

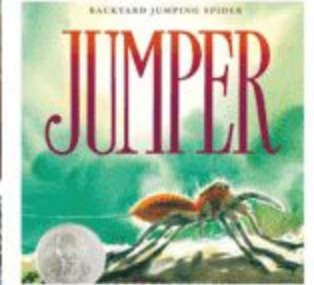
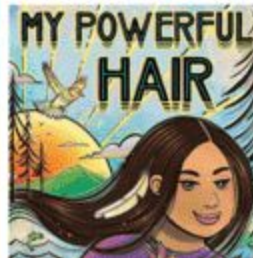
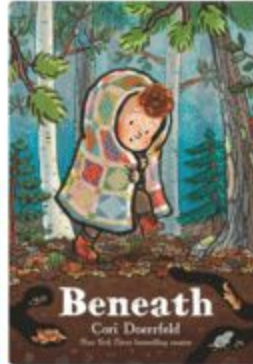


# Star of the North Award

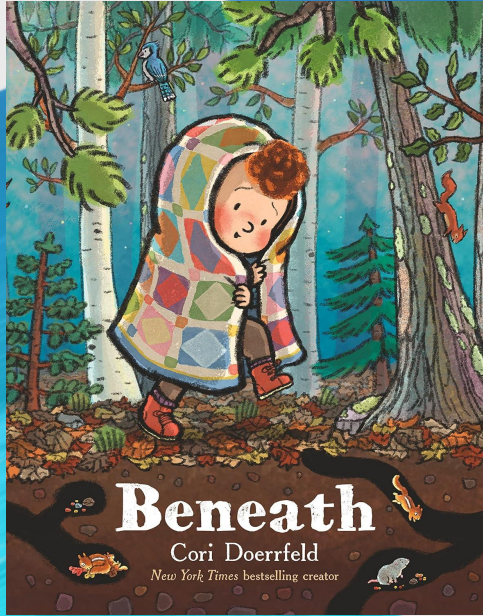
## 2025 Nominees

2024-2025 School Year

Sponsored by Minnesota Youth  
Reading Awards



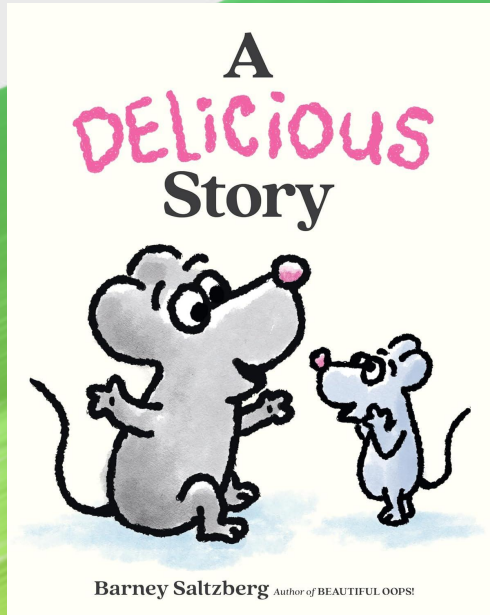
# Beneath



Finn is in a horrible mood and doesn't want to talk about it. After some persuading, though, they agree to go for a hike with Grandpa. Throughout their forest walk, they see many different things: big, strong trees with networks of roots growing underneath, still water with schools of fish swimming below, and an expectant bird with eggs nestled under her. It's when the pair pass fellow hikers that Finn realizes that people, just like the elements of nature, are more than they appear. Grandpa explains that sometimes beneath a person who seems like they won't understand what you're feeling, is someone feeling exactly the same way.

