

**The Jo Osborne  
Award for Humor  
in Children's  
Literature**





**“But he hasn’t got anything**

### **What to do about...humor**

Sometimes it takes children to make us sit up and take notice of the obvious. So it’s not surprising that although children love humorous books, we adults haven’t always recognized the value of humor for ourselves, let alone its value to children.

And, while there are numerous awards for children’s literature, there has been no way to honor those who use humor to address human foibles.

Which is really too bad. Humor can be goofy and slapstick, gentle and witty. It can communicate difficult issues or concepts. It can even convey truth and wisdom. Humor is important -- whether it produces a guffaw, a chuckle, or a grin.

It’s about time that we adults take humor seriously.

**Which brings us to ...**

### **The Jo Osborne Award in Children’s Literature**

Storytellers have been telling the beginning of oral communication there are even some amusing hidden away.

Today, literature provides an introduction to the art of humorous amusing illustration; the barrier become librarians and teachers know how to find funny books chance to share them aloud hundred.

**The Jo Osborne Award for Children’s Literature** was such a storyteller and the humor loved to share. As the Child Worthington Public Library



**g on," a little child said.**

-- Hans Christian Andersen  
The Emperor's New Clothes

## **ard for Humor ature**

g funny stories since  
unication. Maybe  
g cave paintings

children with an early  
morous writing and  
ds of past times have  
ers who not only  
ks, but relish the  
with one child or one

**r Humor in**  
established to honor  
morous materials she  
ren's Librarian at the  
(OH) for seventeen

years, Jo Osborne sought out the silly, the funny, the poignant, the witty for storytelling and puppet shows to impart a love of books to all the children who were lucky enough to cross her path during those years.

To recognize the importance of humor with a national award honors her sense of humor and her love of books and children.

The Jo Osborne Award for Humor in Children's Literature salutes authors and/or illustrators for their contributions to our understanding of human nature, and the ability to make us laugh at what we discover about ourselves.

## **AWARD WINNERS:**

- |             |                         |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| <b>1996</b> | <b>Patricia Polacco</b> |
| <b>1997</b> | <b>Sid Fleischman</b>   |
| <b>1998</b> | <b>Steven Kellogg</b>   |
| <b>1999</b> | <b>Jon Scieszka</b>     |
| <b>2000</b> | <b>William Steig</b>    |
| <b>2001</b> | <b>Rosemary Wells</b>   |
| <b>2002</b> | <b>Kevin Henkes</b>     |
| <b>2003</b> | <b>Tomie De Paola</b>   |
| <b>2004</b> | <b>Paula Danziger</b>   |



## **What? Yet *another* children's book award??**

Yup, but this one is different (really it is). This one doesn't have to honor just one book, but could recognize a body of work (more like the Nobel than the Pulitzer). But most of all, this award honors what no other award does -- the art of humor in children's books. Humor -- it captivates, it educates, it rejuvenates. It's for all ages. It's for yesterday, today and tomorrow. It's to treasure and it's to share. Through the **Jo Osborne Award for Humor in Children's Literature**, those who create humor will be recognized for their lasting contribution.

### **Selection of Winners**

**A jury of librarians, teachers, authors, illustrators, and academicians will select a winner each year, based on a body of work or on a particularly outstanding book published within that year.**

**Winners can be authors, illustrators, and author/illustrator teams. The recipient will be invited to speak at the annual Ohio State University Children's Literature Conference, where the award will be presented.**



## **The Jo Osborne Award for Humor in Children's Literature**

This award has been established in conjunction with the Ohio Library Foundation to honor those who take seriously the art of humor in children's literature. The award recognizes the lifetime of work of Jo Osborne, a talented professional committed to bringing children, books and humor together.

To enhance the connection between children and books, Ms. Osborne supported a strong relationship among libraries, schools and teacher education. The Jo Osborne Award for Humor in Children's Literature is funded by contributions from those who share her commitment -- librarians, teachers, authors, illustrators and publishers. Continued funding will allow the award committee to recognize authors and illustrators with an annual monetary grant.

**To make a tax-deductible contribution to the award, or for more information, contact:**

Jo Osborne Award for Humor in Children's Literature  
The Ohio Library Foundation  
35 East Gay Street, Suite 305  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3138

The award logo features the grumpy old troll from the Three Billy Goats Gruff, one of Jo Osborne's favorite stories. Through this vehicle, and many others like it, she shared her joy and humor with countless children. *Logo design donated by Mary Heath Morrison.*