



## Nebraska Golden Sower Award Nominee Titles 2022-2023

Sponsored by Nebraska Library Association's  
School, Children's, and Young People's Section

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### 2022-2023 Picture Book Nominees

Czajak, Paul. *Trees Make Perfect Pets*.

Illustrated by Cathy Gendron. Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2020. ISBN 9781492664734

Abigail is determined to get the perfect pet, so she chooses Fido. He keeps her cool from the sun, stays where she tells him, and even gives her air to breathe. That's because Fido is a tree! But not everyone thinks having a tree as a pet is a good idea, especially when Fido starts to grow. Will Abigail be able to keep her perfect pet?

Elya, Susan Middleton. *The Three Billy Goats Buenos*.

Illustrated by Miguel Ordonez. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers, 2020. ISBN 9780399547393

Three little cabritos have a clever plan to get past the grumpiest troll in the land. But then one of the billy goats wonders--Why is that gigante so grumpy, anyway? This thoughtful question sends their plan in a new direction, and the results are better than they ever imagined.

Le, Minh. *Lift*.

Illustrated by Dan Santat. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2020. ISBN 9781368036924

When Iris's lift button-pushing is disrupted by a new member of the family, she's pretty put out. That is, until the sudden appearance of a mysterious new button opens up entire realms of possibility, places where she can escape and explore on her own. But when it becomes a question between going it alone or letting someone else tag along, Iris finds that sharing a discovery with the people you love can be the most wonderful experience of all.

Levis, Caron. *This Way, Charlie*.

Illustrated by Charles Santoso. Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2020. ISBN 9781419742064

All the animals at the Open Bud Ranch can see that Jack likes keeping his space to himself. But when Charlie arrives, he doesn't see Jack at all. He's still getting used to seeing out of only one of his eyes. At first, Jack is anxious and distrustful. But one day, he summons his courage and guides Charlie to his favorite sunlit field. And so begins a powerful friendship that will be tested by life's storms--but will ultimately change each life for the better.

## 2022-2023 Picture Book Nominees (con't)

Mantchev, Lisa. *The Perfectly Perfect Wish*.

Illustrated by Jessica Courtney-Tickle. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman Books, 2020. ISBN 9781534406193

In the grass, a girl finds an extraordinary thing that gives her...just...one...wish. She asks those around her what they would wish for in her shoes, but nothing seems quite right. What will her perfect wish be?

Parsley, Elise. *How to Catch a Clover Thief*.

Illustrated by the author. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2021. ISBN 9780316534284

All Roy the wild boar wants is to enjoy his precious patch of delicious clover, but every time he turns around, his tasty treasure seems to be *shrinking*! Who's stealing his favorite meal from right under his snout?

Pham, LeUyen. *Outside, Inside*.

Illustrated by the author. Roaring Brook Press, 2021. ISBN 9781250798350

Celebrating essential workers and the community coming together to face the challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Something strange happened on an unremarkable day just before the season changed. Everybody who was outside . . . went inside. Outside, it was quieter, wilder, and different. Inside, we laughed, we cried, and we grew. We remembered to protect the ones we love and love the ones who protect us. While the world changed outside, we became stronger on the inside and believed that someday soon spring would come again.

Rex, Adam. *On Account of the Gum*.

Illustrated by the author. Chronicle Books, 2020. ISBN 9781452181547

This is a story about one kid's hilarious misadventures with gum, and the cumulative buildup of stuff stuck in his hair.

Roeder, Vanessa. *The Box Turtle*.

Illustrated by the author. Dial, 2020. ISBN 9780735230507

Terrance the turtle was born without a shell, so he uses a cardboard box instead. Terrance loves his box, but when another turtle points out that Terrance's shell is weird, he begins to wonder whether there might be a better shell out there.

Tabor, Corey R. *Mel Fell*.

Illustrated by the author. Balzer + Bray, 2021. ISBN 9780062878014

Readers will need to turn their book sideways and upside down to follow Mel on her journey from downward fall to triumphant flight in this tale of self-confidence and taking a leap of faith. Sometimes, you might fall down, down, down, before you learn to fly up, up, up.



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Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Chapter Book list this year contains 11 titles instead of the usual 10.

### 2022-2023 Chapter Book Nominees

Behar, Ruth. *Letters From Cuba*.

Nancy Paulsen Books, 2020. ISBN 9780525516477

[paperback: Nancy Paulsen Books, 2021. ISBN 9780525516491]

The situation is getting dire for Jews in Poland on the eve of World War II. Esther's father has fled to Cuba, and she is the first one to join him. It's heartbreaking to be separated from her beloved sister, so Esther promises to write down everything that happens until they're reunited. And she does, recording both the good--the kindness of the Cuban people and her discovery of a valuable hidden talent--and the bad: the fact that Nazism has found a foothold even in Cuba.

