

What you do to promote the Iowa Children's Choice Award?

We asked and you sent some great ideas! ²⁰⁰⁶



At Walnut Hills our fifth graders complete two projects with the ICCA books. First, our Media Center specialist does a powerpoint book talk about each book and its author. Next, the students are given several weeks to have a chance to read the books. Then, around the end of October, we use these books in a keyboarding project. For this project I have the students pick one book to make a brochure about. Each fifth grader chooses a book and makes a brochure. They are tri-fold brochures that include information about the student, a cover page, information and picture of the book, information and picture about the author, a list of other books written by the author, and a list of books in our Media Center that are similar to their ICCA book's storyline, characters, setting, etc. Once these are completed, I send the brochures to the AEA to be printed in color and then we display them in the Media Center (after which they are added to the student's portfolio). Also, students use the information they gathered for their brochure to create a web page about their favorite ICCA book. These webpages are then posted together to our school website to share with others.



 Julie Weeda 

Technology Teacher

Waukee CSD, Walnut Hills Elementary



I have a jean jacket on which my friend used her sewing machine to embroider Children's Choice Books in red thread on the back. After a child reads one of the nominated books, I ask him a few questions about the book. If he answers them correctly, he may pin a bead on the back on my jacket. The beads are color coded according to the grade of the students. For example, all fourth graders pin on a red bead for each book read. The kids love this hands on activity, and they always enjoy watching me wear the jean jacket on Fridays. It generates a lot of discussion for the program as kids can be heard guessing which grade has the most beads on my jacket. Try it!

 **Carla Roghair, Librarian** 
Clarke Elementary School
Osceola, Iowa



At my parochial P-6 school the sixth grade teacher requires her students to read at least 3 of the ICCA books during the year. They interview with me about the book as the teacher wants to be sure they are reading and understanding. In the interview, if they liked the book, I always ask them to think of at least one other person they will be recommending the book to. I've been pleasantly surprised that they generally carry out the recommendation. I have introduced the set of books at the beginning of the year with booktalks or the tape provided. About halfway through the year I also share the tape or booktalks with the fifth graders and the fourth graders in the spring. That allows time for the higher grades to access the books after they've been introduced to them.



In the past with a previous sixth grade teacher, students were assigned (with some choice) one of the books and entered an illustrated page describing the book and telling why they thought others would like it in a loose leaf notebook. The notebook was available in the library for lower grades to check. There's just something about a recommendation from the sixth graders that catches the attention of lower grades.

 **Jeanette Gerrietts** 
Public Service Librarian
Vogel Library, Wartburg College



Our school district has partnered with the local public library to start an annual Battle of the Books using the Iowa Children's Choice nominees as our Battle books. We encourage the 4th - 6th graders to sign up in teams of 3 people. They read and read and then in the spring we'll start our building battles using questions that the library media specialists have made up. The winning team from each building then goes to the public library on a Saturday morning for the district battle. It's been a great way to both promote the books and to collaborate with the public library!

This year when I introduced the books, I tried something different. I had a book for each student at the tables. We talked about genres, specifically the ones represented on the ICCA list. We talked about the two places where you can find out what a book is about (front flap and back cover - but be careful on the back cover because sometimes it talks about other books by the author). Then we did a book pass. Everyone had a minute with a book, and then they passed and got the next book. When everyone at the table had a turn with each book, I asked, "Who thinks they have a historical fiction book at their table?" They'd hold up the book and I would give a brief description of it. If anyone was interested in reading it, they could mark it on the bookmark I gave them as they entered.

 **Mia Beesley** 
Edward White Elementary
Eldridge, Iowa



At Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Dubuque, the 6th grade AEP students are reading both the Iowa Teen Award and Children's Choice books. After completing the book, they are designing a booktalk and visual presentation. These will be videotaped and presented to the rest of the student body via our daily news broadcast. The Children's Choice titles will also be shared with one of our elementary schools via our teleconferencing units.

In addition, the 3 Dubuque middle schools - Eleanor Roosevelt MS (librarian Kathy Pisarik), George Washington MS (librarian Amy

Mozena) and Thomas Jefferenson MS (librarian Anne Sushko) are using both lists as the basis for our Battle of the Books.

