



**Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Award
2021-2022 Booktalk Scripts
Grades 3-6**



***Nubby's Story* by Aubre Andrus**

Nubby the dog was a boxer who was born very small and sick – and without his front legs. No one thought he would survive, but the humans who took him in were determined to help him. Nubby started to grow and get better but didn't have a way to walk without his front legs. His human family came up with creative ways that would allow Nubby to get around and live a full life just like other dogs. Nubby's Story is the true account of determination, creativity and love and how obstacles can be overcome.

Author website: <https://aubreandrus.com/>

“Different is Not Disposable” – Nubby's Dodo trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HTJqq-1K2HA>

Video of Nubby in action with his family: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGJsuF2_sOE

***The Best of Iggy* by Annie Barrows; illustrated by Sam Ricks**

Meet Iggy Frangi. He is impulsive and he knows it. Even though he knows he acts without thinking, it does not stop him. Iggy has some great ideas that end up not working out the way he thought they would. Enjoy this hilarious book about a boy who does some kind of bad things that ultimately end up being really bad things. Or is that just the way his teachers and parents see it? You be the judge.

Author website: <http://anniebarrows.com/kids-home/>

Illustrator website: <https://samricks.com/>

Book trailer: <https://watchkin.com/c733412787>

***Superlative Birds* by Leslie Bulion; illustrated by Robert Meganck**

Combining both science and poetry, *Superlative Birds* introduces the reader to eighteen different species of fine feathered friends. Nonfiction poems and witty illustrations provide fun details and less common facts about all types of birds – hummingbirds, peregrine falcons, lyrebirds – and their quirky traits. Fun for budding ornithologists and poets alike! Extras await in the form of a glossary of bird related terms and notes on the different types of poetry.

Author website: <https://www.lesliebulion.com/>

Illustrator website: <https://meganck.com/>

Birdwatching for kids: http://www.birdwatching.com/tips/kids_birding.html

Build your own poems: <https://www.poetrygames.org/>

***Winterborne Home for Vengeance and Valor* by Ally Carter**

In the premier title of the Winterborne Home series, brave 11-year-old orphan April is almost consumed by a fire she ignites in a majestic museum. This suspenseful mystery of the inhabitants of Winterborne Home moves along at breakneck speed. Although the employees who take her in after the fire appear kind and generous, streetwise April senses that there are a lot of secrets to uncover in the luxurious Winterborne Home. They might even lead her to the mysterious key she wears around her neck (the one gift her mother left her, before placing her baby daughter on a doorstep, with a note promising to pick her up soon). This adventure, with many twists and turns coupled with death-defying, swashbuckling feats performed by April and the other orphans who live together in the legendary Winterborne Home, is perfect for readers craving exciting fantastical mysteries.

Author website: <https://allycarter.com/>

Book trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GFYc_q5gI

Student activity pack: <https://authorfy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Winterbourne-Activity-Pack.pdf>

***Honeybee: The Busy Life of Apis Mellifera* by Candace Fleming; illustrated by Eric Rohmann**

Candace Fleming and Eric Rohmann work together to describe the life cycle of the hard-working honeybee in this beautifully rhythmic picture book. The life of the honeybee was thoroughly researched and simply told through poetic phrases and realistic oil-on paper illustrations.

Author website: <https://www.candacefleming.com/>

Illustrator website: <https://www.ericrohmann.com/>

Author book discussion: <https://www.watchkin.com/2c783520f5>

***How the Cookie Crumbled: The True (and Not-So-True) Stories of the Invention of the Chocolate Chip Cookie* by Gilbert Ford**

Did you ever bite into a chocolate chip cookie and wonder who invented this delicious treat? Meet Ruth Wakefield the creator of the chocolate chip cookie but wait, there is more. The real story becomes a little complicated. You see there are three different stories about how the chocolate chip cookie was invented. Was it an accident? Was it on purpose? Also, what has the famous Toll House cookies have to do with this story? You will have to read to find out and decide on your own what is the real story.

