse, doze” (round yellow) “eyes close”.

Standard 7: Students can identify the rhyming words and engage in repeated reading of the text as a poem.

Standard 14 and 19: After listening to “The Old Pond”, a haiku by Matsuo Basho, students can select a favorite illustration and compose a short poem about the creature pictured on the page. (26)
Island of the Blue Dolphins

Scott O’Dell, author
Published by Houghton Mifflin, 1960

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 6

The personal narrative of a Native American girl who survived to live a solitary life on an island off the California coast from 1835, when she was twelve years old, until 1853, when she was rescued.

Newbery Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Standards: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author.

Standards 1, 8, and 9: Scott O’Dell describes Karana as “the girl Robinson Crusoe”. Students can read an excerpt from this book and note the qualities shared by the two characters, for example, courage, initiative, and imagination.

Standards 1, 14, and 15: The story is a tale of hope that endures through countless obstacles over many years. “Hope’ is the thing with feathers” by Emily Dickinson reflects the same theme and can lead to a discussion of the ways the poet’s words are descriptive of Karana. (3)

Standards 4 and 8: The environment in which Karana lived was a source of comfort or challenge as she lived alone for a long period of time. Students can select one of the rich descriptions of the settings (for example, the house Karana built or the cave where she kept the canoe), and describe the effects of the place on Karana.
The legend of John Henry, a real or imagined ex-slave, who worked on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad in the latter part of the nineteenth century, illustrated by the award-winning artist, Jerry Pinkney.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author

Standards 1, 4, and 15: The figurative language in the phrases: “shining like hope that never dies”, “a rainbow wrapped around the morning like a shawl” can be discussed as qualities of the author’s craft. Julius Lester uses language to help the reader to visualize and understand the events in the tale. Students can generate figurative language to describe other characters and scenes in the text.

Standards 1, 9, and 14: John Henry’s comment, “What matters is how well you do your living.” can lead to a discussion of the courage and optimism of people who live their lives well, as reflected in the text and in the poem, “Walkers With the Dawn” by Langston Hughes. (10)

Standard 10: Focus: The story, based on a ballad that combines fact, building the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, and the fantastic feats of John Henry, provides an opportunity to study these characteristics of the folk tale genre.
Jumanji

Chris Van Allsburg, author and illustrator
Published by Houghton Mifflin, 1981

Fantasy. Grade Level 5

A board game comes to life and creates chaos for a brother and sister who are left alone for the afternoon. Illustrated with black and white drawings that have a three-dimensional quality.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator.

Standards 1, 4, 11, and 19: The importance of reading all the directions before a playing a game can motivate students to rewrite directions for familiar board games played in unusual ways, for example, checkers that come to life as planets.

Standard 1, 10, 12, and 19: The fusion of reality and fantasy in the story and illustrations can lead to a discussion of this aspect of the author’s craft and to composing stories that combine reality and fantasy.

Standard 8, 9, and 14: The three-dimensional illustrations can be used by students to retell the story to younger readers and to read a poem about monkeys with them, for example, “When You Talk to a Monkey” by Rowena Bennett. (4)
Lincoln: A Photobiography

Russell Freedman, author
Published by Clarion, 1987

Photobiography. Grade Level 6

A biography of Abraham Lincoln, illustrated with original photographs and documents, that includes a “sampler” of Lincoln’s speeches and written texts, a list of historic sites, and a bibliography.

Newbery Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 1, 10, 19, and 24: This photo-biography offers opportunities to discuss the characteristics of this genre: the combination of biography and history, the description and chronology text structures, and the original photographs and documents, and to prepare a photo-biography of a person studied in the Social Studies curriculum.

Standards 1, 15, and 24: The simple language in the excerpts from Lincoln’s speeches and writing can be discussed, and the effects of the words can be explored with reference to the events that were occasions for the speeches.

Standards 14, 15, and 18: Students can read “Oh Captain! My Captain! by Walt Whitman is a memorial poem that honors Abraham Lincoln and consider the remarkable life that is celebrated by the poet. The language of the poem invites individual oral renditions and discussions of the meanings conveyed by individual readers. (8)
Little Bear’s Visit

Elsie Holmelund Minarik, author; Maurice Sendak, illustrator
Published by HarperCollins, 1961

Fiction. Grade Level 2

The story of Little Bear’s visit to his grandparents, enhanced by the stories Grandfather tells to him.