 **Anne Sushko** 
Thomas Jefferson Middle School
Dubuque School District



Read 2 - vote



Read 5 by a date in November - come to the library for dessert

Read 7 by a date in December - come to the library for pizza lunch

Read 12 by the end of January - come in for a surprise

The surprise has been lunch in the library with some administrative staff. The superintendent has come both years we have done this. We have place cards and have kids sit with an adult and have book discussions over lunch. One year lasagna and one year we had grilled hotdogs and had a dog tag for each, etc.

If a student reads them all, then we get them a gift card to Barnes and Noble for \$5.00. The kids that have come before do not want the surprise changed to anything but lunch with the superintendent. They are pleased that she comes to spend time with them.



 **Sandy Antons** 
Nancy Mulford
Strawberry Hill Elementary
Anamosa School District



First I read all of the Children's Choice books over the summer. Then I chose to do booktalks for Children's Book Week in November. For 4th and 5th grade I chose to use the Children's Choice books. I asked teachers for a half hour time slot to do the booktalks in the classroom/library. I handed

out the Children's Choice bookmarks (provided by IEMA!), and told students to mark any books I talked about that they thought they would like to read as they listened to the booktalks. Then I proceeded to talk about as many of the Children's Choice books as I could. Many of the classroom teachers stayed to hear the booktalks and selected Children's Choice books as read-alouds for their class. Some of the teachers gave me extra time because I hadn't finished the list in 30 minutes, and students and teachers wanted to hear about all of them! I challenged the 4th and 5th grade students to see how many they could read before we voted in February. Since the booktalks, many of these books have been on reserve lists. If I had anything to change, I would do these booktalks much earlier.

I plan to do that!

 Bonnie Staiert, 2-5 Media Specialist 
Bryant, Franklin, and Lincoln Elementaries
Boone, Iowa





This year students in grades 3-6 participated in the program in our school. What I did this year was to read all the ICCA books last summer and write a booktalk on an index card. Then I used the card to booktalk two of the ICCA books each time the 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders were scheduled in the library. I kept track on the back of the card to which grades I had talked about the book. I also required the students in 4th and 5th grades to read at least two of the ICCA books and do a report. The report choices included a variety of forms on paper, two characters writing letters to each other, writing a poem about the book, making a timeline about the book, and keeping a journal while reading the book. Students were encouraged to read more than two books from the list, but had to do reports on only two of them. I wrote a note to parents at the time of the fall parent teacher conference explaining the program and telling each how their child was doing with the assignment. Third graders were encouraged to participate and had one additional report option--drawing a picture of something that happened in the book and labeling it with the book title and author and a sentence about the picture.

 Janet Wiener, Media Specialist 
St. Mary's Grade School
Remsen, Iowa





I read all the books myself in the summer. The first few classes I teach with 4th and 5th graders in the fall, I booktalk the books. I prepare a database with the author, title, and a place for the genre, date read, and comments. I fill in the title and author, but not the genre, date read and comments. I load that database on the computers in our lab. As I booktalk the books, we discuss what genre they are and enter that into the database. After we have completed entering all the genres, I teach them how to reserve a book using our Alexandria library system. Each student reserves 3 books. I order more copies of those titles that are reserved by the most people. Several times throughout the year we talk about what books they have read and what they thought of them. Students can enter the date read and comments about the book into their database. When it is time to vote the students try to convince each other which book is the best. This year we also ordered Reading Counts quizzes for all the Iowa Children's Choice books.

 Barb Ehlers, K-5 Media Specialist 
Wings Park Elementary
Oelwein, Iowa



Our teams have a special literature time twice weekly. We call it Oral Literature. Students are grouped by choice and meet with that group for about 8-9 weeks while reading a title in the theme. Over a year's time, we do 4 separate themes--things like Fantasy, Classics, Mystery etc. We include Children's Choice as one of our yearly themes. This way, we assure that all students hear at least 1 of the choices.

I also do book talks on the titles and hand out lists in the first 4 weeks of school in the fall, so students are exposed to a list of good reads right away and the books are in circulation quickly.

 **Barbara Stein, K-6 Media Specialist** 
Weber Elementary
Iowa City



We have had the 6th graders do book talks for the 3-5 graders to promote the children's choice books.

