

Michigan Reads! One State, One Children's Book Program

Library of Michigan

June 2010

Q: What is *Michigan Reads!* ?

A: The *Michigan Reads!* program seeks to highlight the importance of reading and sharing books with children, especially toddlers through early elementary school age, and to recognize the vital role of libraries which provide access to quality books, programs and services to children and families that lay the foundation for reading and school success.

Michigan Reads! raises awareness of the intergenerational nature of literacy and the value of sharing books with children, especially during their critical developmental stage between birth and age 5. *Michigan Reads!* promotes early-childhood literacy in Michigan and engages teachers, librarians, caregivers and parents in reading and sharing books with children ages birth to eight.

Q: How does the program work?

A: Annually, a title is selected based on literary merit, readability and appeal to children. Preference is given to a Michigan or Great Lakes children's author. The Library of Michigan provides each public library, branch library, Reservation library, bookmobile, Head Start and Great Start Readiness program in the state with a free copy of the selected book, posters and programming ideas. The Library of Michigan maintains and promotes an active website at www.michigan.gov/michiganreads where programming materials can also be easily downloaded.

Q: Then what?

A: Parents, grandparents, caregivers, older siblings, and volunteers are encouraged to read the *Michigan Reads!* title to their preschooler sometime – or many times – during a designated month. The Library of Michigan arranges for the author, and sometimes the illustrator, to present programs at selected libraries and schools across the state. Schools and libraries use the book and program materials to hold their own programs, knowing that around all of Michigan, other groups are similarly engaged.

Q: Who sponsors this program?

A: Target is our generous sponsor of this statewide program. You can watch the website to keep informed: www.michigan.gov/michiganreads

Q: What is included in the kits that go out to the libraries, schools, and Head Start and Great Start Readiness Programs?

A: Each kit includes:

- a hardcover copy of the *Michigan Reads!* book;
- a programming resource guide developed specifically for *Michigan Reads!* and the selected title;
- stickers for young readers;
- a poster describing the program; and
- a set of bookmarks highlighting early childhood literacy tips for parents

Q: How are the books selected each year?

A: The *Michigan Reads!* title is selected annually based upon several criteria including:

1. Appropriate for children grades Pre-K - 2nd with wide kid appeal
2. Lends itself to programming – and story extenders
3. Living author and/or illustrator, preferably from the Great Lakes region
4. Artistic merit/illustrations match the text - with engaging color and art
5. Book will stand the test of time, have literary merit, be multi-faceted
6. In print / widely available (A written commitment from the publisher that the book will be in print and readily available is required for selection for Michigan Reads! and will be determined after nominations are made.)
7. Available in hardcover. Desirable additional formats include paperback, AV, big book, etc.
8. Prefer recent copyright (in 21st century)
9. Inclusive in nature

Q: What is the book for 2010?

A: The 2010 *Michigan Reads!* One State, One Children's Book Program title is ***The Runaway Garden***, written by Bellaire resident Jeffery L. Schatzer; illustrated by Jeffrey Ebbeler. The book is published in Ann Arbor by Mitten Press (an imprint of Ann Arbor Media Group LLC), copyright 2007.

Q: When does the author go on tour and which libraries/schools are included?

A: The author tour takes place in September and October and you can find the listing of locations, dates and times by going to the website at www.michigan.gov/michiganreads.

Q: What is the impact of the program?

A: Research shows that children learn more from birth to age 5 than during any other time in life. Reading regularly to children during this early period ensures the development of appropriate levels of language acquisition, listening skills and reading readiness. Parents and caregivers play a critical role in introducing kids to the wonder and enchantment of reading. Children who are read to 30 minutes a day from birth to age 5 will build up 900 hours of literacy preparation while, just as importantly, strengthening relationships with the people who read to them. *Michigan Reads!* encourages family bonding through reading. It also increases awareness and usage of Michigan's public and school libraries as excellent resources for learning.

Q: What are the previous *Michigan Reads!* Books?

A: 2004: *Barnyard Song* by Rhonda Gowler Greene
2006: *Bed Hogs* by Kelly DiPucchio
2007: *Big Chickens* by Leslie Helakoski
2008: *Raccoon Tune* by Nancy Shaw
2009: *The Pout-Pout Fish* by Deborah Diesen
2010: *The Runaway Garden* by Jeffery Schatzer