Caldecott Honor Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, recommended author

  Standards 1, 8, and 12: Students can compare Grandmother’s story about the robin and Grandfather’s story about the goblin, decide which story is true and which is make-believe, and explain the differences.

  Standards 1, 9, and 14: Students can listen to A. A. Milne’s poem, “Fuzzy Bear” and compare the appearance of real bears to the bears in the book. (16)

  Standards 10 and 19: Students can compose another story about Little Bear that includes some events that are make-believe and others that are real.
The Little House

Virginia Lee Burton, author and illustrator
Published by Houghton Mifflin, 1942

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 5

The story of a little house that was built in the country and becomes a city dwelling as a result of development, enhanced by detailed colorful illustrations. This book is suitable for reading aloud to younger learners.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1, 4, and 8: Students can imagine the onlookers’ thoughts as they watched the little house being moved through the city and the little house’s thoughts as she watched the onlookers. The students can study the illustrations and notice how the colors of the paintings reflect the mood of the little house and the onlookers.

Standards 1, 12, and 24: Students can retell the story of the changes that resulted in the little house, from the country setting at the beginning of the story, to a city setting in the middle of the story, to a country setting at the end of the story.

Standard 14: Robert Louis Stevenson’s poem, “Block City” invites students to think about the houses they might build with blocks or with paint and to create these houses. (23)
Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story from China

Ed Young, author and illustrator
Published by Philomel, 1989

Folk Tale. Grade Level 5

The thousand year old tale of Little Red-Riding Hood told in the Chinese tradition and illustrated in the style of pastels. This book is suitable for reading aloud to younger learners.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Honor Book,

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standard 1 and 8: The illustrations, in the style of Chinese paintings, convey the mood of the story and can serve as the focus of a discussion to prepare students to read the book to younger students.

Standards 10, 14, and 19: Focus: “Was that a fox”, a haiku by Matsuo Basho can be read and the form studied to create poems about the wolf who was disguised as Po Po. (14)

Standards 11 and 16: Focus: This rendition of a classic tale can be compared to other versions of the story for example, the Grimm tale. The comparisons can focus on: the setting (the children’s house in this version, the house of the wolf in the Grimm tale); the characters (three sisters in this version, one child in the Grimm tale) and the plot (the sisters as the heroines in this tale, the huntsman as the rescuer in the Grimm tale). The students can speculate on the reasons for the differences in the tales.
Make Way for Ducklings

Robert McCloskey, author and illustrator
Published by Viking, 1941

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 3

The classic story of a family of ducks who search for a home until they find a perfect place on a small island in the Boston Public Garden.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book.

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator.

Standards 1, 3, and 19: The students can create the story the policemen might have told to their families when they returned home after helping the ducks reach their new home.

Standards 1, 9, and 14: After listening to Langston Hughes’ poem, “City” students can discuss what the ducks saw as they flew over the city of Boston looking for a home. (20)

Standards 8, 12, and 19: After the ducks make their home on the small island in the Boston Public Garden, they are likely to have many adventures. The students can create a mural to depict one of these adventures and write captions to tell the story.
A Man Named Thoreau

Robert Burleigh, author; Lloyd Bloom, illustrator
Published by Simon and Schuster, 1985

Biography. Grade Level 5

A biography of Henry David Thoreau told with reference to the writer’s own words.

ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: ALA Notable Book

Standards 1 and 15: The words from Thoreau’s writing: “A lake is like an eye of the earth.” “A bird carries the sky on its back.” can lead to a discussion of figurative language, identifying other examples in the text, and generating figurative language to describe other scenes in the text.

Standard 8, 9, and 14: On many occasions in his life, Thoreau chose a different way of living. Robert Frost’s classic poem, “The Road Not Taken” can be read to initiate a discussion of Thoreau’s life and the “difference” he made in the ways his readers think about the natural world. (21)

Standard 9, 19, and 24: Thoreau’s regard for the environment can lead to a study of global warming and the actions students can adopt to protect the environment. Students may wish to publish their findings and recommendations.
*Martin’s Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 
Doreen Rappaport, author; Bryan Collier, illustrator  
Published by Hyperion, 2001  
Biography. Grade Level 4

The story of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., told in a text that is enhanced by his own eloquent words.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book, Coretta Scott King Award

