Jacqueline Woodson won a 2008 Newbery Honor Book award for “Feathers.”

Growing up

Jacqueline said, “I loved writing as a kid. I have known I wanted to be a writer since I was 7.” She loves everything about writing. “I love the physical act of writing and love making up stories.”

She said she read a lot as a child. She read the same favorite books over and over. If she gets stuck in her own writing, she rereads the books she loved. “Those are the books that taught me to write,” she said.

Her writing career

Jacqueline’s career began when she took a writing class as an adult. The teacher read students’ work out loud in class. One day, an editor was in class and heard the teacher read Jacqueline’s work. The editor asked Jacqueline to send in her manuscript. From then on, she has worked as a writer.

Advice to kids

Jacqueline said you learn to write by reading. It is also important to write. “Write every day. It doesn’t matter if it’s for a half-hour or 15 minutes. Write and write about stuff you care about, not about stuff you think others would care about,” she said.

“Don’t be afraid. Write through it. Write about the things that make you scared. Writing is an emotional process. In order to get emotions onto the page, you have to feel them too.”

Some favorites

Color: green, but sometimes blue
Hobbies: sewing. Jacqueline sews all her own and her kids’ clothes. She also likes to hang out on her stoop visiting with other neighbors, many of whom are children’s writers too.
Music: a big variety. She is drawn to music with lyrics she likes.
Sport to play: basketball
Place to read: in the garden if the mosquitoes are not too bad.
Meet Laura Vaccaro Seeger

Laura Vaccaro Seeger won a 2008 Caldecott Honor Book award for “First the Egg.”

Background

Laura said, “As far back as I can remember, I always wanted to make picture books.” Since she was 5 years old, she has been writing and illustrating books, even if they were handmade.

She didn’t realize she could make a living by creating picture books until years after she graduated from art school.

For about 10 years she did animation* for ABC and NBC-TV.

*Animation is filming or showing art quickly so that it seems to move, as in cartoons.

When she had kids, she no longer wanted to work long hours at the studio, and she quit that job.

In “Dog and Bear: Two’s Company,” a dog makes a birthday surprise for his friend, a stuffed bear. Laura based the dog in this book on the family dog, Copper.

Private projects

Laura has produced a children’s video about a folk group with her husband’s uncle, singer Pete Seeger. She also has worked on individual TV jobs.

Her books

One of her friends had worked in children’s publishing. She urged Laura to create her own books. Within six months, Laura had created six books. A publisher bought her books right away.

She said: “I am a total free spirit. I get up and do whatever I feel like. Usually that involves work, because I love it.”

In “Black? White! Day? Night!” Laura uses cutouts to change one thing into another. For example, a sunny day becomes a starry night.

Advice to kids

“Never stop wondering. If you keep wondering, you can be so creative.”

Some favorites

Color: “I don’t have a favorite. I love all colors.”

Hobbies: She loves to play the piano, draw and paint, and spend time with her family.

Sports to do: tennis, scuba diving, surfing

Mini Spy . . .

Mini Spy and her friends are listening to a great story at the library. See if you can find: • exclamation mark • word MINI

- man in the moon
- letter A
- canoe
- lima bean
- key • sock
- letter E
- tin can
- toothbrush
- fish • ant
- pencil
- ladder
- ring

Book Awards

Words that remind us of reading are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally. See if you can find: BOOK, NEWSPAPER, MAGAZINE, WEB, KNOWLEDGE, FUN, FACT, LEARN, MYSTERY, WORD, HISTORY, EXPLORE, INTERNET, LIBRARY, FIND, SCHOOL, WONDER, TEXT, ADVENTURE, SCIENCE, STORY, TALE.

I LOVE TO READ!
Meet Krista Eyler

Krista Eyler plays electric guitar and sings rock 'n' roll for kids and adults as “Funky Mama.” Krista worked as a TV reporter in Kansas City, Mo., from 1999 through 2004. She was nominated for an Emmy Award for her TV coverage.

She quit reporting to sing and write songs for her own two sons and for other kids. She played at the White House Annual Easter Egg Roll in Washington, D.C., in 2007.

A friend gave her the nickname “Funky Mama” after seeing Krista compete in a karate tournament. Krista holds a black belt in American karate, or Bushidokan.

She learned to play piano, cello and guitar when she was a child. She began singing in musical theater in the Kansas City area when she was 15.

Krista has made four CDs and written a children's book, “Funky Mama's Grandma's House.”

You'll need:

- 1 (32-ounce) box chicken broth
- 1 (16-ounce) package frozen vegetable soup mix, or frozen vegetables
- 1 cup penne pasta
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 (15.5-ounce) can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 1/2 cups cooked chicken, cubed

What to do:

1. Place broth, frozen vegetables, pasta and spices in a large soup pot.
2. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and boil gently for 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, drain and rinse canned kidney beans.
4. Cut cooked chicken into cubes.
5. Add beans and chicken to soup mixture.
6. Simmer for additional 10 minutes to heat through. Makes 8 servings.

*You will need an adult's help with this recipe.

Go dot to dot and color.