Author website: <https://www.gilbertford.com/>

Tollhouse chocolate chip cookie interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJ3JEpQBx4>

History of chocolate chip cookie: <https://https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5Ine0uo25A>

***Get a Grip, Vivy Cohen!* by Sarah Kapit**

Vivy Cohen is obsessed with baseball. Wanting to perfect her special pitch, the knuckleball, Vivy gets pointers from her idol, a baseball Major League pitcher named Vincent James “VJ” Capello. Through letters, she talks to VJ about how difficult it can be for her since she has autism and not many kids understand what is wrong with her. Despite having autism and with the help of her friends, Vivy tries to be the best pitcher that she can, but she is being bullied by the coach’s son and decides to quit. Will Vivy quit baseball for good? Read *Get a Grip, Vivy Cohen!* to find out.

Author website: <https://www.sarahkapit.com/>

How to throw a knuckleball: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96XMmb9D6XU>

Inspirational baseball player with autism: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNy7Px1HYX0>

***From the Desk of Zoe Washington* by Janae Marks**

On her 12th birthday, Zoe Washington's life takes a significant shift after she receives a letter from her father in prison who committed a horrific crime before she was born. She finds his thoughtful letter confusing. How can he seem so kind if he's committed a terrible crime? Feisty Zoe has a busy summer ahead with a job at "Ari's Cakes" bakery, which provides great training because she wants to become a pastry chef and compete on Food Network's Kid's Bake Challenge. Her summer doesn't go exactly as planned, working at Ari's bakery and secretly researching in the library about systemic racism in the prison systems. Zoe is a bright, motivated girl, curious to find out the truth about her father. You'll learn a lot about systemic racism through Zoe's discoveries, rooting for her as she searches for answers, while also learning how to make the best cupcakes.

Author website: <http://www.janaemarks.com/from-the-desk-of-zoe-washington.html>

Book resources: <http://www.janaemarks.com/extras.html>

Author interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6S42sB9B3tU>

***Willa and the Whale* by Chad Morris and Shelly Brown**

Willa had been living in Tokyo with her mother, a marine biologist, when suddenly her mother dies. Now Willa will have to move to a new town with her father in Washington state. On a whale watching tour with her father Willa hears someone speaking to her. She realizes it is a humpback whale named Meg who is communicating with her. As she returns to the beach to talk to Meg, they slowly become best friends. Willa has many problems and needs all the strength she can gather to tackle them. Then a big problem washes up on shore and Willa finds out who her real friends are.

Author Chad Morris website: <http://chadmorrisauthor.com/>

Author Shelly Brown website: <http://www.shellybrownwriter.com/about-the-author.html>

Book trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-EVzjv684Ts>

Whale trivia with the authors: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzqi2e7nsT4>

***Little Libraries, Big Heroes* by Miranda Paul; illustrated by John Parra**

You might have seen a little library set up outside in a park or near a school. They can be any shape, from a little house to a cabinet or even in a tree! The Little Free Library was the creation of Todd Bol who had difficulty reading as a child. He helped to start a phenomenon of sharing books within a community with the saying, “Take a book, leave a book.” Learn more about the creator and how the Little Free Libraries grew to be more than 75,000 worldwide!

Author website: <http://mirandapaul.com/>

Illustrator website: <https://johnparraart.com/>

Book trailer: https://youtu.be/_0rRMjScNbU

Author interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V65NQUUCJYIA>

***Stay* by Bobbie Pyron**

Piper's life is turned upside down when her family moves into a shelter in a whole new city. She misses her house, her friends, and her privacy-and she *hates* being labeled the homeless girl at her new school. Piper tries to look for the silver-lining in her shelter, Hope House. Piper finds friends in the Firefly Girls Troop 423. She also finds a sweet street dog named Baby. Piper soon realizes that Baby needs help. But helping means finding the courage to trust herself and her new friends, no matter what anyone says about them-before Baby gets taken away for good. Told in the alternating perspectives of Piper and Baby, this uplifting friendship tale celebrates the importance of hope, the power of story, and the true meaning of home.