by Cori Doerrfeld; illustrated by Cori Doerrfeld

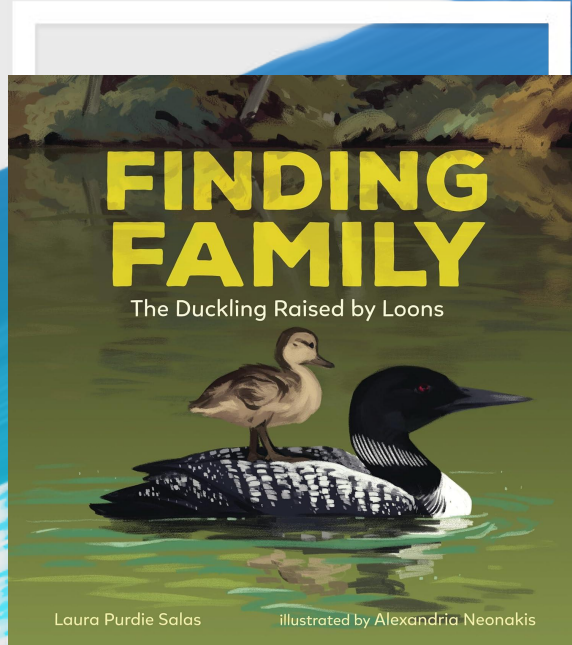
# A Delicious Story



Two mice—one big and one small—have a terrible problem. Little Mouse is looking for a story—they're in a book, after all!—and Big Mouse has to admit the truth. The story is gone. And (gasp!) he ate it. That is not okay with Little Mouse, who is all ready to hear a story and will settle for nothing less. Saltzberg's improvisational dialogue showcases both the patience required of true creativity and the dazzling on-the-spot storytelling that can happen when you get in the flow. In the end, these endearing mice work out their conflict— and make the reader realize that they've been delivering a story all along. Parents and children will want to take this satisfying comedic journey together again and again.

by Barney Saltzberg

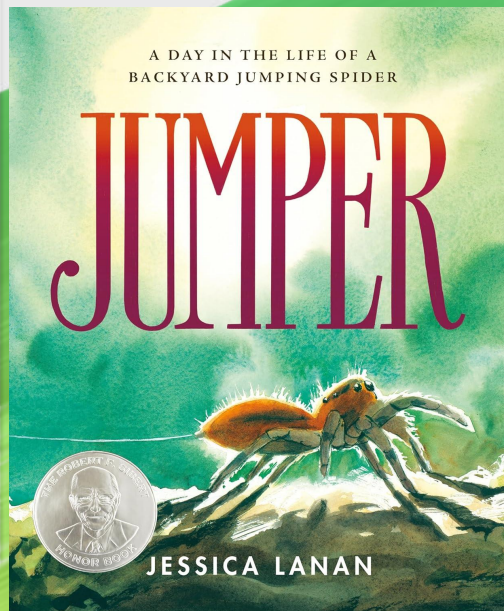
# Finding Family: The Duckling Raised by Loons



On a lake in northern Wisconsin in 2019, loon researchers were surprised to discover a mother and father loon caring for a mallard duckling. Normally loons and mallards live very different lives and do not get along. Follow along as the duckling grows and displays a mix of both loon behaviors and mallard behaviors. Intriguing verse and striking illustrations combine in this heartwarming tale of unexpected animal cooperation.

by **Laura Purdie Salas**; illustrated by **Alexandria Neonakis**

# Jumper: A Day in the Life of a Backyard Jumping Spider



From critically acclaimed illustrator of *The Lost Package* comes a bold nonfiction story following a day in the life of a backyard jumping spider - meticulously researched and utterly charming.

What if you were small as a bean,  
Could walk on the walls and ceiling,  
Sense vibrations through your elbows,  
And jump five times your body length?  
That is Jumper's world.

