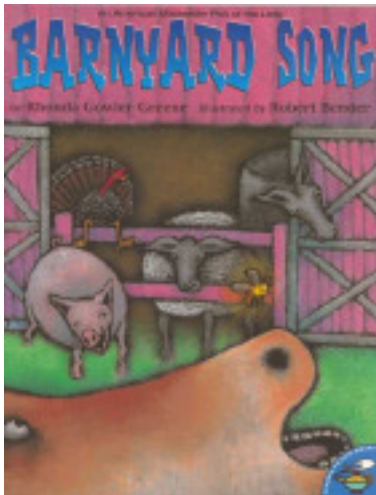




One State, One Preschool Book April 18-30, 2004

www.michigan.gov/michiganreads



Honorary Chair Governor Jennifer M. Granholm and State Librarian Christie Pearson Brandau invite you to take part in **Michigan Reads! 2004**, a “one state, one preschool book” program that highlights the importance of reading and sharing books with children, especially during the critical developmental ages of 0-5. The goals of Michigan Reads! are to encourage family bonding through reading and to increase awareness of Michigan’s public libraries as they provide services to families that lay the foundation for reading and school success. The program contains three main components:

- ◆ THE BOOK: **Barnyard Song**, written by Rhonda Gowler Greene and illustrated by Robert Bender, was voted this year’s Michigan Reads! selection. It’s the delightful story of what happens when a bad case of flu strikes the farm and the familiar barnyard chorus is replaced with sneezes and coughs.
- ◆ LIBRARIES and CHILD CARE CENTERS: Plans are underway for special Michigan Reads! events at libraries, child care centers and other venues across the state. Programs include author visits, training opportunities for parents, and a host of children’s programming focusing on books and barnyard animals.
- ◆ MICHIGAN READS! TOOLKITS: Developed by Michigan librarians and available via the project web site at www.michigan.gov/michiganreads, the toolkits provide a wealth of information and resources in easy access, quick print format. The **Parents' Toolkit** features reading activities that parents and child care providers can do with preschoolers. The **Librarians' Toolkit** offers program ideas and support materials for community-based Michigan Reads! activities.

Early childhood literacy is vital.

- Learning to read begins far before children enter formal schooling.
- Babies are born learning, long before it becomes apparent to most parents.
- What young children learn in their first five years becomes the foundation for how they learn, manage their emotions, cope with stress, relate to others and, generally, handle life in the future.
- Children need parents and caregivers who talk to them, sing to them and read to them daily. The shared book experience between an adult and child is very powerful!
- Research shows that children most at risk for reading failure are those who enter school with limited exposure to literacy-related activities.
- Children who have stimulating literacy experiences from birth onward enter school with larger vocabularies, better listening skills, and enhanced memory and imagination.

Public libraries provide important resources.

- Public libraries are, and have been, in a remarkable position to expose children to great quantities of print and meaningful language opportunities that researchers say are crucial to reading achievement.
- Children who have been exposed to library pre-school programs show a greater number of emergent-literacy behaviors and pre-reading skills than those who were not.
- Libraries are full of resources and librarians that can help parents and caregivers learn how to model good reading behaviors. Librarians are among the best at helping patrons navigate through the many resources available, too. Take advantage of their expertise!

How can I participate in Michigan Reads?

- Parents, grandparents, and caregivers are vital to pre-reading literacy. Read to your child, your grandchild, and the children in your care every day.
- There are children in our communities who, for many reasons, have not experienced the joys of reading. Volunteer to read at your local library or community center; you'll be glad you did!

For more information about early childhood literacy, reading aloud to preschoolers, and opportunities to participate in and sponsor Michigan Reads! programs, visit the Web site at www.michigan.gov/michiganreads.