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book,

Standards 1, 4, and 8: The eloquent and powerful words quoted in the text invite students to select their favorite words and to consider the effects of the words on the events of the life of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Standards 1, 9, and 14: Langston Hughes’ poem, “Words Like Freedom” can be read to relate Martin’s ideas about the power of words in the Civil Rights Movement to the sentiments expressed by the poet. (10)

Standards 9, 19, and 24: Groups of students can select one of the events in the text, for example, Rosa Parks’ bus ride or the March in Washington, read more about the event, and contribute to a report to be included with the text in the classroom library.
Misty of Chincoteague

Marguerite Henry, author; Wesley Dennis, illustrator
Published by Simon and Schuster, 1947

Fiction. Grade Level 4

The adventures of a brother and sister and the two wild horses they purchase, a pony named Phantom and her filly, Misty of Chincoteague.

Newbery Honor Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery Honor winner, Recommended author

Standards 1, 8, and 10: When Paul asks Grandpa if the story about the galleons and the ponies is truth or legend, he responds, “Course it’s a legend. But legends be the only stories as is true.” Students can consider the events of the story and discuss the differences between a legend and other types of stories to determine the truth of Grandfather’s claim.

Standards 12 and 19: The race involved Paul and Maureen in different ways, before, during, and after the event. Students can write a newspaper account of the race from Paul or Maureen’s perspective.

Standards 9, 11, and 14: Paul and Maureen’s unwavering commitment to Phantom and Misty is a central theme of the story. Marianne Moore’s poem, “I May, I Might, I Must” invites students to consider the characters’ determination to do what is best for the horses, from the earliest encounter to giving Phantom her freedom. (26)
Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale

John Steptoe, author and illustrator
Published by Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1987

Folk Tale. Grade Level 3

The African tale of the classic Cinderella story enhanced by illustrations that resemble paintings and provide detailed renditions of the settings.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book, Coretta Scott King Award

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott award, ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator.

Standards 1, 4, 19, and 24: Students can study the rich illustrations to note the birds, the flowers, and the crafts of Africa that are depicted there. Groups of students can choose one of these topics and write a report to accompany the book in the classroom library.

Standards 1, 8, and 10: Each daughter’s personal characteristics affects the outcomes of the story. The differences in the daughters’ characters and behaviors can be discussed to prepare students to write a character study of each of the daughters.

Standards 9, 11, 14, and 16: A theme of the Cinderella story, and many other tales, is that dreams can come true. Langston Hughes’ poem, “Dreams” can be read to initiate a discussion of this common theme as evident in Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters and other tales students have read. (16)
Number the Stars

Lois Lowry, author
Published by Houghton Mifflin, 1989

Historical Fiction. Grade Level 5

The historically accurate story of a Danish family, some of whom are members of the Resistance, and their efforts during the occupation to save a Jewish family who are their friends and neighbors.

Newbery Medal Winner, ALA Notable book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author

Standards 8 and 10: Lois Lowry’s notes to the reader at the end of the book recount the facts of the Danish occupation by the Germans and the imaginary details that are woven into the story. Students can relate the facts to the story and note that fine authors are faithful to the truths of history, a model to emulate in their own writing. As they prepare to write in the future, students can be reminded to learn the facts that will inform their writing.

Standard 9 and 12: The changes in Annmarie, from a frightened child who doubted her own courage to the person who helped to save the life of her friend and her family, can lead to a discussion of character study. Students can compare Annmarie’s qualities to those of other heroic characters in the history of the period they are studying in Social Science.

Standards 9, 14, and 24: W. H. Auden’s poem, “Say This City Has Ten Million Souls” describes a German-Jewish couple’s attempts to leave their country at the time of the Holocaust. The poem can be read to initiate a study of the Holocaust and the experiences of those who tried to escape its terrible fate. (7)
Watercolors illustrate this story of a girl and her father who go out on a moon lit night to watch and listen for an owl.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book.

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author

Standard 1 and 4: Pa’s comment, “When you go owling you don’t need words.” provides an opportunity to consider the types of experiences that evoke silence, in comparison to those that can be described in words. Students can consider the ways other art forms provide opportunities for giving expression to these experiences, for example, music and art.

