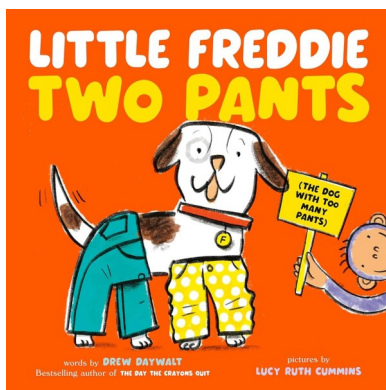


Indiana Center for the Book Announces the 2026 Indiana Early Literacy Firefly Award



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August 3, 2026 —INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana Center for the Book Director Tammie Buchanan is excited to announce that the 2026 recipient of the Indiana Early Literacy Firefly Award is the book *Little Freddie Two Pants* published by Philomel Books, an imprint of the Penguin Young Readers Group, a division of Penguin Random House. *Freddie* was written by Drew Daywalt and illustrated by Lucy Ruth Cummins. *Freddie* is "A laugh-out-loud funny picture book about a dog who doesn't know how many pairs of pants to wear (or where to wear them!) by the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Day the Crayons Quit*. One pair of pants? Two pairs? Three? How many pants should Little Freddie wear? And where should he put them? What about underpants? Where do they go? In a book with text and art that are sure to induce giggles, Drew Daywalt and Lucy Ruth Cummins settle the age-old question: Do a dog's front legs deserve pants, too?"--

This is the eleventh year of the Indiana Early Literacy Firefly Award. 4,425 Indiana children ages 0-5 voted for their favorite book from a ballot of five books and *Freddie* earned 1242 votes! This is the third biggest year of the award as far as number of children participating.

When he heard that *Freddie* had won the award, author Drew Daywalt had this to say, "This is phenomenal news! I believe that just by existing, a picture book has succeeded because there's a special book for *every* child. And to think that our book was chosen by so many children is heartwarming, and frankly, a little overwhelming. I'm honored to be part of this, and I'm honored to get to partner with Lucy who is a genius artist and storyteller. She brought this story to life in ways that I never could have imagined! And I'm eternally grateful to the children who chose my books because when I sit down to write in my big, comfy, leather chair, I think of them sitting around me for story time." Illustrator Lucy Ruth Cummins added "I am so honored our book was voted winner of the Firefly Award, especially when it was in such wonderful company on the ballot! I will wear THREE-pants to celebrate! Thank you, Indiana readers!"

The Indiana Early Literacy Firefly Award is an initiative of the Indiana Center for the Book to promote early childhood literacy in Indiana. The nominees are chosen by the Indiana Early Literacy Firefly Committee from a list of books nominated by library staff who work with children all over Indiana.

The nominated books are chosen for their ability to encourage parents and children to use the Every Child Ready to Read® practices of talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing together. Caregivers can use the Firefly books as a quality go-to resource for having fun and learning with their young children.

A program guide is available for full of activities to use with children, as well as the nominees, short lists, and winners from the past 11 years:

<https://www.in.gov/library/files/ProgramGuide2025.pdf>

Indiana residents! Visit this link for *Little Freddie Two Pants* resources!
<https://library.teachingbooks.net/tb.cgi?tid=101300>

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