The popular nine-part series on the Constitution, written in collaboration with the National Archives, is now packaged as a colorful 32-page softcover book. The series covers:

- the preamble, the seven articles and 27 amendments
- the “big ideas” of the document
- the history of its making and the signers

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Please send ______ copies of The Mini Page Guide to the Constitution (Item #9-7407-6511-6) at $13.45 each, total cost. (Bulk discount information available upon request.) www.smartwarehousing.com

Name: ______________________________________________________________________________
Address: _____________________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________________________ State: _________ Zip: ________________

All the following jokes have something in common. Can you guess the common theme or category?

Betty: Where did Mother Goose leave her trash?
Ben: At the Humpty dump!

Bailey: Who do the mice see when they are ill?
Barra: Hickory Dickory Doc!

Baird: What sign did the real estate agent put in the yard of the old woman who lives in a shoe?
Boyd: Soled!
Newbery and Caldecott Winners

It is sweet to read just for fun. For suggestions of good books, The Mini Page looks at the 2008 Newbery and Caldecott Honor Book award winners.

Newbery winners

The John Newbery Medal is awarded each year to the author of the most outstanding children’s book. This year there were also three Honor Book awards.

The 2008 Newbery Medal was awarded to Laura Amy Schlitz for “Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices From a Medieval Village.” It tells stories of individual people of that time.

Newbery Honor Book awards


“Elijah of Buxton” is the story of an 11-year-old free boy from Canada who risks his own freedom to help a friend in America during the time when many people owned slaves.

Jacket art © 2007 by Gary D. Schmidt, published by Clarion Books

In “The Wednesday Wars,” a seventh-grader has problems staying out of trouble, especially after his teacher makes him stay after class to work on Shakespeare.

Caldecott winners

The Caldecott Medal is presented each year to the illustrator of the most distinguished picture book for children. This year there were also four Honor Book awards.

Brian Selznick won the 2008 Caldecott Medal for “The Invention of Hugo Cabret.” It tells of an orphaned boy living in a Paris train station, and a mystery about a movie and a robot.

Caldecott Honor Book awards

Kadir Nelson has illustrated about 20 books for kids. He has also worked on the art for movies.

In “Henry’s Freedom Box: A True Story From the Underground Railroad” by Ellen Levine, a boy finds a creative way to gain his freedom.

Laura Vaccaro Seeger has written and illustrated about 10 books for kids.

“First the Egg” illustrates the way one thing leads to another.

Peter Sis grew up in Communist Czechoslovakia. He has written and illustrated several books for kids, including the 1997 Caldecott Honor Book winner “Starry Messenger: Galileo Galilei.”

“The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain” is the true story of what it was like to grow up in a country ruled by a dictatorship, where people had few freedoms.

Mo Willems has won previous Caldecott Honor Book awards for “Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!” and “Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale.”

In “Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity,” Trixie is upset when she finds out a classmate has the exact same stuffed bunny.

Look at the headlines in your newspaper. Without reading the news story, make up your own story about a headline.

Next week, The Mini Page is about bullying.

The Mini Page Staff
Betty Debnam - Founding Editor and Editor at Large  Lisa Tarry - Managing Editor  Lucy Lien - Associate Editor  Wendy Daley - Artist

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Meet Jacqueline Woodson

in
The Mini Page®

by Betty Debnam

Appearing in your newspaper on ____________.

from The Mini Page
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Supersport: Knowshon Moreno

Height: 5-11  Birthdate: July 16, 1987
Weight: 207  Residence: Belford, N.J.

The buildup is big, the expectations high. But Knowshon Moreno appears to be man enough to handle it. The University of Georgia sophomore is the star running back on a talented team ranked No. 1 heading into the football season.

Moreno made a splash last season, and now folks are even mentioning his name in the same breath as that of Herschel Walker, Georgia’s Heisman Trophy winner of almost 28 years ago. In 2007, Moreno played in 13 games but started just six, and still wound up as the second-leading rusher in the tough Southeastern Conference, with 1,334 yards rushing. He also scored 14 TDs.

Before arriving at Georgia in 2006, Moreno set the all-time high school scoring record in the state of New Jersey, with 128 career touchdowns and 782 points.

At Georgia, where he’s majoring in consumer economics, Moreno may be running right into school history.

Standards Spotlight:
Meet Jacqueline Woodson

Mini Page activities meet many state and national educational standards. Each week we identify standards that relate to The Mini Page’s content and offer activities that will help your students reach them.

This week’s standards:
• Students comprehend and respond to a variety of images and text.
• Students identify forms and elements of literature. (Language Arts: Reading)

Activities:
1. Write the name of one of the Newbery or Caldecott books in a circle in the center of a piece of paper. Cut out newspaper words and pictures that show what you think the book might be about. Paste them around the title.
2. Make a Newbery/Caldecott recommendation for three different people in the newspaper. Select an entertainer, an athlete, and a community or national leader. Explain your recommendations.
3. Find three newspaper stories that match Newbery or Caldecott books in some way. Paste the stories on a piece of paper. Write a sentence for each one telling why the story reminded you of the book.
4. Which of the Newbery/Caldecott books is (a) about real people, (b) had poetry, (c) was about different times, and (d) was about friends?
5. Conduct a survey among your friends. Have them select their favorite book from today’s Mini Page. Ask them to choose the book they would like to read. Have them explain why they made their choices. Then write a paragraph discussing which books were the most popular and why.

(standards by Dr. Sherrye D. Garrett, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi)