The 2017 Bell Awards Winners

READ: The Summer Nick Taught His Cats to Read
by Curtis Manley, illustrated by Kate Berube
Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2016

Nick loves spending time with his cats, except when he wants to read: his cats lay on the pages of the books and make nuisances of themselves! Nick decides to teach his cats to read, so they can all enjoy books together. Just like Nick’s cats, some children will be enthusiastic learners and others will struggle. This book describes a wonderful variety of activities that will support all children on their learning journeys.

WRITE: Alphonse, That Is Not OK to DO, by Daisy Hurst

Natalie loves to create art with her little brother, Alphonse. When she catches him eating her book, however, Natalie is mad and channels her anger into her art, drawing beasts and a tornado chasing Alphonse! Drawing and scribbling allows children to tell stories and express their feelings before they learn how to write words and sentences.

SING: Rock-a-Bye Romp, by Linda Ashman, illustrated by Simona Mulazzani

This bedtime romp starts with the familiar lines of "Rock-a-Bye, baby, in the treetop" only to head off on an adventure, taking baby into a bird’s nest, through a farmyard, over a waterfall, and onto the back of a flying hawk. All the words of the book can be sung to the tune of Rock-a-Bye Baby. Changing the words to a familiar song is a fun way introduce a child to new vocabulary and to make children laugh.

TALK: Puddle, by Hyewon Yum

Stuck inside on a rainy day, a mother coaxes her son to enjoy the day inside by drawing a picture of the rainy day together. After drawing and talking, they decide to go outside and splash in the puddles. The entire story is told through the conversation between mother and son and models how to engage children in the rich conversations that develop language skills.

PLAY: Box, by Min Flyte

A box can contain a fun new toy, but even more fun is what you can do with the box after you open it! With lift-the-flaps and fold-out pages, this book is just as much fun to play with as it is to read. The dramatic play and imagination that an ordinary box inspires develops language, vocabulary, and narrative skills as children act out their own stories.

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for activity sheets for each title, visit http://www.clel.org and select the CLEL Bell Awards tab.