 **Nancy Buck, K-6 Media Specialist** 
Crawford and Edwards Elementary Schools
Ames, Iowa





I ordered the Camelot /King Arthur bookmarks from Demco, and the Catch A Dragon by the Tail reading records, stickers, and certificates from Upstart. For each ICCA book recorded in the reading record the students received a sticker and a bookmark - there are 13 bookmarks in the series, but I had to repeat the stickers. In May I will give each student a certificate that includes the number of books read. Also, I went to the ICCA web site and printed the sheet for each title. I put these sheets in a 3 ring binder with 3 pieces of lined notebook paper between the sheets. Students could then write their comments about the books they read and rate the books with Dragon's teeth. 1 tooth =fair, 2 teeth = good, 3 teeth=excellent. Also used the ICCA video. Students are able to keep earning stickers until the end of the school year. We do not have next year's titles as of yet. I may buy several copies of the winning book and have it autographed at IEMA as an option and have a drawing .

 **Shelley Little, Pre-K through 12** 
Tri-County
Thronburg, Iowa





I show the video and then go over the books with the kids. If I have read the book, I give my own critique of it. My associate picked one book to read to each grade.

 **Kathy Bunt, K-12 Media** 
North Iowa Community Schools
Buffalo Center, Iowa





I use trains along the wall to record books read. An engine is in front and then students write the title and their name & class on the cars. I post them at least once a week. When I run out of wall, I start another train below it. We had three trains this year. (All books must be read on their own; books read to classrooms do not count on the train.) That way I can tell who has read how many books (to determine who gets to vote). I also give a little surprise (troll pencil top, mini-tablet, etc.) to students who read and record five or more books. I used to take students who read the whole list to the DQ, but quit when a parent thought that was not enough!

 **Jane Varcho, K-6 Media Specialist** 
Neil Armstrong School
North Scott School District
Park View, Iowa





I spoke with each classroom and gave a brief booktalk on each book on the list. I went to local establishments for gifts/free items coupons and raffled them off every other week to those students that were reading and filling out their tracking forms. The students really looked forward to winning free pizza, free ice cream cones, free slurpies, etc. It seemed to motivate many of them to read at least two. I also gave bookmarks to those who

read two books to vote, I made certificates for those who read 10 or more on the list, and I bought lunch at a local restaraunt for my top two or three readers in each grade level. I put the names of the students who read 10 or more in our newsletters home and I put the names of my top readers in the newsletter. I also announced the top readers and the 10 or more readers over the P.A.

 Cynthia Blinkinsop, K-8 Media Specialist 
Camanche Elementary AND Camanche Middle School
Camanche, Iowa





It was difficult for us to purchase enough books to have both the 4th graders and the 5th graders participate in the contest. What I have done is allow the 4th graders to read last year's list since we already had those books available. The 5th graders read the current year's books. Then the students can read for different levels of incentives--pencils, books, and t-shirts!

 Deanne Drees, K-5 Media Specialist 
Denison Elementary School
Denison, Iowa





I only do ICCA with 4th and 5th graders. The second week of school I booktalk all the books to all 12 classes. In Feb. the 5 students in each class who have read the most ICCA books are contestants in the ICCA Battle of the Books. After I read all the books the summer before, I make up 4 statements for each of the books. Two classes compete at a time. I say the statement and the class contestants I am addressing have 15 sec. to talk together to give me the book title and author for one point each. If they don't get it, the other team can steal. I say the statement once again and they have 10 sec. to give me title and author. Both teams are given the same number of statements. I only take answers from the captain of each team. We have a fourth grade winning team and a fifth grade team. We

hold these contests the week the students vote for ICCA. When each grade has a winner, all contestants are invited to a cupcake decorating party in the media center after lunch. We end up with sprinkles everywhere! We try to have third graders watch the contest, so they have an idea of what to expect next year. I have gotten a lot of positive feedback from students, teachers, and parents about the contest. A big plus is that students who haven't read very many of the ICCA books are fighting over them after the contest!

