Unit 06: Caldecott Medal and the Theodore Seuss Geisel Award

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 2**
Length: **4 sessions**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Kindergarten students will be introduced to the Caldecott Medal, an award given annually to children book illustrators by the American Library Association. Each year Media Specialists will gather the books awarded the Caldecott Award and the Theodor Seuss Geisel Award and read those award winning books to students. In addition, these lessons may also include readings and discussions on past award winners.

This unit is designed to be part of a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including physical and social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship. During this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers.

Revision Date: July 2026

Standards

The identified standards reflect a developmental progression across grades/ levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness and global citizenship. The standards that follow are relevant to this course in addition to the associated content-based standards listed below.

Information Literacy: This unit challenges students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to, digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons may include the research process and how information is created and produced; critical thinking and using information resources; research methods, including the difference between primary and secondary sources; the difference between facts, points of view, and opinions, accessing peer-reviewed print and digital library resources; the economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information.

Information Literacy for Elementary Educators

LA.RL.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).
L.RF.K.1	Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
LA.RL.K.2	With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).
LA.RL.K.3	With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
LA.RL.K.6	With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.
LA.RL.K.7	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).
LA.RL.K.10	Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.
LA.RI.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
LA.RI.K.2	With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
LA.RI.K.5	Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.
LA.RI.K.6	Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.
LA.RI.K.7	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).
RL.CR.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a literary text (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).
RI.CR.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in an informational text (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).
RL.CI.K.2	With prompting and support, identify the central message and retell familiar literary texts, including key details (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).
RI.CI.K.2	With prompting and support, identify the main topic and key details of an informational text (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).
RL.IT.K.3	With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
RI.IT.K.3	With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
RL.TS.K.4	Recognize common types of literary texts (e.g., storybooks, poems) and identify features of print (front cover, back cover, and title page of a book).
RI.TS.K.4	Recognize common types of informational texts (e.g., biographies, recipes, how-to manuals) and identify features of print (e.g., front cover, back cover, and title page of a book).
RL.PP.K.5	With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.
RI.PP.K.5	With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.
RL.MF.K.6	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).
RI.MF.K.6	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).
RI.AA.K.7	With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.

RL.CT.K.8	With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two literary texts on the same topic (e.g., characters, experiences, illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).
RI.CT.K.8	With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two informational texts on the same topic (e.g., characters, experiences, illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).
W.AW.K.1	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces on topics or texts (e.g., My favorite book is…).
W.IW.K.2	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts to convey ideas.
SL.PE.K.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
SL.PE.K.1.A	Follow agreed-upon norms for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).
SL.II.K.2	Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.
SL.ES.K.3	Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
SL.PI.K.4	Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.
SL.UM.K.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.
SL.AS.K.6	Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.
I	Inquire: Build new knowledge by inquiring, thinking critically, identifying problems, and developing strategies for solving problems.
I.A	Learners display curiosity and initiative by:
I.A.1	Formulating questions about a personal interest or a curricular topic.
I.A.2	Recalling prior and background knowledge as context for new meaning.
I.B.3	Generating products that illustrate learning
CRP.K-12.CRP1	Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
TECH.8.1.2	Educational Technology: All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.
TECH.8.1.2.D	Digital Citizenship: Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior.

Essential Questions

- How can Exploring many different books help me discover what I enjoy reading?
- How do authors and illustrators develop their own unique styles?
- How do authors and illustrators work together to tell a story?
- How do illustrations help readers understand and enjoy a story?
- What makes a book easy and fun to read?
- Why do some books receive awards?

Students Will Know/Student Will Be Skilled With

- Using illustrations and familiar words to create meaning from text by questioning, reflecting, responding and evaluating.
- Appreciating award winning books for their unique artistic crafts and accessibilities.
- Demonstrating active listening skills.
- Describing illustrations in story read-alouds.
- Identifying titles of popular award winning books.
- Participating in read aloud and storytelling experiences.
- Responding to literature with retellings, predictions, and discussions.
- The author and illustrator work together to create an award winning book.
- There are many different types of awards that a book can win.
- To find connections between words and illustrations in books read aloud or read alone.
- Using illustrations and familiar words to create meaning from text by questioning, reflecting, responding and evaluating.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative.

Developmental progression across years in media is evidenced through benchmark assessments as part of the media specialist's Student Growth Objective (SGO). Follow up diagnostic assessments are used to target skill remediation. Student proficiency allows for additional or alternative assessment based on demonstration or absence of skill.

The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments teachers may use in the classroom and the data collected by the district to track student progress.