Standard 8 and 12: Focus: The brief time frame in which the story takes place invites readers to discuss Jane Yolen’s skill in maintaining suspense until the end of the book. Conveying the same sense of suspense, students can describe the events as the girl and her father might have recounted them to the other members of the family.

Standards 9, 14, and 19: Langston Hughes’s poem, “Winter Moon” can be read to appreciate the way the poet describes a different phase of the moon in a short verse. Students can write their own short poems to describe the Owl Moon.
"Ox-Cart Man"

Donald Hall, author; Barbara Cooney, illustrator
Published by Viking, 1979

Historical Fiction. Grade Level 2

The life of a farming family in nineteenth century New England as they experience the effects of the changes in the seasons, illustrated in the style of painting on wood.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author

Standards 1 and 8: Barbara Cooney’s illustrations, in the style of paintings on wood, can be discussed to identify the additional information the reader learns from studying the detailed scenes that accompany the simple text. Students can select one illustration, for example the scene of Portsmouth Market, and explain the facts the author was required to know in order to create the picture.

Standards 1 and 11: The story of the ox cart man who sold the goods the family made or grew, and bought the additional items they needed, can lead to a discussion of the differences and similarities between the ways goods were acquired at that time and in the present, for example, supermarkets and the farmers markets.

Standards 9 and 14: The events are described in a chronology that reflects the seasons of the year. Robert Louis Stevenson’s poem, “Sing a Song of Seasons” can be read as an introduction, and poems about the season of the year can selected from the anthology, The Seasons. (5 and 24)
The Paper Crane

Molly Bang, author and illustrator
Published by Greenwillow, 1985

Fiction. Grade Level 3

An old man visits a poor restaurant owner and repays his kindness by making an origami crane that comes to life, illustrated with three-dimensional collages.

ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1, 8, and 19: The young boy who appears in every illustration, but not in the text, invites readers to imagine who he is, to look for clues in the illustrations to suggest his qualities, and to write his story.

Standards 10 and 12: The combination of reality and fantasy invites readers to distinguish the factual from the imaginative elements in the story and to use reality and/or fantasy to predict what happens to the restaurant owner and the boy after the old man flies.

Standards 9, 14, and 19: The predictions can be expressed in the form of a haiku, after reading “Watch that giant firefly!” by Kobayashi Issa, a poem about a creature that flies away and is “gone now”. (14)
The adventures of the animals that live on Rabbit Hill and the new family who come to live in the house that has been empty for many years. This book is suitable for reading aloud to younger learners.

Newbery Medal winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book, Recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1 and 10: This allegory, a tale of friendship, courage, and generosity, told in the voices of the animals, can lead to a discussion of the characteristics of the genre and the personification of the animals, for example, the use of capital letters in the names of the animals and the personalities that are revealed in their words and actions.

Standards 8, 19, and 24: The descriptions of the animals, their habits, and the foods they eat can motivate students to write a factual report about a less familiar animal, for example, a mole or woodchuck, and to note the ways the Robert Lawson uses the factual information to develop the characters in the story.

Standards 1 and 14: Christina Rossetti’s poem, “Hurt No Living Thing” provides a context for discussing the similarities in the animals’ responses when they saw the sign, “Please Drive Carefully On Account of Small Animals”, posted by the family. Students can discuss, as well, the differences in the responses and consider the experiences of the animals that account for the similarities and the differences. (11)
The Red Book

Barbara Lehman
Published by Houghton Mifflin, 2004

Picture Book. Grade Level 4

A picture book with intricate illustrations invites readers to tell the story of the transcontinental journey of a young girl and her red book.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable book

Standards 1, 10, and 11: Students can study the detailed illustrations to extend their understandings of the picture book genre. While many picture books are written to tell a simple story to young children, The Red Book is intended for older students to tell a more complex story. Students can study the pictures and suggest the theme of the story and a more precise title for the book.

Standards 1, 8, and 14: After creating a story of the journey of the book, students can reflect upon Emily Dickinson’s poem “There is no frigate like a book”. (3)

Standards 12 and 19: Focus: In groups, students can plan a story to accompany the pictures and then write the story. After the text has been edited, they may select one of the more precise titles generated earlier or write a different title. The edited stories can be placed with the book in the classroom library.
*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

Mildred D. Taylor, author
Published by Dial, 1976

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 6

The first book in the trilogy about the Logan Family of Mississippi and their struggle to gain and keep their land and their dignity in the segregated south during the Depression.

