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**South Carolina Children's Book Award Nominees**
**2003 - 2004**

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| [All the Way Home](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#All the Way Home) | [Down Cut Shin Creek: The  Packhorse Librarians of Kentucky](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#down cut) | [Love That Dog](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#love that dog) | [Oddhopper Opera: A Bug's Garden of Verses](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#oddhopper) |
| [Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart: The Story of Amber and Essie Told Here in Poems and Pictures](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Amber) | [Fair Weather: A Novel](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#fair) | [Love, Ruby Lavender](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#love ruby lavendar) | [The Other Side](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#other) |
| [The Butterfly](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Butterfyl) | [Gleam and Glow](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#gleam) | [Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#martin) | [Owen Foot, Super Spy](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#owen) |
| [The Chimpanzees I Love: Saving Their World and Ours](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Chimp) | [Goin' Someplace Special](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Goin) | [My Dog, My Hero](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#my dog) | [The Secret School](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#secret) |
| [Coolies](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#coolies) | [Leonardo's Horse](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Leonardo) | [The Mysterious Matter of I.M. Fine](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#mysterious) | [When the Circus Came to Town](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#when) |

***All the Way Home***
**Patricia Reilly Giff**
**Delacorte Press,  2001**
**169 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
It is the fall of 1941.  The Brooklyn Dodgers have a chance at the pennant and Mariel and Brick have a chance at making their dreams come true.  Mariel dreams of finding the mother who disappeared after leaving her in a hospital for polio victims.  Brick wants to save his friend's farm and bring his family back together after the devastating orchard fire drove them apart to find work.  First they have to reach Windy Hill, NY, two hundred miles away by bus.  And, if they do get there, can they meet the challenges that lie ahead?  Supported by loving families and their powerful friendship, this story of a time past comes to life and has an inspiring conclusion.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Lily’s Crossing*and *Nora Ryan’s Song*, both award winning books by Patricia Reilly Giff.
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Have students conduct research on the Great Depression.
Have students conduct research on the polio epidemic and compare to epidemics that are prevalent in the world today.
**WEB SITES:**
[Patricia Reilly Giff Teacher Resource File](http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/giff.htm)
[Patricia Reilly Giff: About this Author](http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/authors/giff.html)
[Book Review](http://www.ala.org/booklist/v98/oc2/61giff.html)
**BOOK TALK:**
During the summer of 1941, two brave and caring children meet and share a great adventure.  Mariel, a polio victim, lives in Brooklyn with her adopted mom, Loretta.  Loretta nursed Mariel in the Windy Hill Hospital when she was four and adopted her when her family never returned to claim her.  Mariel has learned to live with the prejudice and fear people show toward her as a cripple.  Some people even think she might infect them, and therefore it requires courage every time she leaves the safety of her home.
Brick is sent to live with Mariel and Loretta after fire destroys his family's Windy Hill orchard and farm.  After a rough start, Mariel and Brick learn to trust each other and embark on a journey to their shared home, Windy Hill.  Their stories mingle in such a wonderful way and the conclusion to their adventure of discovery is very satisfying.  To find out how these delightful characters resolve their conflicts, you really have to read this book!
***Prepared by:  Marcia Russo***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Amber was Brave, Essie Was Smart: The Story of Amber and Essie Told Here in Poems and Pictures***
**Vera B. Williams**
**Greenwillow, 2001**
**72 Pages**

**SUMMARY:**
Two sisters help each other deal with life while their mother is working and their father is in jail.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*The Railway Children*by E. Nesbit
*Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli
*Out of the Dump: Writings and Photographs by Children from Guatemala* by Kristine Franklin and Nancy McGirr
*It's Not Hard to Worry: Stories for Children about Poverty* by John M.   Barrett
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Social Studies:**
1.  Discuss how poverty can affect children.  As a class, create a project that can help children in the community who, like Amber and Essie, might not have enough to eat or sufficient warm clothes to wear.
2.  Research how children are affected when their parents are incarcerated and how many children in the United States have parents who are imprisoned.
3.  Discuss how many students in the class are “latchkey” kids and make a chart that you can duplicate for everyone with ways that latchkey kids can stay safe when their parents are not home.  Distribute your list to other classes who have latchkey kids.
**WEB SITES:**
[Biographical Information on Vera B. Williams](http://www.kidsreads.com/authors/au-williams-vera.asp)
[Vera Williams Biography](http://www.edupaperback.org/authorbios/Williams_VeraB.html)
[National Center for Children in Poverty](http://www.nccp.org/)
**BOOK TALK:**
In this poignant prose poem of two very young girls living in poverty, Vera B. Williams takes young readers to places they may not have been before:  into a poverty-stricken urban apartment where sisters Essie and Amber must feed and entertain themselves in the absence of their working mother.  Williams’s illustrations, however, temper some of the sadness that the story expresses.  The black and white sketches interspersed throughout the chapters, as well as the colorful portraits of the girls and their family at the beginning and end of the book help to lighten the mood.  The honesty of *Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart* will leave readers pondering long after they close its pages.