by Jessica Lanan

# Just One Flake

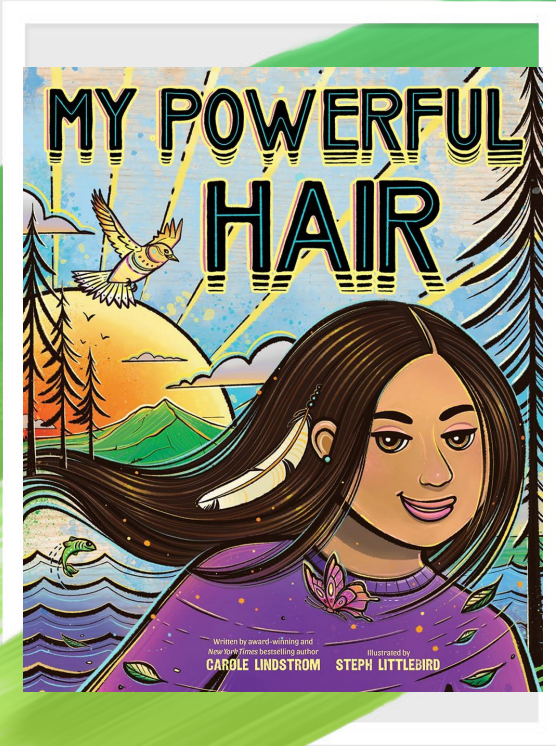


It's snowing outside! Liam rushes out into the squall, determined to catch one perfect snowflake. He tries any number of tricks to complete his mission, but each time he is thwarted.

He sticks out his tongue and looks up . . . nope. He builds a snowman, climbing up to get a little closer to the snow . . . still nope. He runs around the yard—tongue still out—because faster is better, right? Wrong! Nothing seems to work. Until, in a final leap of faith, he catches that one flake . . . in a way he never expected. And the snowflake itself is pretty unexpected too.

by Travis Jonker

# My Powerful Hair



Mom never had long hair—she was told it was too wild. Grandma couldn't have long hair—hers was taken from her. But one young girl can't wait to grow her hair long: for herself, for her family, for her connection to her culture and the Earth, and to honor the strength and resilience of those who came before her.

From Carole Lindstrom, author of the New York Times bestseller and Caldecott Medal winner *We Are Water Protectors*, and debut illustrator Steph Littlebird comes an empowering and healing celebration of hair and its significance across Indigenous cultures.

by Carole Lindstrom; illustrated by Steph Littlebird



# Our Pool

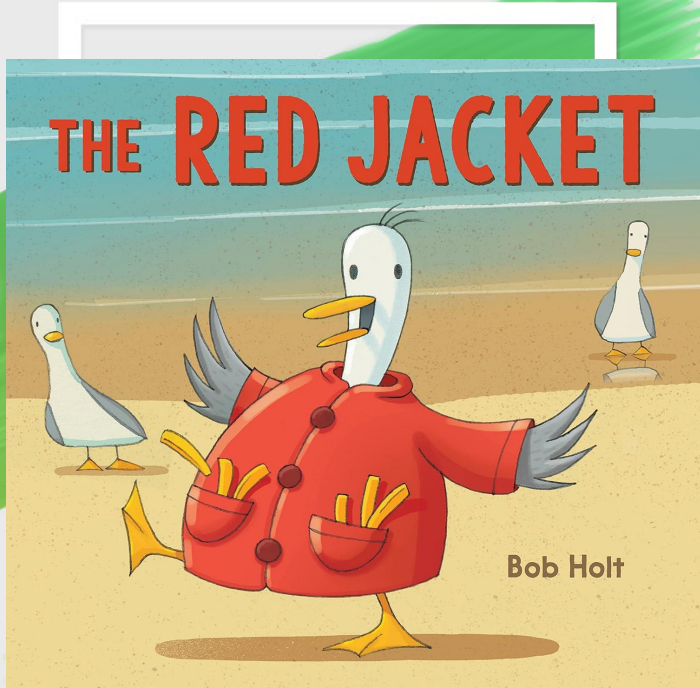


On a hot day, people come from all over the city to spend the day at the pool in this joyful picture book that's a love song to summer, the city, community, and staying cool!

Today is a pool day in the city! The sun is shining, so what are you waiting for? Friends and family. Kids and grandparents. Big bodies and small bodies. Everybody is welcome at our pool! Get ready for swimming and splashing, zigzagging and dunking, and racing and laughing.

by Lucy Ruth Cummins

# The Red Jacket



by Bob Holt

Bob loves his red jacket.

The red jacket makes him feel swanky cool.

The red jacket makes other seagulls notice him and even speak to him.