Author website: <https://www.bobbiepyron.com/>

Book trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQzmOgLGvw8>

Author interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wjc4HArY6l4>

***Coop Knows the Scoop* by Taryn Souders**

Meet Cooper “Coop” Goodman who lives with his mother and paternal grandfather in the sleepy little town of Windy Bottom, Georgia. Near the end of the summer, Coop and his friends are caught up in the excitement of a new playground being built – that is until... A human skeleton was discovered during the excavation and so begins an investigation of a long-unsolved crime. To add to the mix, Coop’s own grandfather – a well-respected town doctor – is accused of having something to do with the crime. Is that because the skeleton was identified as the bones of the grandmother Coop never knew? Through the learning about the past from quirky characters that live in the quaint town, Coop is determined to clear his grandfather’s name. Does Coop really “know the scoop” to solve the mystery?

Author website: <https://tarynsouders.com/>

Book trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnjyVoEea7E>

Activity guide:

<https://cdn.sourcebooks.com/assets/downloads/activitykits/CoopKnowsTheScoop-ActivityKit.pdf>

***Brave Like That* by Lindsey Stoddard**

Have you ever heard adults predicting what you're going to be when you grow up, and felt uneasy about it? In *Brave Like That* a thoughtful eleven-year-old boy is a member of a family of football legends. What if he doesn't want to follow their football legacy, even though the expectations are already set for him to pursue the family path? This proves a challenge with no easy answers, and to make it even more confusing, a needy dog appears on Cyrus' eleventh birthday. The boy and dog have one thing in common, they both show up at the firehouse doorstep abandoned, Cyrus as a baby, and the skittish malnourished dog appears on that same doorstep on Cyrus' birthday with little chance of survival. This heart wrenching story has an empowering message about finding the courage to follow your own dreams.

Author website: <https://www.lindseystoddard.com/blt>

Book talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rpjlh6yRAVE>

Author inspiration: <https://nerdybookclub.wordpress.com/2019/11/04/sharing-the-inspiration-behind-my-next-novel-brave-like-that-and-the-fantastic-cover-by-lindsey-stoddard/>

***William Still and His Freedom Stories: The Father of the Underground Railroad* by Don Tate**

Have you heard of William Penn? How about Benjamin Franklin? William Still? William Still is the Father of the Underground Railroad. William's story began before he was born. William's father bought his freedom and his mom escaped slavery. Unfortunately, they had to leave two of their children behind. A few years later, William Still was born in New Jersey. This tragedy motivated William Still to live a life dedicated to helping slaves get their freedom. As a young man, William went to work for the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society. He raised money, planned rescues, and helped freedom seekers who had traveled north. As a result, he was able to reunite other families and build a remarkable source of information, including encounters with Harriet Tubman, Henry "Box" Brown, and William and Ellen Craft. This is a remarkable story of a notable Pennsylvanian.

Author website: <https://dontate.com/>

Author interview: <https://watchkin.com/d14749632b>

***Ways to Make Sunshine* by Renée Watson**

Fourth-grader Ryan is a spunky girl who loves to bake and stands up for herself when people tease her about her boy name. She has to deal with a tough family challenge when her Dad loses his job, the family moves to a smaller house, and sells their car. African American Ryan is instructed NOT to get her hair mussed or wet after her grandmother meticulously straightens it for an Easter church presentation. When she's invited to her best friend Amanda's sleepover, she's amazed by her huge, new house with a swimming pool. Ryan carefully navigates Amanda's new friends, slowly realizing her friendship with Amanda is as strong as ever. However, when a mean girl teases her about not knowing how to swim, her spunky self can't resist but prove otherwise. Ryan is the kind of girl you'll want to cheer for - she never gives up and her kindness always extends to helping others.

Author website: <https://www.reneewatson.net/ways-to-make-sunshine-1>

Activity guide: <https://media.bloomsbury.com/rep/files/ways-to-make-sunshine-guide.pdf>

Author reflection: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EO8HPaSs5oM>