 I recently read *Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart* with a five-year old British child who is very well loved and cared for.  Naomi couldn't imagine her parents ever leaving her alone and said that if her mother hadn't enough money for a baby-sitter, she would very nicely ask a neighbor to keep her and her brothers until she could come home.  Although the idea of being too poor to afford a baby-sitter was almost beyond this child's imagination, I was glad that Williams’s written portraits of these two little girls were able to reach into Naomi’s world just enough to make her realize that many children are not as blessed or as wealthy as she is and that many poor children's parents have many fewer options than hers.  Williams deserves praise for her gentle but realistic portrayal of the lives of two sisters who have little more than one another.
***Prepared by: Dr. Michelle Martin***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***The Butterfly***
**Patricia Polacco**
**Philomel Books, 2000**
**50 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
During the Nazi occupation of France, Monique’s mother hides a Jewish family in their basement and tries to help them escape to freedom.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Donut You Know There's a War on?* by James Stevenson
*Fireflies in the Dark* by Susan Goldman Rubin
*Snow Treasure* by Marie McSwigan
*Lily’s Crossing* by Patricia Reilly Giff
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Research World War II, Nazi occupation of France, Jewish hardships.
**Social Studies:**
Compare hiding of Jewish families with “underground railroad” in America.
**WEB SITES:**
[Patricia Polacco Web site](http://www.patriciapolacco.com/)
[Teaching Ideas for Use with Jewish Themed Literature](http://www.jecc.org/litvid/holo4.htm)
[Righteous Gentiles](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shtetl/righteous)
**BOOK TALK:**
Nazis have marched into our small village.  They are everywhere in their tall black boots.  It is war!  One night I see a little ghost sitting on the end of my bed and when I tell my mother about it, she tells me that it was not a ghost but a young Jewish girl who – along with her family – has been hiding in the basement.  I bring her grass, flowers, and beautiful butterflies from the outside world every day.  One night while we are playing secretly in my room, we are discovered by a neighbor.  Because of this, they must flee.  Read this touching story of courage and friendship and find out what happens to them.  Will they ever be free like a butterfly?
***Prepared by:  Nancy Bull***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

**The Chimpanzees I Love: Saving Their World and Ours**
**Jane Goodall**
**Scholastic Press, 2001**
**80 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
This is an autobiographical account of Jane Goodall’s life and work in the Tanzanian research center in Gombe National Park.  Carefully detailed and explained, Goodall relates her research findings on chimp behavior, the animals’ relationships, habitat, and especially the traits that make them “more like humans than any other creature living today.”
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*My Life With the Chimpanzees* by Jane Goodall
*The Chimpanzee Family Book* by Jane Goodall
*Jane Goodall: Pioneer Researcher*by Jayne Pettit
*Chimpanzees* by Claire Robinson
*Chimpanzees* by Patricia Fink Martin
*Jane Goodall: Living With the Chimps* by Julie Fromer
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**:
**Language Arts:**
Imagine you are Jane Goodall, working on chimpanzee research at  Gombe.  Write a five-day dairy of what you do, see, and experience in your work.  Use information from the book and other resources to make your account realistic.
Read other books about the dangers facing chimpanzees and other  endangered animals.  Write a poem that expresses your feelings about the uncertainties these animals face.
**Social Studies:**
Conduct research on Gombe National Park and Tanzania.  Create a travel guide for the region, including a map and description of the climate.  Include a picture of the area from the Internet.
Create a timeline of Jane Goodall’s life and work.
**Science:**
Imagine that you are responsible for adding animals to the Endangered Species List.  You know of an animal that you think needs to be added  to the list.  Conduct research.  Then prepare a report for your boss, who is the head of the World Wildlife Fund, detailing the animal's habitat, diet, and behaviors.  Tell why you think that animal should be protected under the Endangered Species Act.
**WEB SITES:**
[Jane Goodall Institute](http://www.janegoodall.org/)
[Chimp Researchers](http://www.discoverchimpanzees.org/)
[World Wildlife Fund, Creators of the Endangered Species List](http://www.worldwildlife.org/)
**BOOK TALK:**
Do you know that the chimpanzee is the animal that is most like humans?  They have thumbs like we do, they use tools like we do, they even have families and feelings much like we do.  Chimpanzees live mainly in Africa, and although there used to be many thousands of chimps in the wild, today there are very few left.  Poachers kill them for their pelts and for their value as souvenirs.  There is hope for the chimpanzee, however.  A woman named Jane Goodall is a researcher who has studied chimpanzees in their natural habitat, and she has written many interesting books about them.  Her newest book is called *The Chimpanzees I Love: Saving Their World and Ours*.  Sure, you say, saving the chimpanzee might be important, but what does it have to do with saving my world?  Read this book and you may learn that all living things – even down to the chimpanzees – have to rely on each other.
