

The Maryland Blue Crab Young Reader Award

Award is presented annually to the authors of outstanding works published the previous year in the categories of Beginning Reader Fiction, Beginning Reader Nonfiction, Transitional Fiction, and Transitional Nonfiction. The award is given by the Children's Services Division of the Maryland Library Association. Award criteria include appropriateness for target age group, overall child appeal, appropriateness of text to support the needs of beginning readers, visual appeal, and the "total package" or overall spirit of the book. The award committee also generates annotated lists of honor titles at the Beginning Reader and Transitional levels, for use by librarians, teachers, and caregivers.



For more information about the MD Blue Crab Young Reader Award, see www.mdlib.org/divisions/csd/blue.html

THE MARYLAND
BLUE CRAB
YOUNG READER
AWARD 2004

The 2004 Maryland Blue Crab Young Reader Award Committee

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Frederick County Public Libraries

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Baltimore County Public Library

Winner, Beginning Reader Fiction:

Milgrim, David. *See Pip Point.* **Atheneum, 2003.**

Pip the mouse wants a balloon, and when his robot friend Otto gives it to him, it's the start of a high-flying adventure. Text and illustrations work together seamlessly in this colorful story for very-beginning readers. Using only 35 words, Milgrim serves up a twist on the "Dick and Jane" format that will have kids and grown-ups giggling together. With clever use of white space, perspective, and movement, the bold digital pen-and-ink illustrations in this winsome book offer excellent support for beginning readers.

Winner, Beginning Reader Nonfiction:

****Nelson, Kristin.** *Hunting Sharks.* **Lerner, 2003.**

In simple language, with marvelous photographs, this small book bursts with information about sharks. In addition to 24 pages of photos and text, there is a map showing where sharks live in the North Western hemisphere, a diagram of a shark's body, a glossary, and a "Hunt and Find" activity which reinforces certain words. The subject matter is of high interest to both boys and girls.

Beginning
Reader Level
Annotated List



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Maryland Blue Crab Young Reader Award Beginning Reader Honor List

**Starred titles are especially appropriate for older reluctant readers.



Fiction:

****Bechtold, Lize. *Buster and Phoebe: The Great Bone Game*. Houghton Mifflin, 2003.**
Phoebe the dog teaches the new puppy, Buster, all about the proper training of bones in this sly story. Children will recognize the ins and outs of sibling rivalry in the relationship between the two dogs, and Bechtold's charming ink and watercolor illustrations interplay with the story to give careful readers a treat.

Capucilli, Alyssa Satin. *Biscuit's Big Friend*.

HarperCollins, 2003.
Biscuit wants to do everything his big dog friend, Sam, can do, but maybe being a small dog has its benefits. Lovable Biscuit is accessible to beginning readers through repetition and double spread illustrations.

Copeland, Cynthia. *What Are You Waiting For?*

Millbrook Press, 2003.
An excited young boy asks the titular question of a crew of construction workers, encouraging them to "Hit it!", "Level it!", "Dump it!" and so on. Mike Gordon's delightfully cluttered illustrations fuel the mounting excitement of this simple story. Excellent use of white space, font, repetition, and a silly twist of an ending make this an ideal choice for very beginning readers.

****Hautzig, Deborah. *Little Witch Learns to Read*.**

Random House, 2003.
Little Witch wants to learn to read, but her witchy family doesn't want her reading any books at all, especially those with happy endings. This is a twist to the usual family story which will appeal to beginning readers. The illustrations are colorful and support the flow of the story.

****Head, Judith. *Mud Soup*. Random House, 2003.**
Josh learns that Rosa's "mud soup" is really not made of mud, and is in fact "delicioso". A simple story with multi-cultural appeal. A recipe for mud soup is included.

Heling, Kathryn. *Mouse's Hide-and-Seek Words*.

