

Manhattan Beach Unified School District

2008 *Pleasure Reading*

Pleasure reading recommended by MBUSD Library Media Specialists

For Students Entering Grades 1 and 2

Picture Books

The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County, by Janice Harrington (2007)

A young farm girl tries to catch her favorite chicken, until she learns something about the hen that makes her change her ways. This funny story will have city kids longing for the chance to chase (or nurture) some chickens themselves.

A Good Day, by Kevin Henkes (2007)

A simple picture book, expertly tuned to the emotions and imagination of children. With a little over 100 words, Henkes portrays animals starting out with a “bad day” that turns into a “good day.” Children will enjoy how each problem is resolved and how the final picture wraps up this very satisfying story.

Clancy, the Courageous Cow, by Lachie Hume (2007)

Because Clancy is the only “Belted Galloway” cow without a belt, the cows in his herd treat him like a misfit. However, when his lack of a belt allows the Belted Galloways to win grazing rights to the best grass, Clancy teaches them all a lesson about acceptance.

The Top Job, by Elizabeth Cody Kimmel (2007)

On Career Day, one of the students describes her dad’s fascinating job: changing light bulbs—on top of the Empire State Building! Information about this architectural marvel completes the book.

My Dog Is as Smelly as Dirty Socks: And Other Funny Family Portraits, by Hanoch Piven (2007)

This is a collection of family portraits, in which an object stands in for a personal characteristic. The unusual illustrations have most kids laughing. Starter word lists and endpaper galleries of ideas may inspire a few art projects to fill those long summer days.

Chester, by Melanie Watt

A self-centered cat named Chester keeps interrupting his owner as she tries to write a story about a mouse. Brought to you by the author of *Scaredy Squirrel*, this is an excellent and decidedly silly meta-textual picture-book. Chester is a mischievous and delightful author. He's even conveniently drawn a circle on the cover of his book for a future award sticker.

Books in a Series

Little Miss and Mr. Men, by Roger Hargreaves (c1971, reissued 2007, 2008)

They're back! These old favorites are being reissued, so in addition to the well-worn copies usually found at libraries, copies are now available from booksellers. Each story features a character who typifies a specific personality trait or tendency (e.g., Mr. Happy, Miss Chatterbox). Simple line drawings—not much more than circles on legs—provide the visuals for these positive little stories.

Mr. Putter and Tabby, by Cynthia Rylant (1994-2007)

Beginning with *Mr. Putter and Tabby Pour the Tea*, the books in this series feature Mr. Putter, an older gentleman, and his pet tabby cat. The two companions enjoy a wide variety of everyday activities, including most recently a nighttime stroll, in *Mr. Putter and Tabby See the Stars*.

Elephant & Piggie, by Mo Willems (2007)

With the Elephant & Piggie books, Caldecott Medalist Mo Willems has created an entertaining series for the very earliest readers. Using speech bubbles and very few words, these visually appealing books will be enjoyed over and over, and are particularly suited to reading with a parent or friend. Look for *I Am Invited to a Party*, *My Friend Is Sad*, *There Is a Bird on Your Head* (winner of the 2008 Theodor Seuss Geisel Award for the year's most distinguished book for beginning readers). and *Today I Will Fly!*

Commander Toad, by Jane Yolen (c1980, 1996)

Soaring through space in his ship the *Star Warts*, Commander Toad and his crew (Mr. Hop, Lieutenant Lily, Jake Skyjumper, and old Doc Peeper) confront challenges and villains from the silly end of the cosmic spectrum. While their mission is to "bring a little bit of earth to the alien stars," these comical adventures will bring whimsical fun to summer readers. Among the six Commander Toad books, look for *Commander Toad in Space*, *Commander Toad and the Dis-Asteroid*, and *Commander Toad and the Space Pirates*.