



## **TEACHINGBOOKS SPIRIT**

### **Spring, 2003**

This is the newsletter for <http://www.TeachingBooks.net>, an unparalleled multimedia children's literature database that utilizes cutting-edge technologies to reveal to educators and families that special spirit and personality behind the best in children's books.

*TeachingBooks was founded upon the premise that educators find enjoyment and professional value in seeing and hearing authors talk about their work and sharing those presentations with children. We strive to give you unprecedented access to front-list authors and authoritative teaching materials.*

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As a hub of children's literature resources, TeachingBooks.net continually identifies, catalogs and maintains reliable links to curricular resources that help you share books in the classroom, library and home. Each issue of **TeachingBooks Spirit** highlights specific links to give you a flavor of what the site has to offer.

**Exclusive Author Up-close Program:** Denise Fleming (author and illustrator of *In the Tall, Tall Grass*, *Time to Sleep* and a dozen more picture books for the young child).

[http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec\\_athr.cgi?name=Fleming%2C%20Denise](http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec_athr.cgi?name=Fleming%2C%20Denise)

In this engaging, five-minute Author Up-close movie, Denise Fleming demonstrates her amazing pulp painting technique; explains how she designs everything in her books and provides many interesting insights into her concept books, including *Count!*, *The Everything Book* and *Alphabet Under Construction*. Illustrator Denise Fleming's pulp painting books have won numerous awards and distinctions, including a Caldecott Honor in 1994 for her *In the Small, Small Pond*. Extra Movie: A thorough — and thoroughly enjoyable — 6-minute additional movie follows Denise in her studio as she recreates an image from *Alphabet Under Construction* from start to finish.

**A TeachingBooks Author/Illustrator in the News:** Jack Gantos

Jack Gantos' autobiography, *Hole in My Life*, was recently named a 2003 ALA/YALSA Michael L. Printz Honor Book and a 2003 Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Honor Book. You can learn more about Jack Gantos and hear him read the first chapter of *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key* in our exclusive TeachingBooks Authors Up-close program at

[http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec\\_athr.cgi?name=Gantos%2C%20Jack](http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec_athr.cgi?name=Gantos%2C%20Jack)

Learn more about the Printz Award at:

[http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/YALSA/Booklists\\_and\\_Book\\_Awards/Michael\\_L\\_Printz\\_Award/Printz\\_Michael\\_L\\_Award.htm](http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/YALSA/Booklists_and_Book_Awards/Michael_L_Printz_Award/Printz_Michael_L_Award.htm).

Learn more about the Sibert Award at:

[http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ALSC/Awards\\_and\\_Scholarships1/Literary\\_and\\_Related\\_Awards/Sibert\\_Medal/Sibert\\_Medal.htm](http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ALSC/Awards_and_Scholarships1/Literary_and_Related_Awards/Sibert_Medal/Sibert_Medal.htm).

**Additional Author Program:** Avi

[http://www.avi-writer.com/aboutbooks/recently\\_published.html](http://www.avi-writer.com/aboutbooks/recently_published.html)

TeachingBooks continually identifies, catalogs and maintains reliable links to multimedia interviews with children's book creators. While TeachingBooks does not create these programs,

we believe that you'll enjoy them. In this featured author program, hear Avi read from his 2003 Newbery Award-winning book, *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*. You will need Real Media Player to hear this program.

**Author's Personal Website:** [Lemony Snicket](http://www.lemonysnicket.com/)

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Lemony Snicket's *A Series of Unfortunate Events* is undoubtedly a popular read with many elementary and middle school students. Against the wishes of Mr. Snicket himself, we ask that you please share this horribly hilarious site with them. Check out the "cheerless song" about Count Olaf called *Scream and Run Away*. Students can print out *A Series of Unfortunate Character Trading Cards* under the "Games" link. From the Reader's Guide introduction: "The discussion topics, suggested reading list and author biography in this reading group guide are intended to guide the public toward books that are less dreadful and so to promote comfort and vitality rather than despair and anxiety in our large and unnerving world."