 Deb Moyer, Media Specialist 
Lincoln and Jefferson Elementary Schools
Pella, Iowa



I introduce our third graders to peer recommended literature via the ICCA books and integrate technology skills by introducing them to our Internet connection to the ICCA web site. They learn about the URL, boot it up in our lab, bookmark it, read the reviews, watch for next year's list to appear later in the year, and this year with the links to other sites and to authors, we used this web site throughout the entire year whenever the whole class came for check outs and students had extra time. They could then go to the computer and do some researching for more good titles to find, authors to know about, and they especially enjoyed the link to Animal Tracks found for the book, Tracks In the Snow. They all took the animal quiz and shared the Maquoketa School URL and ICCA page at home so Mom and Dad learned about ICCA books, too, from the Internet. We also like to compare our school web site with other schools, so Maquoketa is the first one we get to investigate for ideas for the library media center and/or classroom web pages and links, etc. We put the ICCA books on a special top shelf with a colorful sign keeping them promoted all year long. We also buy the special labels for the spines of the books so they can easily be found on the shelf the next year if we didn't get them all read in one year. 4th through 6th graders never forget to watch for those spine labels and frequently go to the web site when they have time, too.

 Janet Gray, K-6 Media Specialist 
Sawyer Elementary
Ames, Iowa



I read them all and book talk them at the beginning of the year. The kids have the bookmark in their hands and can mark the ones they think they want to try. Occasionally we talk about them during check out. That's usually so I can get the kids to sell them to each other. I am interested in finding out if anyone else is doing any book groups to discuss the ICCA books. I am thinking I'd like to try that next year at lunch time.

 **Mia Beesley** 

North Scott Community Schools



I display the ICCA books in one spot on a bookshelf top, in the same place every year, with the laminated list for the year. I make cardstock bookmarks of the list and distribute them to the teachers when the list comes out and to the students in the fall. I encourage teachers to read ICCA books aloud to their classes. We also now have AR so we can make the connection between the ICCA books that are AR as well. ICCA is awesome! I am so glad we have it!

 **Sue Grove, K-5 Media Specialist** 

Monroe Elementary School

Davenport, Iowa



I typically color code my ICCA book lists for the kids, as well as the bookmarks I have printed. I use the color the ICCA committee sends out with the new listing.

The bookmarks are laminated and "awarded" to those who have in fact read or heard two of the titles on the current list...noting their ability to vote for the best in Iowa.



I also include the AR levels in parenthesis behind the titles. I do not include points....I want students to choose the book not the points.

This year, as I read Million Dollar Shot to my third grade classes, I noticed them trying Mr. Stokely's (Gutman's) "secret" suggestions for Eddie as I read. I pulled excerpts (giving credit to the author) that made up the secret, and asked the building p.e. teacher to incorporate it with her basketball unit if it made sense to her (it did, she did). I also had our men's and women's varsity coaches review the sheet and respond for my students...they did. That was terribly exciting for the younger 3rd grade students who truly admire our local basketball "heroes."

 **Judy Havlik, Media Specialist** 
Algona Community Schools



I promote the ICCA books with grades 3-6. At the beginning of every year the media assistants and I booktalk the books to the kids. We usually say if the books are a part of the series, what else the author wrote, and which books we liked best. We use the ICCA purchased stickers to place on the spines and display the books in one area. We also make bookmarks in the same color as the spine labels to pass out to the kids. During the Scholastic Book Fairs, the company sells the books and we make signs to point them out. We usually have 3 copies of each book in the media centers, hardback and paperback. We do reminders to say we are voting at the beginning of February and ask teachers to read at least one of the books to their class. Almost every student participates. Once the voting is over, we display the next year's books with their spine labels. We don't booktalk them, but they think they found a prize when they discover them. This year, the media assistants and I were going to make a book review book for the kids to write their own comments, but we didn't get it done. In the past I have had kids make posters, but we didn't this year. Some kids get disappointed when they don't see the books they nominate on the list. We have thought about making our own favorite book list for our schools. We would still participate in the ICCA. Thanks!

 Sylvia Bergeson, K-6 Media Specialist 
Fairmeadows Elementary & Western Hills Elementary
West Des Moines, Iowa





The kids used your web site to look at the books and evaluate the book that they would like to read and to get author information. Students viewed the ICCA tape - they could get ideas on how to present their book to the class. I gave one class period to read and one class period to work on their poster. The remaining work had to be done outside of class. The poster had to include: information about the author, the book + an illustration. I have AR tests on most of the books; therefore, they could use this book for classroom reading. The students gave their presentations in the ICN Room; thus, making it easy for me to tape and the kids loved using the cameras.