***Prepared by:  Susanne Hogan***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Coolies***
**Yin**
**Philomel Books, 2001**
**40 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
A young boy hears the story of his great-great-grandfather and his brother who came to the United States to make a better life for themselves, helping to build the transcontinental railroad.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Grandfather's Journey*by Allen Say
*Full Steam Ahead: The Race to Build a Transcontinental Railroad* by Rhoda Blumberg
*Building the Transcontinental Railroad* by James Barter
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Conduct an author study of Yin.  What is meant by first generation Chinese American?
Use this book as a read aloud to foster discussions about discrimination.
Discuss the Cantonese language.
**Guidance:**
Discuss derogatory names given to people.
How can students help foster understanding and friendships?
**Science:**
Research clipper ships vs. steam ships.
**WEB SITES:**
[Chinese American Contribution to Transcontinental Railroad](http://cprr.org/Museum/Chinese.html)
[Review of Coolies](http://www.papertigers.org/book_reviews/USA/pacificReader/Coolies.html)
**BOOK TALK:**
Shek and Wong, two Chinese brothers, come to mid-nineteenth-century America to work on the transcontinental railroad.  The two month trip from China is difficult, but nothing in comparison to the indignities and danger that they endure as workers on the railroad.  They are referred to in a derogatory manner as Coolies which means “bitter labor” in Chinese.  And bitter it was. The brothers endure more than they could have imagined – bleeding hands, blasting dynamite, and treacherous avalanches.  All for very little pay.  This book reveals actual events in the history of the American railroad while celebrating the love and loyalty between two brothers who were determined not only to survive, but to succeed.
***Prepared by: Joyce Wolfe***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Down Cut Shin Creek: The Packhorse Librarians of Kentucky***
**Kathi Appelt and Jeanne Cannella Schmitzer**
**HarperCollins, 2001**
**58 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
This is an inspiring and gripping true story of the courageous librarians who overcame many hardships to bring books to the poverty-stricken rural areas of Kentucky during the Great Depression.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Mary on Horseback: Three Mountain Stories* by Rosemary Wells
*More Than Anything Else* by Marie Bradby
*The Inside-Outside Book of Libraries*by Julie Cummins
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Have students keep a journal of the daily life of a pack horse librarian describing the people she meets along her route and the hardships she overcomes to deliver books to her patrons.
**Social Studies:**
Research FDR’s New Deal program, particularly the WPA , and some of the ways these programs brought relief during the Depression era.
**Math:**
To give students a sense of the depth of the poverty during the Depression, have students create a bare minimum budget for their household.  Have them decide what they absolutely have to have as income each month to survive.
**WEB SITES:**
[Book Women of Kentucky Information](http://www.kdla.state.ky.us/Statelib/KYPackhorseLib.htm)
[Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum](http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/)
[New Deal Network: The Great Depression. the 1930's and the Roosevelt Administration](http://www.kdla.state.ky.us/)
**BOOK TALK:**
Just imagine, it is 4:30 in the morning and a woman is riding an old horse up a cold, steep mountain path;  it is freezing and a light rain is falling.  The woman's saddlebag is filled with books to be delivered to poverty stricken people who live along her route.  Enthusiastically awaiting the tattered books and magazines in her saddlebags are families and school children. One woman walks nine miles to meet the book woman and exchange her books and magazines.  This is a day in the life of a pack-horse librarian.  The authors present captivating information which takes readers back to the Depression era in Appalachia.  This book is sure to leave readers with an appreciation for the pack-horse librarians and a desire to discover more about the Depression Era, as well as FDR’s programs that were established to relieve the  poverty and suffering during this time.
***Prepared by: Mary Tyler***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Fair Weather:  A Novel***
**Richard Peck**
**Dial Books, 2001**
**139 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
Thirteen–year-old Rosie and members of her family travel to Chicago to visit their Aunt Euterpe and attend the World’s Columbian Exposition.  The experience turns out to be life changing for everyone.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Buffalo Bill and the Pony Express*by Eleanor Coerr
*Exploring the Chicago World’s Fair*by Laurie Lawlor
*Bill Pickett: Rodeo-Ridin’ Cowboy* by Andrea D. Pinkney
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Research Buffalo Bill and Lillian Russell.
Write about an interesting family member
Write about living with a grandparent or visiting a grandparent.
**Social Studies:**
Study the American West, Yellowstone Park, Plains Indian people.