Newbery Medal winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author

Standard 1 and 15: The description of Mr. Morrison’s voice in the scene where he meets the family, “a deep, quiet voice, like the roll of thunder”, provides a foreshadowing of the character of the man and the theme of the book, affording opportunities to discuss these elements in the title and in the text.

Standards 8, 11, and 24: Cassie’s telling of the story allows the reader to gain insights from her actions and reactions, for example, her responses to the differences between the ways Black and White children live in the “world outside the house” (the school and the stores), the fairness of the interactions between children and between children and adults, and the violence that surrounds her. These insights can motivate students to learn more about this period in the history of the United States.

Standard 9 and 14: Mildred Taylor’s note at the beginning of the book describes the origins of the story in the life of her father and the generations who lived before him provides a foundation for discussing the historical accuracy of the work and the inspiration that motivates fine authors. The poem, “Mother to Son”, by Langston Hughes is a reflection on the values that are passed from one generation to the next. (20)
Rosa

Nikki Giovanni, author; Bryan Collier, illustrator
Published by Holtzbrinck, 2005

Biography. Grade Level 6

The story of Rosa Parks and the bus ride that resulted, ultimately, in the Supreme Court ruling that made segregation illegal.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book, Coretta Scott King Award

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 1, 3, 19, and 24: Students can work in groups to investigate each of the major events in Rosa Parks’ life: the Montgomery Bus Ride, the boycott of the buses, and the Supreme Court action in 1956, and prepare reports to present to the class. Then, students can reread the book and discuss how the information increased their understanding of Rosa Parks’s story.

Standards 1, 4, 8, and 12: Rosa Parks’ personal qualities can be discussed to note the importance of effective character development by an author. Students can study the text and discuss how Nikki Giovanni helps readers to understand the qualities that made it possible for Rosa Parks to accomplish a historic feat.

Standards 9 and 14: Langston Hughes’ poem, “Democracy” reflects the aspirations and the spirit of Rosa Parks and can be discussed in relation to the book. (10)
Sarah Plain and Tall

Patricia MacLachlan, author
Published by Harper & Row, 1985

Historical Fiction. Grade Level 4

In response to an advertisement placed by a widower with two children, Sarah leaves the coast of Maine to join the family and live on the prairie.

Newbery Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable book, recommended author

Standards 1, 4, 10, and 19: The rich descriptions in the text can be discussed to learn more about author’s craft. Sarah’s description of a dune in Maine is a model for discussing this quality of Patricia MacLachlan’s writing and for creating a description of another setting in the book.

Standards 9 and 14: “Until I Saw the Sea”, a poem by Lilian Moore, can be the focus of a discussion of the pictures the children might have drawn of Sarah’s Sea with the crayons she gave to them. (16)

Standard 10 and 19: The letters the family and Sarah write to learn about each other provide models of a letter Sarah might have sent to her brother William to tell him about her new life. The students select one topic, for example, the weather, the animals, and write a letter to William from Sarah.
Shh! We’re Writing the Constitution

Jean Fritz, author; Tomie dePaola, illustrator
Published by Putnam, 1987

Historical Fiction. Grade Level 4

A meticulously factual account of the writing of the United States Constitution told and illustrated with wit and humor.

ALA Notable Book, Caldecott winning author and illustrator

English Language Arts Frameworks: Recommended author and illustrator.

Standards 1 and 4: The illustration (on page 6) of the Virginia Plan for the Government offers a model for discussing and interrelating the meanings of other critical terms: The Constitution and the Bill of Rights; the Congress: the Senate and the House of Representatives; and Chief Justice and the Supreme Court.

Standards 8, and 19: The chronology of events from the First Constitutional Congress in September, 1774 to June, 1788, when the United States became a nation, can be depicted in a time line written by one of the Founding Fathers, for example: Benjamin Franklin or James Madison.

Standards 1, 9, 14, and 24: Focus: A discussion of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s classic poem, “Paul Revere’s Ride “on the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five”, can lead to a study of the events that took place in the same time period as those in the book. (23)
The Sign of the Beaver

Elizabeth George Speare, author
Published by Yearling/Random House, 1983

Fiction. Grade Level 5

The story of a young boy who is left alone in a cabin he and his father built in a new settlement in the Maine wilderness and of the friendship he forms with a neighboring American Indian elder and his grandson.