Conklin, Melanie. *Every Missing Piece*.

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2020. ISBN 9781368048958

[paperback: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, April 2022. ISBN 9780316294072]

Maddy Gaines sees danger everywhere she looks. When Maddy meets a mysterious boy setting booby traps in the North Carolina woods, she suspects he is Billy Holcomb, the boy who went missing in the fall. As Maddy tries to uncover the truth about Billy Holcomb, ghosts from her own past surface, her best friend starts to slip away, and Maddy's world tilts once again. Can she put the pieces of her life back together, even if some of them are lost forever?

Grossman, Lev. *The Silver Arrow*.

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2020. ISBN 9780316539531

[paperback: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2021. ISBN 9780316539548]

Kate and her younger brother Tom lead dull, uninteresting lives. Why can't Kate have thrilling adventures and save the world the way people do in books? On her 11th birthday, her mysterious and highly irresponsible Uncle Herbert, whom she's never even met before, surprises her with the most unexpected birthday present of all time: a colossal steam locomotive called the Silver Arrow.

## 2022-2023 Chapter Book Nominees (con't)

Holm, Jennifer L. *The Lion of Mars*.

Random House Books for Young Readers, 2021. ISBN 9780593121818

Bell has spent his whole life on Mars, and he is curious about the secrets the adults in the US colony are keeping. Why don't they have contact with anyone in the other Mars colonies? When a virus breaks out and the grown-ups all fall ill, Bell and the other children are the only ones who can help.

Hoyle, McCall. *Stella*.

Shadow Mountain, 2021. ISBN 9781629729015

Stella, a beagle trained to sniff out explosives, is left traumatized when she is distracted and misses a bomb. Her beloved handler is killed and Stella is certain she's a bad dog. Now she's scared of loud noises and struggles with her anxiety as she's retired from being a service animal. She is sent to foster families, but gets in trouble because she can't deal with her fears. An expert dog trainer and her daughter Chloe are Stella's last hope. Can she prove she can be a good dog?

Johnson, Varian. *Twins*.

Illustrated by Shannon Wright. Graphix, 2020. ISBN 9781338236170

[paperback: Graphix, 2020. ISBN 9781338236132]

Maureen and Francine Carter are twins and best friends. But as the girls start sixth grade, Francine seems to be growing apart from Maureen. Are sisters really forever or will middle school change things for good?

Li, Christina. *Clues to the Universe*.

Quill Tree Books, 2021. ISBN 9780063008885

[paperback: Quill Tree Books, January 2022. ISBN 9780063008892]

When Rosalind's dad dies unexpectedly, all Ro has left of him is an unfinished model rocket they had been working on together. Benjamin doesn't like science, but he can't get enough of *Spacebound*, a popular comic book series. When he finds a sketch that suggests that his dad created the comics, he's thrilled. Too bad his dad walked out years ago, and Benji has no way to contact him. Ro and Benjamin become science partners and also unlikely friends.

Reynolds, Aaron. *The Incredibly Dead Pets of Rex Dexter*.

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2020. ISBN 9781368051835

[paperback: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, March 2022. ISBN 9780316407809]

Rex Dexter really wants a dog, but when his birthday arrives his parents surprise him with a chicken instead. One hour and fourteen minutes later, the chicken is dead (by a steamroller), Rex is cursed (by the Grim Reaper), and wild animals are haunting his room (hounding him for answers).

Smith, Matthew Ross. *The Million Dollar Race*.

Aladdin, 2021. ISBN 9781534420274

[paperback: Aladdin, April 2022. ISBN 9781534420281]

Grant Falloon is a fast runner, so when the mega-rich Babblemoney sneaker company announces an international competition to find the fastest kid in the world, he's desperate to sign up. However, his non-conformist parents never got him a legal birth certificate. He can't race for the United States, so now if he wants to compete, he has to invent his own country.

## 2022-2023 Chapter Book Nominees (con't)

Stead, Rebecca. *The List of Things That Will Not Change*

Wendy Lamb Books, 2020. ISBN 9781101938096

[paperback: Yearling, April 2022. ISBN 9781101938126]

After her parents' divorce, Bea's life became different in many ways. But she can always look back at the list she keeps in her green notebook to remember the things that will stay the same. The first and most important: Mom and Dad will always love Bea, and each other. When Dad tells Bea that he and his boyfriend, Jesse, are getting married, Bea is thrilled. Bea loves Jesse, and when he and Dad get married, she'll finally (finally!) have what she's always wanted--a sister.

Stoddard, Lindsey. *Brave Like That*.