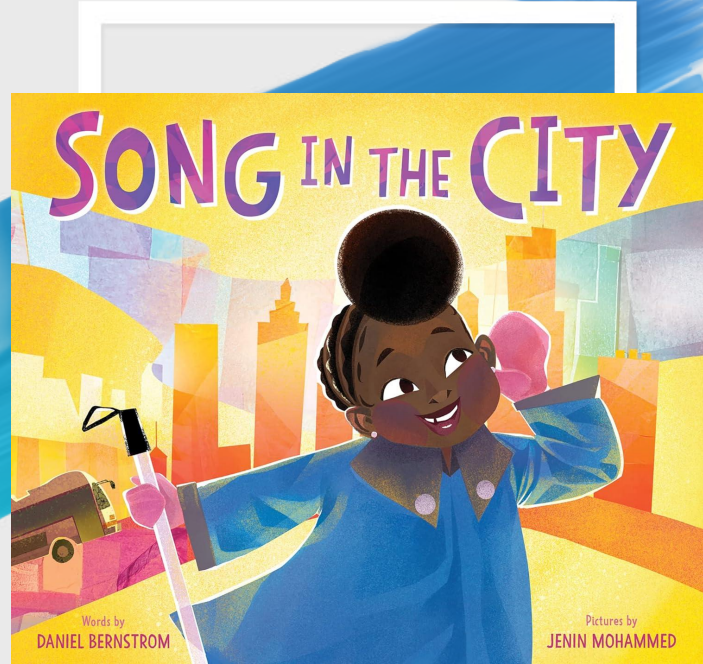
But when a wave washes it away, will Bob lose his cool and his newfound friends, too?

Bob Holt's spare text and humorous artwork come together perfectly in this charmingly humorous tale about a seagull who learns a lesson or two about style, "fitting in," and confidence.

# Song in the City

A young girl, filled with the sounds of her beloved city, shares a song with her grandmother that changes the two forever. After helping Grandma realize that the city makes music as beautiful as the sounds they hear in church on Sunday morning, the two sit down and take in all the sounds of the city...together.

Song in the City bridges the gap between generations of music and family, while centering love, understanding, and joy.

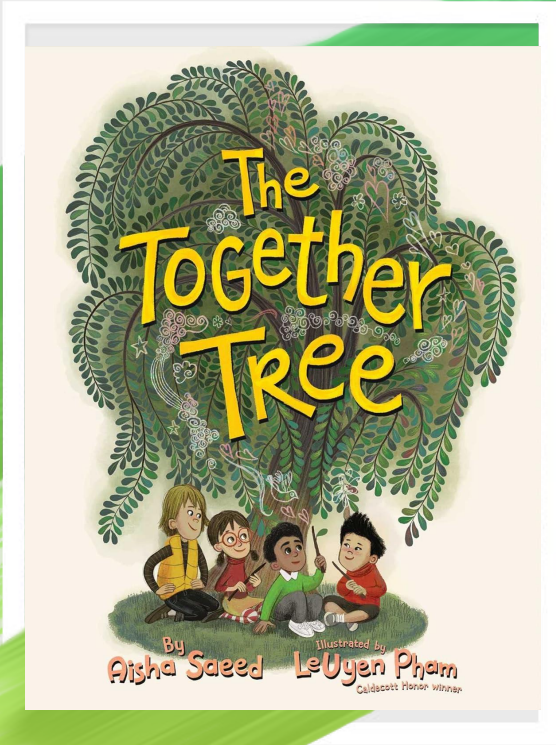


by Daniel Bernstrom; illustrated by Jenin Mohammed

# The Together Tree

At his new school, quiet Rumi feels small and unwelcome, and a few kids bully him for being different and wearing bright shoes. He finds refuge beneath the old willow tree by the playground and builds his own world of hope and dreams of belonging.

One day, when Rumi is made a target again, one of his classmates bravely steps in to defend him. It's in that moment of solidarity Rumi's class finally realizes that under the shade of the willow tree, all are welcome, and they create a space they can all play in—together.



by Aisha Saeed; illustrated by LeUyen Pham



**Enjoy these books!  
Vote for your favorite!  
Stay tuned for the announcement  
of the winners spring 2025!**