

# Anything is Possible with Books!

## 2011 READERS' CHOICES FOR GRADES K-2 • WINDHAM COUNTY READS

Compiled and annotated by Sara Ryan

P=Picture Book, E=Early Reader, C=Chapter Book, N=Novel

**P. Cronin, Doreen. *Diary of a Worm*. 2003.** Written in diary form, this truly hilarious picture book tracks the ins and outs of a worm's life from the perspective of the worm family's young son. Harry Bliss's endearing illustrations of anthropomorphized worms are clever visual punch lines for Cronin's delightfully deadpan humor. Children and adults alike will adore this worm's-eye perspective on the world.

**N. Dahl, Roald. *James and the Giant Peach*. 1961.** When James accidentally spills magic crystals on his aunts' withered peach tree, he sets an amazing adventure in motion. From the old tree a single peach grows, grows and grows some more, until finally James climbs inside the giant fruit and rolls away from his despicable aunts to a whole new life. He befriends an assortment of hilarious characters, including Grasshopper, Earthworm and Centipede.

**P. Fucile, Tony. *Let's Do Nothing!* 2009.** Frankie and Sal have already played every sport and board game invented, baked and eaten batches of cookies, and painted a zillion pictures. What's left to do? Nothing! Ten seconds of nothing! Can they do it? This delightful picture book just won the Red Clover Award.

**P. Galdone, Paul. *The Gingerbread Boy*. 1979.** A wonderfully frenetic cross-country chase is depicted in Galdone's broadly humorous color wash drawings.

**P. Haskins, Lori. *Too Many Dogs*. 1997.** "Waggy dog, shaggy dog, doggies in a bunch. Floppy dog, sloppy dog, doggies eating lunch." Kids will love this bouncy, colorful book that is bursting with every kind of dog imaginable!

**C. Kinney, Jeff. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. 2007.** Kinney's popular Web comic, which began in 2004, makes its way to print as a laugh-out-loud "novel in cartoons," adapted from the series. Middle school student Greg Heffley takes readers through an academic year's worth of drama.

**P. Leaf, Munro. *The Story of Ferdinand*. 1936.** Translated into more than sixty languages, this classic tale of a peaceable bull has been a favorite of readers across the world for generations. Munro Leaf wrote a number of books for children, including *The Story of Ferdinand* and *Wee Gillis*, both illustrated by Robert Lawson. Because of his work's international appeal, Mr. Leaf and his wife were invited on three twenty-six-country tours.

**E. Lobel, Arnold. *Frog and Toad Together*. 1979.** This pair of amphibian pals likes to do everything together, from list making to flower growing to dragon vanquishing. Perfect for new readers, the charming, frog-hued pictures and sensitive, funny, original stories in each book in this series show children what real friendship is all about.

**E. Minarik, Else Holmelund. *Little Bear*. 1958.** This is the first I Can Read Book ever, and the first of five classic Little Bear books expressly designed for beginning readers. Elsa Holmelund Minarik and Maurice Sendak teamed up to create stories that are deeply comforting and lovingly playful. The gentle, teasing repartee between Little Bear and his mother will delight young readers, and the spacious layout and large type will encourage them to keep on reading!

**C. Osborne, Mary Pope. *Dolphins at Daybreak, Ghost Town at Sundown, Lions at Lunchtime, and Polar Bears Past Bedtime*. 1996.** Morgan, the magical librarian of Camelot, challenges Jack and Annie to discover the answers to four riddles as they travel under the sea, to the Wild West, the African plains, and the frozen Arctic. If they succeed, they will become Master Librarians!

**C. Parks, Barbara. *Junie B. Jones Loves Handsome Warren*. 1996.** Junie B. Jones falls in love with the new boy in her kindergarten class in the latest book about this eager preschooler and her friends. Older kids will laugh at Junie's klutzy innocence, even as they recognize their own vulnerability in the classroom and the schoolyard. Brunkus' line drawings pick up the farce of Junie's desperate efforts in the world of romance and rivalry.

**E. Rylant, Cynthia. *Henry and Mudge*. 1996.** Henry doesn't have any brothers or sisters or human friends. What he does have is Mudge, a 180-pound dog who is his best friend and protector. They share several adventures in this lighthearted and easy-to-read book with cheery and colorful illustrations. When you finish this book, there are many more in the series to enjoy!

**E. Seuss, Dr. *The Cat in the Hat*. 1957.** When in doubt, turn to the story of a cat that transformed a dull, rainy afternoon into a magical and just-messy-enough adventure. This rambunctious and energetic feline continues to entrance new readers.

**P. Silverstein, Shel. *The Giving Tree*. 1964.** To say that this particular apple tree is a "giving tree" is an understatement. Silverstein's popular tale of few words and simple line drawings depicts a tree that starts out as a leafy playground, shade provider and apple bearer for a rambunctious little boy. Making the boy happy makes the tree happy but, with time, doing so becomes more challenging. Should the tree sacrifice everything?

**C. Warner, Gertrude Chandler. *The Boxcar Children*. 1942.** The central characters in this book are four children of various ages who need to find a way to survive without parents to guide their decisions. Vivid descriptions make it easy for young readers to empathize with the children and experience each event vicariously.

**N. White, E.B. *Stuart Little*. 1945.** How terribly surprised the Little family must have been when their second child turned out to be a small mouse. They build him a bed from a matchbox, and supply him with all of the accoutrements a young mouse could need. Mrs. Little even fashions him a suit, because baby clothes would obviously be unsuitable for such a sophisticated mouse. In return, Stuart helps his tall family.

**N. Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *Little House in the Big Woods*. 1953.** Laura Ingalls' story begins in 1871 in a little log cabin on the edge of the Big Woods of Wisconsin. Four-year-old Laura lives there with her Pa, her Ma, her sisters Mary and Carrie, and their trusty dog, Jack. Pioneer life is hard, since the family must grow or catch all their own food as they get ready for the cold winter, but it can also be very exciting.