HarperCollins, 2020. ISBN 9780062878113

[paperback: HarperCollins, 2021. ISBN 9780062878120]

Cyrus Olson's dad is a hero--Northfield's former football star and now one of their finest firefighters. Everyone expects Cyrus to follow in his dad's record-breaking footsteps, and he wishes they were right--except he's never been brave like that.



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### 2022-2023 Golden Sower Novel Nominees

Barnes, Jennifer Lynn. *The Inheritance Games*.

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2020. ISBN 9781368052405

[paperback: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2021. ISBN 9780759555402]

When billionaire Tobias Hawthorne dies and leaves Avery Grambs virtually his entire fortune, Avery has no idea why. To receive her inheritance, Avery must move into Hawthorne House and live with the family that Tobias Hawthorne just dispossessed.

Braden, Ann. *Flight of the Puffin*.

Nancy Paulsen Books, 2021. ISBN 9781984816061

Libby comes from a long line of bullies. She wants to be different, but sometimes that doesn't work out. To bolster herself, she makes a card with the message *You are amazing*. That card sets off a chain reaction that ends up making a difference in the lives of some kids who could also use a boost.

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker. *Fighting Words*.

Dial Books, 2020. ISBN 9781984815682

[paperback: Dial Books, 2021. ISBN 9781984815705]

Ten-year-old Della has always had her older sister, Suki. Suki is Della's protector, but who has been protecting Suki? Della has always known how to keep quiet where it counts, but when Suki tries to kill herself, Della thinks she's been quiet about the wrong things. Maybe it's time to be loud.

Cisneros, Ernesto. *Efrén Divided*.

Quill Tree Books, 2020. ISBN 9780062881687

[paperback: Quill Tree Books, 2021. ISBN 9780062881694]

Efrén Nava's parents, Amá and Apá, work hard all day to provide for the family, making sure Efrén and his younger siblings Max and Mía feel safe and loved. But Efrén worries about his parents; although he's American-born, his parents are undocumented. His worst nightmare comes true one day when Amá doesn't return from work and is deported across the border to Tijuana, México. Now more than ever, Efrén must be brave in order to help take care of and try to reunite his family.

## 2022-2023 Golden Sower Novel Nominees (con't)

Deuker, Carl. *Golden Arm*.

Clarion Books, 2020. ISBN 9780358012429

[paperback: Clarion Books, August 2022. ISBN 9780358667940]

When Laz gets an opportunity to pitch for the rich kids across town, he has a chance to get drafted by the major leagues. But playing for the other team means leaving behind his family, including Antonio, Laz's younger brother, who seems to be drawn to the dark world of the Jet City's drug ring.

Korman, Gordon. *Unplugged*.

Balzer + Bray, 2021. ISBN 9780062798893

[paperback: Balzer + Bray, January 2022. ISBN 9780062798909]

Spoiled rich kid Jett Baranov can't believe it when his father sends him to a place in the middle of the Arkansas wilderness where he's forced to hand over his cell phone, eat grainy veggie patties, and participate in wholesome activities with the other kids. Jett can't help noticing that the adults at the Oasis are acting really strange. He is determined to get to the bottom of things, but can he convince everybody that he is no longer just a spoiled brat who is making trouble?

Mancusi, Mari. *Dragon Ops*.

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2020. ISBN 9781368040907

[paperback: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2021. ISBN 9780759555167]

Welcome to Dragon Ops, the world's first augmented-reality video-game theme park. Set on a once-deserted island, three beta players—classic gamer geek Ian; his adventure-seeking sister, Lily; and their too-cool-for-gaming cousin, Derek—have been lucky enough to score an invite to play before the fully immersive experience opens to the public. But once inside, they find themselves trapped in a game taken over by a rogue AI dragon called Atreus.

McAnulty, Stacy. *Millionaires for the Month*.

Random House Books for Young Readers, 2020. ISBN 9780593175255

[paperback: Bantam Dell Publishing Group, 2020. ISBN 9780593305461]

After seventh graders Benji and Felix "borrow" \$20 from a lost wallet, the billionaire owner of the wallet challenges them to spend over \$5 million dollars in thirty days in order to learn life lessons about money.

Souders, Taryn. *Coop Knows the Scoop*.

Sourcebooks Young Readers, 2020. ISBN ISBN 9781492640189

When a body is found buried in the playground, Coop and his friends must get to the bottom of the mystery and clear Gramp's name.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Before the Ever After*.

Nancy Paulsen Books, 2020. ISBN 9780399545436

[paperback: Penguin, 2020. ISBN 9780593324660]

ZJ's dad is a former pro football star, but lately he is having trouble remembering things and seems angry all the time because of all the head injuries he suffered during his career.