Newbery Honor Book, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable book, recommended author

Standards 1 and 8: Respect for nature and the ways the natural world can contribute to the well being of humans is an essential part of Attean’s tradition. When Matt is left alone after his friends leave, he begins to understand how his time with Attean and his family have changed his perspective. Students can discuss how the ways and the gifts of Attean and his grandfather helped Matt to survive during the harsh winter.

Standards 1 and 11: One of the major themes of the book is the benefit to be gained from an exchange of knowledge and skills at a time when survival was a daily challenge. Students can discuss how Matt and Attean became “brothers” by sharing their talents, Matt’s teaching Attean to read and write the alphabet, and Attean’s teaching Matt to read the tribal signs that make it possible to survive in the wilderness.

Standards 9 and 14: Focus: Dwellings are an important element in the story; the cabin where Matt lives alone and the village where Attean and his family live. The haiku, “My real dwelling” by Ikkyu allows readers to reflect on the spirit of the person who resides in a dwelling, wherever it is located. (18)
A Single Shard

Linda Sue Park, author
Published by Yearling/Random House, 2001

Fiction. Grade Level 5

The story of a Korean boy who is living in dire poverty when he observes a master potter at his craft and embarks on a challenging journey.

Newbery Medal winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 3 and 24: When a respected Chinese scholar named the small wonders of the world, he included the color of Korean celadon pottery among them. Students can read the article about celadon pottery at the end of the book, search for colored illustrations of the pottery, including the Thousand Cranes Vase, and present their findings to the class.

Standards 1, 4, and 8: On his journey Min meets Crane-man who tells him “I have no gift for you beyond words”. For the rest of the journey, the man’s proverbs and stories help Min during times of challenge. Students can recall the wise man’s proverbs and stories and describe how these words help readers to understand the challenges Min faced as he carried Tree-ear’s pottery to the King’s Court.

Standards 9 and 14: In many cultures, pottery represents the traditions of the people. The book-length poem, When Clay Sings, by Byrd Baylor can be read to gain more insights into this craft and the stories told by the potters. (2)
Snowflake Bentley

Jacqueline Briggs Martin, author; Mary Azarian, illustrator
Published by Houghton Mifflin, 1998

Biography. Grade Level 6

The life of Wilson Bentley whose interest in snowflakes led him to spend his life photographing and studying them. Told in two parts, the main text and a series of panels that provide information and explanations. Illustrated with woodcuts.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 1, 8, and 10: The two parts of the book, the panels that present the facts and the main text that tells the life story, can lead to a discussion of the ways facts inform a biography and the person who reads the book.

Standards 9 and 14: Focus: The poem, “Snowflakes” by David McCord, offers an opportunity to add a poetic view of the snowflakes that Wilson Bentley studies as science. (4)

Standards 12 and 19: Students can consider the choices made by Wilson Bentley and write a character study, beginning in his childhood and ending with his final note about his life and his contributions.
The Snowy Day

Ezra Jack Keats, author and illustrator
Published by Viking, 1962

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 2

The adventures of a small boy who enjoys a snowy day and attempts to save a snowball, illustrated in bright colors and exquisite detail.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1 and 4: The description of the snowball the boy puts into his pocket, “round and firm” can motivate students to suggest words to describe what he found in his pocket the next day.

Standards 1 and 8: Students can explain why the snowball melted in the boy’s pocket and suggest how the boy might save a snowball on the next snowy day.

Standards 9, 11, and 14: Students can listen to the poem, “Snowman” (Anonymous) and note the similarities between the fate of the snowball and the snowman. (5)
*Sounder*

William Armstrong, author; James Buckley, illustrator
Published by HarperCollins, 1969

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 5

The story of a courageous African-American sharecropper and his family, told in the stark detail that conveys the violence and injustice inflicted on the people.

Newbery Medal winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery Medal winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 1, 11, and 15: The dehumanizing conditions of the share-croppers’ lives are symbolized by the fact that only the dog has a name. The human characters in the story are called “the boy”, “his mother”, and “his father”. At the end of the story, the name given to the dog is rendered meaningless when he is unable to make a sound. Students can discuss the effect of these elements on their responses to the story,

Standards 1 and 8: William Armstrong pays tribute to the teacher who inspired this story and to the power of reading to change a life. Students can learn more about the lives of share-croppers in the nineteenth-century and present their reports to introduce a discussion of the importance of reading in the harsh and cruel lives the share-croppers were required to live.