**WEB SITES:**
[World's Columbian Exposition Web site](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA96/WCE/title.html)
[World's Columbian Exposition Website](http://www.chicagohs.org/history/expo.html)
[Buffalo Bill](http://www.americanwest.com/pages/buffbill.htm)
[Buffalo Bill](http://www.buffalobill.com/)
**BOOK TALK:**
This story takes place in rural Illinois in 1893.  Thirteen–yearold Rosie lives on a farm with her parents, her granddad and her siblings, Lottie and Buster.  When Aunt Euterpe invites the family to visit her in Chicago and attend the World’s Columbian Exposition their quiet life changes.  During the first 48 hours in Chicago, the clan manages to run off the household help and embarrass their aunt in front of some of Chicago's most prominent ladies. The grandfather is a little senile and cantankerous, and his antics will keep you laughing. Famous firsts are woven into this story such as the first Ferris wheel and the introduction of hamburgers and postcards.  Peck's unforgettable characters and fast paced action will keep you in stitches as a colorful chapter inAmerican history isrevealed.
***Prepared by:  Edith Ley***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Gleam and Glow***
**Eve Bunting**
**Harcourt, 2001**
**32 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
After his home is destroyed by war, eight-year-old Viktor finds hope in the survival of two special fish.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*So Far From the Sea* by Eve Bunting
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Study poetic similes that abound in this book.
**Guidance:**
Discuss impact of war on families and children, including separation of families
How does this book portray life in refugee camps for children?
**WEB SITES:**
[Biography of Eve Bunting](http://www.friend.ly.net/scoop/biographies/buntingeve/index.html)
[Poetry Site](http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/web/poetry.html)
[Meet Afghan Children from the Red Cross](http://kidsfund.redcross.org/dollar.html)
**BOOK TALK:**
My name is Marina and I live in Bosnia.  Our country is fighting in a war and my father has left to join in the fight.  A family came by yesterday on the way to a refugee camp and gave me some fish.  Look at them.  I named one of them Gleam and one Glow.  Aren't they beautiful?  My mom says we will have to leave soon because it is getting too dangerous to stay any longer – the war is coming closer.  My brother, Viktor says we will have to leave my fish in the pond behind our house.  They are so beautiful and I don't want to leave them. Inspired by real events, Bunting presents the difficult topic of war with clarity and sensitivity.   Read this beautiful book about a family, a war and a dazzling discovery found when they return home.
***Prepared by:  Leigh Ann Vitale***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

**Goin’ Someplace Special**
**Patricia McKissack**
**Atheneum Books, 2001**
**34 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
In segregated 1950’s Nashville, Tennessee, a young African American girl braves a series of indignities and obstacles to get to one of the few integrated places in town: the public library.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Martin’s Big Words* by Doreen Rappaport
*The Land* by Mildred D. Taylor
*Rivka’s Way* by Teri Kanefield
*Carver: A Life in Poems* by Marilyn Nelson
*The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles
*More Than Anything Else* by Marie Bradby
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Read aloud *Goin’ Someplace Special* and *More Than Anything Else.*Discuss the importance of learning to read. Have students talk about when and how they learned to read.
**WEB SITES:**
[Voices from the Gaps: Patricia McKissack](http://voices.cla.umn.edu/authors/patriciamckissack.html)
[Patricia McKissack Site from Kent State University](http://dept.kent.edu/virginiahamiltonconf/mckiss.htm)
**BOOK TALK:**
You know that you should be some place other than where you are.  It isn't safe here; there are dangers all around and they are pressing in, getting closer.  If only you could find that safe haven!!!  It is close, so close, but you just can't find it.  The danger is getting closer and closer and safety is just around the corner.  Now open your eyes and the nightmare is over.  You are awake and safe in your own bed.  It was all a dream.  Not so for Tricia Ann. The dangers and indignities of a segregated Nashville, Tennessee in the 1950’s are with her whenever she ventures out of her neighborhood.  Tricia Ann must brave her real nightmare in order to get to someplace special.  Tricia begins her trip and takes us along with her as she journeys across the city to the public library.
***Prepared by:  Jane S. Chinault***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Leonardo’s Horse***
**Jean Fritz**
**G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 2001**
**48 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
A story of the life of Leonardo da Vinci focusing on the unfinished sculpture of a statue of a horse which caught the attention of a pilot named Charlie Dent who took the initiative to bring Leonardo’s dream to life.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Pish, Posh, Said Hieronymus Bosch* by Nancy Willard
*Michelangelo* by Diane Stanley
*The Starry Night* by Neil Waldman
*Camille and the Sunflowers:  A Story About Vincent Van Gogh* by Laurenace  Anholt
*The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins: An Illuminating History of Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins, Artist and Lecturer* by Barbara Kerley
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Art:**
Discuss horses in art.