**Featured Activity Guide:** *Talkin' About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman* by Nikki Grimes, illustrated by E. B. Lewis

This picture book was doubly awarded this year with the 2003 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award and a 2003 Coretta Scott King Author Honor. Have your students create a scene between Bessie and a character from the book from the teacher's guide. Using suggestions from the multiple intelligence projects page, you can appeal to students' musical, kinesthetic and verbal learning styles by listening to early jazz from Chicago, acting out a scene, or writing a newspaper article about Bessie.

Teacher Guide: <http://www.nikkigrimes.com/teacher/besstg.html>

Multiple Intelligence Projects: <http://www.nikkigrimes.com/teacher/bessmip.html>

Guides written by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer.

**Featured Award/Distinction:**

Award: [Excellence in Poetry for Children Award](http://www.ncte.org/elem/Poetry/2003.shtml)

<http://www.ncte.org/elem/Poetry/2003.shtml>

The 2003 winner is TeachingBooks featured author, Mary Ann Hoberman. Learn more about Mary Ann and her delightful books that span five decades in our exclusive Authors Up-close program: [http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec\\_athr.cgi?name=Hoberman%2C%20Mary%20Ann](http://www.teachingbooks.net/spec_athr.cgi?name=Hoberman%2C%20Mary%20Ann)

Distinction: [ALA/YALSA's Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults](http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/YALSA/Booklists_and_Book_Awards/Popular_Paperbacks_for_Young_Adults/Popular_Paperbacks_for_Young_Adults.htm)

[http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/YALSA/Booklists\\_and\\_Book\\_Awards/Popular\\_Paperbacks\\_for\\_Young\\_Adults/Popular\\_Paperbacks\\_for\\_Young\\_Adults.htm](http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/YALSA/Booklists_and_Book_Awards/Popular_Paperbacks_for_Young_Adults/Popular_Paperbacks_for_Young_Adults.htm)

Useful for middle and high school librarians for suggesting popular books to their students.

**Take Note:** The Horn Book Magazine Virtual History Exhibit

<http://www.hbook.com/exhibit/authillus.html>

This "Take Note" site is selected from TeachingBooks' list of Research & Special Collection Sites. The home page reads in part, "Over the past seven decades, the *Magazine* editors have all had deep and lively relationships with a variety of children's book authors and illustrators.

[Including letters from Beatrix Potter, Roald Dahl, William Steig and Laura Ingalls Wilder.]

These links will take you to some examples of their correspondence in text form, with an option

at the bottom of the page to view an art file of the actual letter. We have also included five transcripts from the *Horn Book Radio Review*. These links will take you to a transcript of the program with an option to hear the actual audio program.”

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### **Company Update:**

Thanks to all of you for your belief in and use of TeachingBooks.net! We hope you find it a valuable resource. Thousands of subscribers (and growing daily) from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and in 32 countries around the world are now regularly using TeachingBooks. We've built a collection of unparalleled children's literature resources that grows continually and remains completely free to use.

We have been fortunate to receive excellent media coverage recently. Among many great reviews and articles,

*School Library Journal* featured TeachingBooks in its March 2003 issue with a story entitled, “An Author In Every Classroom: An innovative Web site lets cash-strapped schools show artists in action.” See it online at:

<http://slj.reviewsnews.com/index.asp?layout=article&articleid=CA279516&publication=slj>

USA Today.com featured TeachingBooks on April 23, 2003 with the following perceptive description: “Offering parents and teachers a guiding hand through the land of young people's literature, TeachingBooks.net features a gateway to extensive study guides around the Web, audio and video interviews with the authors — all the information necessary to enrich children's adventures in reading.”

Thank you so very much for your use and support of our children's literature resource site. We are grateful for your interest and for passing along TeachingBooks to your colleagues and friends.

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We hope that these featured links from our database connect you to material that highlights the personality and spirit within the best of children's literature.

To learn more about what's happening at TeachingBooks, you can go to our News page at <http://www.teachingbooks.net/news.cgi> and read about where we've been, what we're doing and who's taken notice.

Thanks again for your interest in TeachingBooks.net, and happy spring!

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