Standards 9 and 14: Langston Hughes’ poem, “Share-Croppers” describes the lives of the characters in William Armstrong’s book. (10)
Stone Soup: An Old Tale

Marcia Brown, author and illustrator
Published by Simon & Schuster, 1947

Folk Tale. Grade Level 2

A retelling of the story of hungry soldiers who enter a village and join with the initially reluctant residents to gather the ingredients for stone soup.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Standards: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1 and 4: Focus: The contributions of equipment and ingredients to making the soup can be discussed and categorized as: Things Used to Make the Soup or Things in the Soup. Students can suggest additions or substitutions to the second category to create their own favorite soups.

Standards 1, 8, 12, and 17: A discussion of the elements of characters, setting, and plot can lead to planning a dramatization of the tale and to presenting the play to an audience.

Standards 10, 14, and 16: After recalling that folktales were written to teach a lesson, students can discuss the lessons taught by this tale. The poem, “The Library” by Barbara A. Huff describes other kinds of lessons that can be learned from books. (19)
Sugaring Time

Kathryn Lasky, author; photographs by Christopher G. Knight
Published by Macmillan, 1983

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 5

A story of a family’s work at sugaring time, from tapping the trees to enjoying maple syrup on their pancakes, illustrated with black and white photographs.

Newbery Honor Book, ALA Notable Book.

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author.

Standards 1, 9, and 24: Kathryn Lasky’s description of the family’s work to produce maple syrup, from tapping to tasting, allows readers to consider the facts the author needed to know about the place and the work in order to make the story real to the reader. With the text as a model, the students can research the locations and the work of the family farm that produces fruits and vegetables.

Standards 4 and 8: The descriptive language in the text helps the reader to visualize the scenes in the story (“the crystalline whiteness of February”, icicles “dripping like popsicles in August”) and provides models of the language that students can generate to describe other scenes in the text.

Standards 9 and 14: Students can read Sara Coleridge’s poem, “Trees” and add lines to the verse that describe the maple tree, informed by the descriptive language in the text. (5)
*Swimmy*

Leo Lionni, author and illustrator  
Published by Knopf, 1963

Fiction. Picture Book

The story of a small fish that finds a way to swim safely by joining other tiny fish to form the biggest fish in the sea is enhanced by imaginative illustrations.

Caldecott Honor Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1, 4, and 15: The figurative language in the text (“fish pulled by an invisible thread”, “a forest of seaweed growing from sugar-candy rocks”), can be discussed in preparation for describing the little fish and the big fish.

Standards 1, 8, and 11: The suggested but not explicitly stated thoughts that led Swimmy to solve the problem can lead to a discussion of the lessons readers can learn about solving a problem.

Standards 1 and 14: Students can listen to D. H. Lawrence’s poem, “Little Fish”, and consider the connections between the poem and the story. (9)
A Tree is Nice

Janice May Udry, author; Marc Simont, illustrator
Published by HarperCollins, 1956

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 1

A picture about book about trees and their place in the lives of people and other creatures.

Caldecott Medal, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book

Standards 1 and 4: The text and the illustrations can be used to name the parts of a tree and to create a poster that presents the information.

Standards 1 and 8: The students can discuss the ways a tree contributes to the lives of people, birds, and animals.

Standards 1 and 14: The illustration of the swing in the text affords an opportunity to suggest details that might be added to the picture after listening to the poem, “The Swing” by Robert Louis Stevenson. (26)
The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Eric Carle, author and illustrator
Published by Philomel, 1970

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 2

The development of a butterfly from a caterpillar is told in a sequence that is marked by the days of the week, illustrated with bright colors on pages that vary in size.

ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1 and 4: The fruits eaten by the caterpillar, and the vegetables that can be eaten by the reader can be identified and categorized by color and shape.

Standards 1 and 8: The chronology of the development of the butterfly, from Sunday to Sunday, can be used to retell the sequence of the events of each day.