Reseach Leonardo da Vinci and his works
Research Charlie Dent
Practice drawing horses
**Language Arts:**
Read a biography on Leonardo da Vinci
**WEB SITES:**
[Jean Fritz Page from Internet School Library Media Center](http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/fritz.htm)
[Review of Leonardo's Horse](http://www.ala.org/booklist/v98/oc2/60fritz.html)
[Leonardo da Vinci's Horse Web site](http://www.leonardoshorse.org/)
**BOOK TALK:**
Leonardo da Vinci – just his name evokes wonder-filled visions of beautiful works of art from paintings, to statues, to drawings of fantastic flying machines.  One of the works that Leonardo began was never finished in his lifetime – a statue of a horse for the Duke of Milan to give to his father.  *Leonardo’s Horse* begins with a brief look at Leonardo da Vinci’s life and then his meetings and plans for the horse.  Leonardo studied horses.  He drew them, he measured them, and he learned all about their muscles and how they worked together.  He actually did construct a 24-foot high clay model but then the real problems began – how to actually cast in bronze that large of a statue!  Then Leonardo was distracted by other projects and even a war interfered with his statue.  The Duke took all of the metal Leonardo had collected for making the horse to use for weapons. Then when the French attacked, they destroyed the clay model! All was lost and Leonardo worried about his horse until his dying day.  In 1977, Charlie Dent, an airline pilot read about Leonardo’s grief over not finishing the horse and decided that he would complete the task.  He studied, measured, and drew horses like Leonardo did.  Dent had a special domed building made to work in and began constructing the new horse.  However, Charlie Dent’s untimely death in 1994 ended his work.  Was the horse ever to be finished?  Read *Leonardo’s Horse* and follow Leonardo da Vinci’s and Charlie Dent’s stories to find out.
***Prepared by: Skye Hall***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Love That Dog***
**Sharon Creech**
**HarperCollins, 2001**
**112 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
Jack hates poetry.  Only girls write it and every time he tries to, his brain feels empty.  But his teacher, Ms. Stretchberry, won’t stop giving her class poetry assignments – and Jack can’t avoid them.  But then something amazing happens.  The more he writes, the more he learns he does have something to say.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
**Professional:**
*The Art of Teaching Writing* by Lucy Calkins
*Writer’s Workshop:  Working through the Hard Parts and They’re All Hard Parts* by Katie Wood Ray
**Students:**
*Brown Angels: An Album of Pictures and Verse* by Walter Dean Myers
*Collected Poems: 1909-1939, Volume I* by William Carlos Williams
*The Poetry of Robert Frost* edited by Edward Connery Latham
*All the Small Poems and Fourteen More* by Valerie Worth
*Street Music: City Poems* by Arnold Adoff
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Author studies - have students study about Sharon Creech and several of her books.
Writer’s Notebooks - have students keep writers’ notebooks similar to the one Jack keeps in the book, responding to what they are reading and communicating with their teacher.
*Love That Dog* is a great read-aloud.  Have students share their reactions to the poems in the book as well as their      reactions to Jack’s comments about them.
Have students write “shape” poems inspired by the poem Jack wrote that was shaped like a dog.
**Guidance:**
Guidance counselors can use this book in counseling students who have lost a pet or loved one.
**WEB SITES:**
[Sharon Creech's Web site](http://www.sharoncreech.com/)
[Interview with Sharon Creech](http://www2.scholastic.com/teachers/authorsandbooks/authorstudies/authorhome.jhtml?authorID=2152&collateralID=10656&displayName=Interview+Transcript)
**BOOK TALK:**
Jack hates poetry and thinks only girls write it, until his teacher, Ms. Stretchberry, inspires him to read poetry and the work of Walter Dean Myers, where he discovers a poem that touches his heart.  Jack’s teacher says that Jack has poetry inside him and she knows what to do to help this budding poet blossom into a writer.  As Jack attempts to read and write poetry, he realizes he does have something to say, and that others will want to hear what it is.  Jack is also instrumental in getting Mr. Myers himself to come to his school to talk about his poetry.  After this visit, Jack will be forever changed.
***Prepared by:  Janet Kittrell***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Love, Ruby Lavender***
**Debbie Wiles**
**Harcourt, 2001**
**188 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
When her quirky grandmother goes to Hawaii for the summer, nine-year-old Ruby learns to survive on her own in Mississippi by writing letters, befriending chickens as well as the new girl in town, and finally coping with her grandfather’s death.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Halmoni’s Day* by Edna Coe Bercaw
*Grandmothers* by Lola M. Schaefer
*Grandma’s Records* by Eric Valasquez
*Just Grandma and Me* by Mercer Mayer
*Keeping Up With Grandma* by John Winch
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Guidance:**
Help children deal with the death of a grandparent through the use of children’s  literature.
**Language Arts:**
Read and discuss *Little Bear’s Grandad* by Nigel Gray and *The Granddad Tree* by Trish Cooke.
Honor grandparents during annual Grandparent’s Day at school.
