

***Kenny and the Dragon* by Tony DiTerlizzi**

When the townsfolk in Kenneth's sleepy little village catch wind that there's a dragon running loose in the countryside, they call George--a retired knight and dragonslayer--out of retirement, and it is up to Kenneth to protect these two--who happen to be his two best friends. 151p. For ages 8 – 12. Lexile 820

***Sky Boys: How They Built the Empire State Building* by Deborah Hopkinson**

Traveling back in time to 1930s New York City, a young boy and his father watch in great delight as the magnificent Empire State Building is built through fierce hard work, sheer strength, and incredible dedication by the men who risked their very lives to complete the job. 48p. For ages 4 – 9. Lexile AD950

***Emmy and the Incredible Shrinking Rat* by Lynne Jonell**

When Emmy discovers that she and her formerly loving parents are being drugged by their evil nanny with rodent potions that can change people in frightening ways, she and some new friends must try everything possible to return things to normal. 346p. For ages 9 – 12. Lexile 780

***Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine**

When his family is sold during the era of slavery, a determined young boy who dreams of freedom ships himself in a wooden box to a place up north in the hopes of living the life he always wanted. An inspiring story about one of the Underground Railroad's most amazing escapes. 23p. For ages 4 – 8. Lexile AD380

***Year of the Dog* by Grace Lin**

As Pacy celebrates the Chinese Year of the Dog with her family, she finds out that this is the year she is supposed to "find herself," in a debut novel that addresses the universal themes of friendship, family, and finding one's passion in life. 134p. For ages 8 – 12. Lexile 690

***Being Teddy Roosevelt* by Claudia Mills**

When he is assigned Teddy Roosevelt as his biography project in school, fourth-grader Riley finds himself inspired by Roosevelt's tenacity and perseverance and resolves to find a way to get what he most wants--a saxophone and music lessons. 89p. For ages 7 – 10. Lexile 670

***Hachiko Waits* by Leslea Newman**

Professor Ueno's loyal Akita, Hachiko, waits for him at the train station every afternoon, and even after the professor has a fatal heart attack while at work, Hachiko faithfully continues to await his return until the day the dog dies. 96p. For ages 8 – Up. Lexile 770

***Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman* by Mark Tyler Nobleman**

Provides the true story of how the character of Superman came to be through the creative minds and determination of writer Jerry Siegel and illustrator Joe Shuster. Their comic book became a hit, with the help of DC Comics, in the early 1930s. 34p. For ages 10 – Up. Lexile 760

***How to Steal a Dog* by Barbara O'Connor**

Living in the family car in their small North Carolina town after their father leaves them virtually penniless, Georgina, desperate to improve their situation and unwilling to accept her overworked mother's calls for patience, persuades her younger brother to help her in an elaborate scheme to get money by stealing a dog and then claiming the reward that the owners are bound to offer. 170p. For ages 8 – 12. Lexile 700

***Houdini Box* by Brian Selznik**

A chance encounter with Harry Houdini leaves a small boy in possession of a mysterious box--one that might hold the secrets to the greatest magic tricks ever performed. 56p. For ages 6 – 11. Lexile 840

***Dodger and Me* by Jordan Sonnenblick**

Miserable because his only friend moved away and he has once again caused his baseball team to lose a game, fifth-grader Willy Ryan's life suddenly becomes a lot more interesting when he finds Dodger, a furry, blue chimpanzee that only he can see, and he has to decide what he really wishes for in life. 171p. For ages 8 – 12. Lexile 810

***Where I Live* by Eileen Spinelli**

Settled in just perfectly and living right next door to her best friend, Rose, Diana is unhappy when she is told that she has to move away from everything and everyone she knows, in a touching tale about love, loss, friendship, and change. 112p. For ages 4 – 8. Lexile NA

***Stand Tall, Abe Lincoln* by Judith St. George**

After the death of his mother, a young Abraham Lincoln's stepmother took over the role of his education and gave him the encouragement he needed to see his many dreams become fulfilled, including that of becoming one of the most celebrated presidents of all time. 44p. For ages 4 – 8. Lexile 660

***Shredderman: Secret Identity*
by Wendelin Van Draanen**

After Mr. Green assigns everyone the task of becoming reporters, Nolan Byrd decides to go undercover and do an exposé via a web site on Bubba and the bullies at his school--giving them a dose of their own medicine by showing what they really are and what their classmates really think of them. 138p. For ages 7 - 10. Lexile 520

***Oggie Cooder* by Sarah Weeks**

Fourth-grader Oggie Cooder goes from being shunned to being everyone's best friend when his ability to chew slices of cheese into the shapes of states wins him a slot on a popular television talent show, but he soon learns the perils of being a celebrity. 172p. For ages 7 – 10. Lexile 880

***Aurora County All-Stars* by Deborah Wiles**

After the death of the old man to whom young star pitcher House Jackson has been reading, House uncovers some secrets which may allow the annual Fourth of July baseball game to proceed, despite the county's anniversary pageant. 242p. For ages 10 – 14. Lexile 750



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Bluestem Award Reading List 2011

The Bluestem Award was established in 2010 to promote the joy of reading for children in 3rd grade through fifth grade.

The winners are chosen by Illinois children in grades 3-5 after reading books from a list of 20 titles.

This is the list of nominees for the 2011 Award.

***Ivy and Bean* by Annie Barrows**

When seven-year-old Bean plays a mean trick on her sister Nancy, she finds unexpected support for her antics from Ivy, the new neighbor, who is less boring than Bean first suspected. 120p. For ages 6 – 10. Lexile 510

***Nic Bishop Frogs* by Nic Bishop**

A collection of close-up photographs capturing an array of diverse frogs in their natural habitat, including bullfrogs and dart frogs, as well as general information and fun-filled facts provides readers with a colorful introduction to these amazing animals. 48p. For ages 4 – 8. Lexile 890

***No Talking* by Andrew Clements**

With the boys and girls of Laketon Elementary at definite odds, Dave's single insult to Lynsey is the final straw that leads to a competition of silence between the two groups, causing a quiet chaos within the school and a confused principal who has no idea how to get things back to normal. 146p. For ages 8 – 12. Lexile 820

***BFG* by Roald Dahl**

The BFG--Big Friendly Giant--kidnaps Sophie from her bed in the orphanage and takes her back to Giantland where she becomes involved in a scheme to end the loathsome activities of nine evil giants. 207p. For ages 8 – 10. Lexile 720