 Bonnie Fear, K-6 Media Specialist 
Alburnett, Iowa





I read all of the books on the list and make them available to interested teachers over the summer so they can read them, too. In the fall, I do booktalks for grades 3-5 and show them the ICCA web site. The students get bookmarks. I also send letters home, explaining the program, so the parents can encourage their kids and can even read some of the books aloud. The letter also includes the public library's hours, since they have all of the ICCA books in a special display, too. During the summer, my daughter and I make posters for each book. Each year we do a different theme. For this year's books, we had black paper with something symbolizing each book (for Kidnap Kids we made a set of handcuffs out of foil; for White Water we had a big rattlesnake, etc.). Each poster also had a brief description of the book. After students read the book, they signed the poster with a fluorescent gel pen. This was optional and I didn't question them on their reading--we used the honor system.

 Merry Kahn, K-5 School Librarian 
Briggs Elementary School
Maquoketa, Iowa



I, too, read the books in the summer and do a fall booktalk but here's a little extra idea. At the conclusion of my booktalk, I challenge the students to read all the Children's Choice books. Every year I have a few that meet that challenge. They are recognized at the end of the year assembly with an award. Their favorite part of the award is a recognition sheet with candy bars filling in some of the words. I try to stand in front of a well-stocked candy counter as I write lines such as: "Your reading habits are worth (100 Grand)," and "Hope you had a few (Snickers)."

 Mary Ann Engel 
Pleasant View/ Bridgeview Elementary Schools
Pleasant Valley, Iowa





I begin Iowa Children's Choice on October 1st by challenging each of our fourth graders to read and report on 8 books from the list, our fifth graders to read 10, and our sixth graders to read 12 before the first of March. I read them before October 1st and write an annotated bibliography that I hand out to the students. I buy three copies of each book so they have a chance to get them. Students can have one Children's Choice book at a time and can keep them for two weeks only. When a student finishes a book they are encouraged to fill out a report form. (See attachment) I expect a minimum of mistakes and a feel for their reading experience. I often get long involved reactions.

We keep records of how many students have read each month. On the first of March, we tally the totals and invite students meeting their goal to a darned good party during school time. We have certificates, prizes, picture taking, some really good eats, and time to play a game or two. Students do not compete against each other-only with themselves. It takes real stick-to-

itiveness to make it. We have had several students read and report on them all each year. Some have read them all all three years. Students can count one of their total if the teacher reads one aloud.

This program encourages year-long reading. Students talk about their reading and frequently come in asking for books. The party encourages goal setting. Then when March 1 rolls around we have a supply of ICCA books that the third graders can't wait to get their hands on. This encourages participation in fourth.

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|--|-------------------|
| Iowa Children's Choice Report Form | |
| Teacher _____ | Name _____ |
| Author _____ | |
| Title _____ | |
| Two main characters: _____ | |
| Write a paragraph in your own words about the most exciting part of the story. Use correct spelling and punctuation. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ | |
| How does the story end? _____ _____ | |

 Barb Feuerhak 
Orchard Hill Elementary
Cedar Falls, Iowa



I booktalk the books for the existing 3rd and 4th grade students in the spring so they can be reading over the summer time from the public library. I booktalk the incoming 3rd grade students in the fall and introduce them to the program. I give them the color-coordinated bookmarks at the time of the booktalks.

To promote the program I set voluntary participation challenges:

If you read 15 of the titles (10 for 3rd grade), you are invited to a pizza party in April after the winner is announced.



If you read 18 of the titles (15 for 3rd grade), you are also given a gift certificate for ice cream at the local ice cream shop.

If you read all of the books on the list, you also are presented with your own copy of the winning title.

Each year we have an Iowa map created that makes each of the nominees into a "county". The students mark off the county when they have finished reading the book. The maps are kept in their media folders in the media center. I collect them in February when we vote the winner. I then do spot checking of those titles they have marked. I also run a reading log from our Winnebago computerized system to show what they have checked out. Sometimes, a student will have to erase a title they had marked if they can't tell me some basic info. about the book.

The students are always racing me to get the books all finished before they do. Usually I have 3-4 students who get them all read by voting time. At the pizza party, I introduce the next year's list to the students and let them have first chance at the new list of books.

We keep the books separated on top of the shelf so they are readily available. I have a photocopy of the covers of the books with the color-coordinated construction paper as the background on the wall to remind them which ones are up for nomination. It has been a very effective way to encourage participation. We also use the color-coordinated labels on the spines of the book.

 **Andrea Rauer** 
Hoover Elementary
West Branch Community Schools
West Branch, Iowa