**WEB SITES:**
[Debbie Wiles Web Site](http://www.deborahwiles.com/)
[Grandparents: Best Friends](http://www.4children.org/news/701books.htm)
**BOOK TALK:**
Meet Ruby Lavender.  She is nine years old and has red hair and freckles.  She lives in the small town of Halleluia, Mississippi – “Population: 400 Good Friendly Folks And A Few Old Soreheads.”  Ruby’s best friend is her grandmother, Miss Eula.  Ruby and her grandmother write each other every day and leave their letters in the trunk of an old tree.  One summer, Ruby’s grandmother leaves to go visit her son in Hawaii whose wife has just had a baby.  Ruby is not about to willingly share her grandmother with any baby living in Hawaii.  Ruby and her grandmother continue to write each other and Ruby passes her time reading to her chickens and sweeping the floor of her aunt’s store.  This refreshing novel points out how daily events often take on huge proportions in the minds of children and that with love, support, and kindness, they can find their way.
***Prepared by:  Susan Adams***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Martin’s Big Words:The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.***
**Doreen Rappaport**
**Sun/Hyperion Books,  2001**
**34 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
This inspiring picture book biography celebrates Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as a great leader, preacher and politician.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Carver: A Life in Poems* by Marilyn Nelson
*Martin Luther King, Jr.: Young Man with a Dream* by Dharathula Millender
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Have students rewrite the sentences in their own words.
**Social Studies:**
Use this book during Black History Month as a read aloud.
The illustrations of the marches only show men.  Where are the women and  children?  Were they participants?
**Art:**
Have students make their own books and pictures of Martin’s big words.  What would the students use instead of what the illustrator did?
**WEB SITES:**
[Doreen Rappaport Web Site](http://www.doreenrappaport.com/)
[The King Center Web Site](http://thekingcenter.com/)
[The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project at Stanford University](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/)
**BOOK TALK:**
*Martin’s Big Words* is about Martin Luther King, Jr. and some of the important events in his life.  One life time impression he had when growing up was how segregated the South was in the 1950’s.  Seeing signs that had “white only” were deflected by his parents words which were, “Anyone can do anything.”  As he grew up, he became fascinated by Ghandi and how he helped India to become free without using violence.  That became his passion, to use words and non-violence to make a change. This book is very descriptive and takes many of King’s words to inspire the reader to think about what they say and do and to treat all mankind with love in their heart. On the cover, the artist shows King with his eyes glancing to the side.  In the final portrait, he is looking directly at the reader, his eyes offering an unmistakable challenge.
***Prepared by: Becky Marshall***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***My Dog, My Hero***
**Betsy Byars**
**H. Holt, 2000**
**47 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
A panel of three judges must decide which of the eight finalists (dogs) should win the “My Hero” medal.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Shelter Dogs: Amazing Stories of Adopted Strays* by Peg Kehret
*Because of Winn Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo
*White Fang* by Jack London
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
After reading the book have each student write a one page essay on which dog they think should have won the award and why.
Have students write a report on a person who is a hero to them.  This could be a family member, a teacher or a well-known person.
Have students use this book as an example of point of view, characterization, and plot construction.
**WEB SITES:**
[Betsy Byars Web Site](http://w3.iac.net/~feguy/betsybyars/index.html)
[Working Dog Heroes and Champions](http://www.workingdogs.com/doc0013.htm)
[Famous Dog Quotes and Quotations](http://www.useful-information.info/quotations/dog_quotes.html)
**BOOK TALK**:
Has your dog ever done something brave?  If he has I bet you thought he deserved to get a medal!  Newbery Medal winner Betsy Byars and her daughters collaborate for the first time in this collection of stories about heroic dogs.  Each of the tales is told from the point of view of a contestant entering a dog in the "My Hero" contest.  Drama, humor, and love fuel these short, well-written stories.
***Prepared by:  Jessie Catalano***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***The Mysterious Matter of I.M.Fine***
**Diane Stanley**
**HarperCollins, 2001**
**201 pages**

**SUMMARY**:
When Franny and Beamer notice the kids in their school acting weird after reading each new book in the popular Chillers horror series, they start investigating the books and the author, I.M. Fine.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Edwina Victorious* by Susan Bonners
*Dear Napoleon, I Know You’re Dead, But….* by Elvira Woodruff
*Dear Whiskers* by Ann Whitehead
*The Year of Miss Agnes* by Kirkpatrick Hill
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Discuss the possible meaning of the author’s name, I.M. Fine.  Is the name an accurate description of the author’s personality?
Imagine you were Franny and Beamer.  What would you do when you noticed the kids acting strangely?
Would you have made I.M.Fine rewrite the new book?  If yes, what changes would you have made?
**Math:**
I.M.Fine’s home is described in detail.  Choose a partner and create a 3-D model of it.
Based on the description of Wimberly, draw a map of the town and highlight the Kute Kandy Company, the library, the
diner and I.M. Fine’s house.
**Social Studies:**
Research Senator Joseph McCarthy and McCarthyism in the 1950’s and discuss the affect it had on the people in the U.S. then and now.
