

“Librarian’s Shelf” by Brad Hruska

And This Year’s Nominees for the 2011-2012 Golden Sower Award Are...

The world of Children’s Literature is brimming with numerous awards like the coveted Newbery Metal, presented to juvenile chapter books containing effective literary elements, and the desirable Caldecott Metal, bestowed to picture books with illustrations depicting superior artistic merit. But to Nebraskans, one recognition outshines them all...the Corn Husker State’s very own “Golden Sower Award.”

Atop Nebraska’s state capitol building is a 19,000 pound statue known as the Sower. This bronze statuette stands unprotected against the elements, portrayed dispersing seeds in an unindustrialized manner.

The Sower is “symbolic” of Nebraska’s proud agricultural heritage, propagating “life, hope, and prosperity” and was selected to signify the Nebraska Children’s Choice Literary Award because it represented the recognition’s sound principles “to stimulate children’s thinking, introduce different types of literature, encourage independent reading, increase library information skills,” and “foster an appreciation for excellence in writing and illustration.”

Whether children and parents are seeking quality manuscripts for information purposes or for reading pleasure, the lists presented by the Nebraska Golden Sower Award committee are guaranteed to better the lives of Heartland youth.

Two primary categories make up the Golden Sower Nominees: Primary Titles and Intermediate Titles. The primary titles consist mostly of picture books and are written for students in grades kindergarten-third. The nominees in this year’s primary category are “Creaky Old House” by Linda Ashman, “Willoughby and the Lion” by Greg Foley, “Spot the Plot” by Patrick Lewis, “Otis” by Loren Long, “Dewey” by Vicki Myron, “I Need My Monster” by Amanda Noll, “Testing the Ice” by Sharon Robinson, “Help Me, Mr. Mutt!” by Janet Stevens, “The Circus Ship” by Chris Van Dusen, and “Ms. McCaw Learns to Draw” by Kaethe Zemach.

All of the above texts are great for young children and make ideal read alouds for classroom and bedtime settings because they draw in readers and keep their attention throughout the story.

Books found in the intermediate group are chapter books that are more suited for students reading at the fourth-sixth grade levels. The nominees highlighted in the 2011-2012 category are “Extra Credit” by Andrew Clements, “Kenny & the Dragon” by Tony DiTerlizzi, “Shooting the Moon” by Frances Dowell, “Closed for the Season” by Mary Hahn, “Night of the Spadefoot Toads” by Bill Harley, “Evolution of Calpurnia Tate” by Jacqueline Kelly, “Dying to Meet You” by Kate Klise, “Storm Chaser” by Chris Platt, “The Magic Thief” by Sarah Prineas, and “Jake Ransom and the Skull King’s Shadow” by James Rollins.

These juvenile texts are perfect for upper-level readers because they incorporate effective literary elements like characterization and dialogue while still keeping readers’ interests with enticing, dramatic plots.

If you are in search of a good book for the children in your life be sure stop by the Columbus Public Library and check out the many titles found on the 2011-2012 Golden Sower Lists. If you have any questions regarding the 2011-2012 Golden Sower Nominees or would like to know about past year's winners and nominees, feel free to contact me at (402) 564-7116 opt. 4.