Random House, 2003.
Join mouse on his clever game of finding a word within a word. A phonics reader at its best! Bright illustrations, an expressive main character, large type with simple text, and an easy-to-follow concept make this fun for all.

****McMullan, Kate. *Pearl and Wagner: Two Good Friends*. Dial, 2003.**

Pearl the rabbit and Wagner the mouse navigate the science fair in this humorous story which will appeal to all ages. This delightful story and its expressive illustrations show the importance of friendship.



Nonfiction:

Bauer, Marion Dane. *Wind*. Simon & Schuster, 2003.
The properties and characteristics of wind are presented in a clear and entertaining picture book format. The facts are explained through easily accessible language and soft-pastel color illustrations. Young children can understand the concept of wind through their own daily observations and delight in the exploration.

****Eckart, Edana. *African Elephant*. Children's Press, 2003.**
Explore the world of the African Elephant, the largest land animal. An effective glossary, lots of white space, and exceptional photographs present interesting information for the very young reader.

****Frost, Helen. *Leaf-Cutting Ants*. Pebble Books, 2003.**

Simple language and first-rate illustrations explore the world of leaf-cutting ants. Children will be fascinated by the full-color photographs, and labels on the pictures clearly expand information from the text. With a glossary, index, and graphic style that makes the book a satisfying total package, this title stands out from the pack.

****Schaefer, Lola M. *Amelia Earhart*. Pebble Books, 2003.**
A brief but thoroughly engaging account of the world-famous aviator Amelia Earhart. The author highlights Earhart's record-breaking achievements using period photographs and a timeline as a visual element to extend and clarify the information in the text. This book is part of the "First Biographies" series.

****Schaefer, Lola M. *Jackie Robinson*. Pebble Books, 2003.**
Part of the excellent "First Biographies" series, this book focuses on the first African American baseball player elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. A timeline on the bottom of each page guides readers through Robinson's life, and photographs engage readers' interest. With excellent use of white space, a glossary, an index, and a listing of Internet sites for further research, this is a superb piece of nonfiction for beginning readers.

Schuh, Mari C. *Cats on the Farm*. Pebble Books, 2003.
Cats on the farm live a life of hunting, eating, and sleeping. With full-page color photographs and simple text, even the earliest reader can enjoy this book.

****Trumbauer, Lisa. *The Life Cycle of a Kangaroo*.**

Pebble Books, 2003.
Here is one beginning reader animal book that may teach the adults a new fact or two. Gorgeous illustrations with informative text, along with glossary, internet sites and a "what to read next" section, help the reader examine the life cycle of the red kangaroo.

****Rylant, Cynthia. *The Case of the Fidgety Fox*.**

Greenwillow, 2003.
Readers help the bright and caring Bunny Brown and the always-hungry and somewhat-confused Jack Jones solve their latest case in this silly mystery from the "High-Rise Private Eyes" series. The story's adorable characters, wonderful illustrations, humorous wordplay and even a valuable message are a recipe for success.

****Rylant, Cynthia. *Mr. Putter and Tabby Stir the Soup*.**

Harcourt, 2003.
With Mr. Putter's stove on the blink, he and his faithful cat, Tabby, head over to the house of their good friend and neighbor, Mrs. Teaberry, to make their special day soup-but her dog, Zeke, has other plans for the day. This sweet and gentle story, full of humor and child-appeal, perfectly matches the colorful and charming illustrations.

Rylant, Cynthia. *Puppy Mudge Has a Snack*.

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2003.
"Mudge wants Henry's snack" and he'll do anything to get it. Lots of repetition and a fun story make this a great introduction to the "Henry and Mudge" books for very-beginning readers.

Wells, Rosemary. *Make New Friends*. Hyperion, 2003.

Juanita is the new student at Hilltop School, and she's worried that she won't make any friends. This warm and reassuring story, featuring simple text and familiar characters, presents realistic situations that children can identify with. Colorful illustrations in Wells' signature style help readers decode the text.



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