**WEB SITES:**
[The Official Diane Stanley Web site](http://www.dianestanley.com/)
[Writing Books for Children](http://www.write4kids.com/)
**BOOK TALK:**
“NOOOO!  Make it go away!  Make it go away! Oh no! My head’s killing me!  Make it stop!”
What do you do when kids all across the country suddenly have a Jelly Worm obsession, experience exploding headaches, slither and hiss like snakes and see ghosts?  You find out what’s causing these things to happen, right?  Join Franny and Beamer on their journey to discover the truth and the power of the written word.
***Prepared by:  Becky James***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Oddhopper Opera:A Bug’s Garden of Verses***
**Kurt Cyrus**
**Harcourt, 2001**
**32 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
This book is a fantastic poetry collection that follows many different garden insects and animals from the end of winter through spring and summer to fall.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Barking Spiders and Other Such Stuff: Poetry for Children*by C.J. Heck
*Lizards, Frogs, and Polliwogs* by Douglas Florian
*It’s Raining Pigs & Noodles* by Jack Prelutsky
*Rumpus of Rhymes: A Book of Noisy Poems* by Bobbi Katz
*The Pig in the Spigot: Poems* by Richard Wilbur
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Have students study techniques used in writing such as alliteration,  onomatopoeia and rhyming.
**Science:**
Research the various types of bugs and insects mentioned in the story.
**WEB SITES:**
[Insect Zoo](http://www.ent.iastate.edu/zoo/enhanced4.html)
[This is a great site with insect facts and pictures on over 100 different spiders and insects.](http://www.yahooligans.com/content/animals/insects)
**BOOK TALK:**
Kurt Cyrus begins *Oddhopper Opera* with a garden about to awaken after winter.
“Once upon a Garden rotten,
twice forlorn and half forgotten…
Drip-drip-cold and wet.
Winter isn’t over yet.
Drip-drip-soaking, sopping,
Always dripping, never stopping.
Drip-drip-sound of thunder
wakes a weevil way down under.
Drip-drip-burrow deep.
Wait for spring.  Go back to sleep.”
Then the insects start to awaken in the garden as spring and summer unfold.
Meet the aphids, beetles, and bees,
as well as the snake, the centipedes, and the ants-if you please.
We meet the pollywogs
Who turn into frogs,
And then spiders and the snails
Who leave long icky trails.
What do the insects do all spring and summer long?
Then comes the fall, no matter what may go wrong.
Read *Oddhopper Opera* by Mr. Kurt Cyrus
   And then come tell us all about it-
   Just sit right here beside us.
***Prepared by:  Mary Hall***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***The Other Side***
**Jacqueline Woodson**
**G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2001**
**32 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
Two girls, one white and one African-American, gradually get to know each other as they sit on the fence that divides their town.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Rosa Parks:  My Story* by Rosa Parks
*The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles
*Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Language Arts:**
Have students pretend they are living in the early 1960’s.  Have them write letters to Martin Luther King, Jr. letting him know how they, as individuals, can make a difference in the fight against racism.
**Social Studies:**
Study the history of the Civil Rights movement.
Plan a trip to Columbia to visit the newly restored home of civil rights activist, Modjeska Simpkins.
**Guidance:**
Discuss caring and respect and how these important attributes contribute to friendship.
**WEB SITES**:
[Jacqueline Woodson Web Site](http://www.jacquelinewoodson.com/)
[Modjeska Monteith Simkins Web site](http://www.usca.edu/aasc/simkins.htm)
**BOOK TALK**:
Written from the point of view of a black child, this book uses a powerful symbol – a fence – to emphasize the racial division in a southern town.  Two young girls, Clover who is black and Annie who is white, have both been instructed by their parents not to go on the other side of the fence because it is not safe.  Eventually the story finds both girls and all of their friends sitting on the fence together.  “Someday somebody’s going to come along and knock this old fence down,” Annie says.  What a great metaphor the author has created for knocking down old beliefs and barriers that keep people apart.  This book is a great way to show that change can happen little by little – one child at a time.
***Prepared by: Aileen Holland***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***Owen Foote, Super Spy***
**Stephanie Greene**
**Clarion, 2001**
**90 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
Owen and his friends decide that spying on the school principal at his own house will be a fun challenge.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Harriet the Spy* by Louise Fitzhugh
*Junie B. Jones and Some Sneaky Peeky Spying*by Barbara Parks
*Spying on Miss Muller* by Eve Bunting
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Guidance:**
Character Education traits of honesty, being responsible for your actions and trustworthiness could be discussed and written about.
Have students discuss how they feel when they see their teacher away  from school.
**Language Arts:**
Read *June B. Jones and Some Sneaky Peeky Spying*and compare this book  to *Owen Foote, Super Spy.*
Make of list of books for students to read that deal with spying and  teachers.