Standards 9, 14, and 19: After listening to the haiku, “Wake up, butterfly” by Matsuo Basho, students can suggest other reasons why they wish the butterfly to wake up and write alternate lines to end the poem. (14)
Where the Wild Things Are

Maurice Sendak, author and illustrator
Published by Harper Collins, 1963

Fantasy. Grade Level 2

A little boy’s journey to a place where the wild things are ends where someone loves him best of all, illustrated with imaginative drawings of wild creatures in wild places.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable Book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author/illustrator

Standards 1 and 4: The detailed illustrations of the wild creatures and the descriptions of the sounds they make suggest characteristics of familiar animals that can be used to name the creatures.

Standards 1, 8 and 12: The fact that Max leaves a fantastic place where he is the king can provide a focus for discussing the reasons why Max decided to take off his crown and sail away.

Standards 9 and 14: Karla Kuskin’s poem, “The Middle of the Night” affords an opportunity to relate the poem to the story. (19)
Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears: A West African Tale

Verna Aardema, author; Leo and Diane Dillon, illustrators
Published by Dial, 1976

Folk Tale. Grade Level 3

Annotation: A pourquoi tale enhanced by remarkable illustrations.

Caldecott Medal Winner, ALA Notable book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book.

Standards 1 and 4: The creatures that move along the ground, those that fly, and those that do both provide the content for a chart of the characteristics that explain the differences.

Standards 1, 8 and 16: The fact that each event in the story leads to the next problem can lead to a discussion of the clues that allowed the iguana to solve the problem. Students can relate the story to the characteristics of the explanatory tale.

Standards 9, 10, and 14: Explanatory tales were created to explain the mysteries of the world before scientists discovered the answers. Other stories tell of imaginary adventures. David McCord’s poem, “Books Fall Open” affords an opportunity to discuss different genre and the author’s purpose in writing each type of story. (6)
Working Cotton

Sherley Anne Williams, author; Carol Byard, illustrator
Published by Harcourt, 1992

Realistic Fiction. Grade Level 3

A very young child joins her family as they spend long days with other migrant families working in the cotton fields. Poignant award winning illustrations.

Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book, Coretta Scott King Award

English Language Arts Frameworks: Caldecott winner, ALA Notable Book.

Standards 1, 4, and 15: The author’s use of figurative language (In the early morning, “everyone speaks in smoky whispers”) can lead to a discussion of the meanings of these phrases and to generating language to describe other scenes in the text.

Standard 8 and 12: The story of one long day in the family’s life, from early morning until late at night allows readers to note the sequence of events, and to retell the story the child might have related to describe the day.

Standards 9 and 14: The harsh life of the child invites young readers to reflect on the dreams that may have helped her to survive. Langston Hughes’ poem, “Dream Variations” affords an opportunity to consider the challenges in her young life and the dreams she might have at the end of the day. (20)
A Wrinkle in Time

Madeleine L’Engle, author
Published by Farrar, 1962

Science Fiction. Grade Level 6

The story of the space journey of two children who seek to find their father, helped by a friend and three unusual creatures.

Newbery medal, ALA Notable book

English Language Arts Frameworks: Newbery winner, ALA Notable Book, recommended author

Standards 1 and 10: The fact that science fiction is informed by current knowledge can be the focus of a discussion of the advances in the science of space travel. A Wrinkle in Time was published one year after the first space flight by an American astronaut was launched from Cape Canaveral, now the Kennedy Space Center. To Space and Back by Sally Ride, the first female astronaut, provides an updated understanding of space travel.

Standards 1, 8, and 12: Mrs. Whatsit’s comment that “Life is like a sonnet. You’re given the form but you have to write the sonnet yourself can serve to focus a discussion of the characters in the story. Students can select a character and suggest the “sonnet” that might have been written about the experience of the journey.

Standards 9 and 14: Walt Whitman’s poem, “When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer” describes an earthly perspective on the atmosphere and invites readers to reflect on the ways the stars can be viewed from the ground. (12)
General Standards

Language Strand:

1. Discussion
2. Questioning, Listening, or Contributing
3. Oral Presentation
4. Vocabulary and Concept Development

Reading and Literature Strand:

7. Beginning Reading
8. Understanding a Text
9. Making Connections
10. Genre
11. Theme
12. Fiction
14. Poetry
15. Style and Language
16. Myth, Traditional, and Classic Literature
18. Dramatic Reading and Performance

Composition Strand:

19. Writing
24. Research
Poetry References


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