- Benchmark/Alternative: Students will be given a Caldecott Award winning book and Theodore Seuss Geisel Award winning book. Student will be able to pick which book has illustrations that tell the story?, and which book would help someone learn to read?
- Formative: Students will respond to literature with retellings, predictions, discussions.
- Formative: Students will explain why they like a book.
- Formative: Students will identify the author and illustrator.
- Formative: Students will respond and evaluate the use of illustrations to support text.
- Summative: Studens will display knowledge of the importance of the Caldecott/Theodore Seuss Geisel Award.
- Summative: Students will be able to recognize and differentiate among award-winning books including but not limited to Theodore Seuss Geisel Award and Caldecott Award.
- Summative: Students compare a book in print and another format (ebook/video/audio book).

Learning Plan

Media Specialists may personalize instruction during this unit and address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students.

Media Specialists at the elementary level design their own unique lesson plans in order to incorporate the essential questions provided in this unit. The order in which this information is presented is dependent upon the variables specific to each elementary school community.

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Suggested Learning Plan:

Key Vocabulary:

- Award-a prize or other mark of recognition given in honor of an achievement:
- Randolph Caldecott: A British illustrator for whom the Caldecott Award is named after
- Illustrator: an artist who makes illustrations
- Illustration: a visual explanation of a text, concept or process

Week 1: What is a Book Award?

- Show:
    - A real medal or ribbon

- Photos of the Caldecott Medal and Geisel Medal

Explain: "Just like athletes can win trophies, books can win medals!"

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Discuss:

- Why do people win awards?
- What makes something excellent?

Read aloud:
Choose one recent or classic Caldecott Medal winner.

Focus on:

- Looking carefully at illustrations
- Predicting from pictures

Week 2: Caldecott Award

Display Caldecott Award poster and Caldecott Award winning books.

Use the Caldecott Award Google Slides

- Explain that books are given this award for their illustrations,
- gold for first place and silver for runner up.
- Discuss past books that have won the awards.
- Show the books that won this years award.
- Read one of this years award winning books.
- Direct their attention to Caldecott award books on display and encourage them to take one home this week. Read book to group.

Week 3: Theodore Seuss Geisel Award

Use the Theodore Seuss Geisel Award Google Slides

- Theodor Seuss Geisel Award and what it recognizes.
- Show past winners of the books.
- Explore Geisel Award books and notice how authors use words, repetition, characters, and storytelling to engage beginning readers.
- Read one of this year's Geisel Award-winning or Honor book aloud.
- Discuss what makes the book a great choice for young readers.

Week 4: Caldecott or Geisel Award

- Compare Caldecott and Geisel Award books.
- Discuss how authors and illustrators make choices that impact readers.

- Students explore award-winning books and share a favorite, explaining why they enjoyed it.
- Encourage students to continue discovering books by favorite authors and illustrators.

- Compare books students have read.
- Differentiate among award-winning books including but not limited to Theodore Seuss Geisel and Caldecott titles.
- Explanation of the Caldecott Medal and Theodore Seuss Geisel Award.
- Instruct and reinforce the appropriate skills necessary to be effective listeners while a story is being read aloud.
- Introduce key vocabulary: award, medal, author, illustrators, illustrations, copyright date, Caldecott Award, Theodor Seuss Geisel Award,
- Mini lessons may include: Reading an award winning book popular with age level of students, and identifying award winning books in the library media center, and critiquing books and deciding which deserve an award.
- Preview the essential questions and connect to learning throughout the unit.
- Select resources for recreational and informational purposes.
- Share books by favorite award winning authors and illustrators.
- Utilize relevant fiction and nonfiction books.

Materials

The materials used in this course allow for integration of a variety of instructional, enrichment, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Suggested Supplemental Resources:

Select this link to view the Kindergarten Google Folder under media in the Grades K-5 folder.

Current Caldecott winners (announced in January of each year)

Past winners popular with Kindergarten Students:

A Ball For Daisy (Raschka)

My Friend Rabbit (Rohmann)

Sam and Dave Dig a Hole (Barnett)

Kitten's First Full Moon (Henkes)

Officer Buckle and Gloria (Rathman)

ALA's book awards (current to 2026)

All Slides are in the Kindergarten Shared Media Folder

2026 Theodore Seuss Geisel Award Winners (Google Slides)

2026 Randolph Caldecott Medal Winners (Google Slides)

Officer Buckle and Gloria-Caldecott Winner (Google Slides)

This is Not My Hat and I Want My Hat Back -Caldecott Winners -(Barnett) (Google Slides)

Beekle -Caldecott Winner (Google Slides)

Watermelon Seed- Geisel Award (Google Slides)

Fox at Night -Geisel Award (Google Slides)

- Age appropriate websites
- Computer technology (Ipads/Laptops)
- Interactive board technology
- Media specialist produced interactive materials/presentations/visual aids
- Ongoing collaboration with teachers regarding units taught within the classroom
- Presentation software
- Quality LMC collection of print and nonprint relevant resources

Suggested Strategies for Accommodations and Modifications

Content specific accommodations and modifications as well as Career Ready Practices are listed here for all students, including: Special Education, English Language Learners, At Risk of School Failure, Gifted and Talented, Students with 504.