**BOOK TALK**:
Owen and his friends were practicing to be super spies.  They came up with an exciting plan to spy on their principal at his house.  This seemed like a really cool thing to do, until they started approaching the house.  None of them wanted to be “chicken” so they all went ahead with the plan.  Then there was a terrible incident where they were found out by the principal, and he wanted them to come back to his house in one week for punishment.  What a week that was!  What happened to the spies?  Read *Owen Foote, Super Spy* to find out!
***Prepared by:  Leigh Ann and Susanne Bryant***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***The Secret School***
**Avi**
**Harcourt, Inc. 2001**
**153 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
In 1925, fourteen-year-old Ida Bidson secretly takes over as the teacher when the one-room schoolhouse in her remote Colorado area closes.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*One-Room School* by Laurence Pringle
*Front Porch Stories at the One-room School* by Eleanora Tate
*My Great-Aunt Arizona* by Gloria Houston
*Three Names* by Patricia MacLachlan
*Stargone John* by Ellen Kindt McKenzie
*Little House* books by Laura Ingalls Wilder
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
**Social Studies:**
Have students research events, styles, trends, and social standards of the Roaring Twenties.
Have students compare one-room schoolhouses with their school.
**Language Arts:**
Have students write letters to the characters describing their schools,  teachers, lessons, and classrooms.
**WEB SITES:**
[Avi Web site](http://www.avi-writer.com/)
[One Room Schools: Architecture](http://www.lib.cmich.edu/clarke/schoolsarch.htm)
[One Room Schoolhouse Project](http://www.sckans.edu/~orsh/historical/home.shtml)
**BOOK TALK:**
Have you heard the news?  I suppose you passed Mr. Jordan on your way in.  He just left.  He’s the head of the school board, and he just announced that our little school will close at the end of the day.  Well, I don’t like that idea at all.  Yes Ma’am, I understand the teacher’s mother is sick.  But there are only 8 of us here, and most of us, ‘cept for Herbert, do like school.  I know I do.  You see, I want to go on to high school next year, so I have to graduate from eighth grade and take a big important test.  But I’m not concerned just about myself.  My classmate Ida is real smart, much smarter than me - than I.  See, she’d know which pronoun to use.  And someday she wants to be a teacher too.  I surely would hate for her to miss out on this whole year.  After all, we have only around six more weeks to go.  Surely they could get someone to come for only six weeks, but you know how those school board people are about spending money they don’t have to spend.  Hey, wait a minute.  I just got a bright idea.  It wouldn’t cost anyone a bit of money. It just might work, too.  I think I’ll go ask Ida what she thinks.
***Prepared by: Daniel Beach***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

***When the Circus Came to Town***
**Laurence Yep**
**HarperCollins, 2002**
**113 pages**

**SUMMARY:**
An Asian cook and a Chinese New Year celebration help a ten-year-old girl at a Montana state coach station to regain her confidence after smallpox scars her face.
**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY…**
*Sister Anne’s Hands* by Marybeth Lorbiecki
*Koi and the Kola Nuts* by Verna Aardema
*My Brother Made Me Do It* by Peg Kehret
**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**
Language Arts:  Read the true story that this is based on.  Compare and contrast the two stories.
**Social Studies:**
Research the Chinese New Year.  Focus on how it is celebrated and when it is celebrated.  Plan a Chinese New Year  celebration.
**Science:**
Find out the plants that can be used to make dyes and what colors they make.  Make some dye.
Research the effects of smallpox.  Relate this to the world situation today.
**Art:**
Design a dragon for the Chinese New Year.
**Guidance:**
Discuss the kindnesses performed in this book and how they  were repaid.  Possibly use the saying from Koi and the Kola Nuts:  “Do good and good will come back to you – in full measure and  overflowing.”
**WEB SITES:**
[Laurence Yep Teacher Resource Page](http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/yep.htm)
[Making Dyes Naturally Web site](http://nmaa-ryder.si.edu/webzine/dye1.htm)
[Small Pox Web site from Centers of Disease Control and Prevention](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/index.asp)
**BOOK TALK:**
Ursula and her family run the stagecoach station in Whistle, Montana.  Ursula loves living there and has turned her group of friends into a “band of blood thirsty pirates.”  Then Ursula gets smallpox.  Even when she is well, she refuses to leave her house because of her smallpox scars.  Ursula’s parents try many ways to entice her to leave the house but only through the efforts of their new Chinese cook, Ah Sam, does Ursula finally decide to rejoin her community and friends.  To find out how Ursula makes that decision and how she thanks Ah Sam for helping her, read *When the Circus Came to Town.*
***Prepared by: Sue Bennett***
[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)

Many thanks to the following members of the 2002-2003 Children’s Book Award Committee for their dedication to children of South Carolina, many hours spent reading, and submitting activities for this booklet.

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[Back to Top](http://scasl.net/bookawards/cba%202003%20-%202004.html#Top)