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Choosing Books for Children

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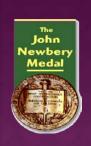
CHOOSING BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Trends and Guidelines

- Major Awards by ALA
 - Caldecott
 - Illustrator of picture book
 - Newbery
 - Author of fiction or Non-fiction chapter book (Grades 4-8)
 - Michael Printz
 - Adolescent fiction
 - Theodor Seuss Geisel Award
 - Easy reading book

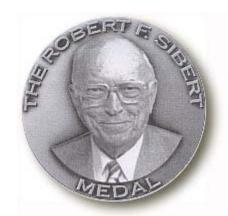








- Non-fiction
 - Richard Sibert Award
 - Orbis Pictus
- Cultural
 - Pura Belpre
 - Hispanic
 - Coretta Scott King
 - African-American







- Genre
 - Historical fiction
 - Scott O'Dell
 - Poetry
 - NCTE
 - Lee Bennett Hopkins
 - Mystery
 - Edgar Award
 - Christian fiction
 - Christy Award





- State Awards
 - Every state but Mississippi
 - Virginia
 - Jefferson Cup
- Named for people
 - Batchelder Award
 - Translation
 - Laura Ingalls Wilder
 - Lifetime American
 - Hans Christian Andersen
 - Lifetime Non-American





Miscellaneous

- Pheonix Award
 - Reprint of older title
- Boston Globe Hornbook
 - Reputable Children's Award in all categories
- IRA Teachers Choice
 - International Reading Association
- Parent's Choice
- New York Times Bestseller





- Result of Newbery Award
 - Newbery oldest and most prestigious
 - Guaranteed initial and residual sales
- Tends to follow social trends
- Great influence on other awards
- Domino Effect
 - Title wins Newbery or other top award and others follow.
 - Many of the awards are given by ALA



STANDARDS FOR AWARDS

- Exceptional literary quality
- Exceptional illustrations
- Historically good quality though sometimes they made mistakes
 - Ex: Secret of the Andes vs Charlotte's Web
- Recent Years questionable quality
 - Ex: The Higher Power of Lucky (banned by librarians)
 - Missing May
- Contemporary bright spots
 - A Single Shard
 - The Tale of Despereaux



CURRENT TRENDS - NEGATIVE

- 4D's of adolescent literature
 - Divorce, Death, Dismemberment, and Drugs (Ann Tobias - children's book agent)
 - Depression lack of hope (Schwedt / DeLong)
- Focus inward rather than outward toward others and society
- Absence of parental or positive adult influence or characters
 - Adults portrayed negatively or are absent altogether
 - Large number of problems but lack of solutions



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CURRENT TRENDS - NEGATIVE

- Casual attitude toward sexual themes
- Influx of occult and paranormal themes
 - Have dominated the adolescent field for a number of years
 - Harry Potter and The Graveyard Book signal mainstreaming of these themes in books for children

CURRENT TRENDS - NEGATIVE

- Why does it matter????
 - Lasting influence of stories
 - Story Proof: the science behind the startling power of story - by Kendall Haven
 - Power of story Story lives in the imagination.
 - Powerful motivator
 - Effects of story are lasting.
 - Jesus used story must have thought they were important

- Biblical Guidelines on Occult Elements
 - Ghostly figures Hebrews 9:27
 - It is appointed unto men once to die
 - Wizards and Witches Leviticus 19:31
 - Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards to be defiled by them; I am the Lord your God
 - I John 4:1 Test the Spirits

- Biblical Guidelines on Occult Elements
 - "Good witches, ghosts, or wizards" Isaiah5:20
 - Woe to them who call evil good, and good evil, who put darkness for light, and light for darkness
- If occult elements are present choose books where evil is portrayed as evil and righteous causes win.

Problem Novels

- Choose books that have hope / that offer solutions to problems presented that coincide with a Christian worldview
 - Phil. 4:8 "Whatsoever things are honest...."
- Choose books where positive character choices are portrayed as having good results
 - (The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe vs. The Chocolate War)

Problem Novels

 Choose books where children have good relationships with at least one adult character

Barbara Feinberg - great insight

- "Reflections on the 'Problem Novel' American Educator Winter 2004-2005
- Welcome to Lizard Motel

BRIGHT SPOTS - NON-FICTION

- Steve Jenkins
 - The Top of the World
 - What do you do with a tail like this?
- Jim Murphy
 - The Great Fire The Blizzard
- Robert Sabuda
 - America the Beautiful

BRIGHT SPOTS - PICTURE BOOKS

- Mo Willems
 - Knuffle Bunny
- Jacqueline Woodson
 - Show Way
- Brian Selznick
 - Invention of Hugo Cabret
- Poetry
 - Joyce Sidman Song of the Water Boatman and other Pond Poems

BRIGHT SPOTS - CHAPTER BOOKS YOUNGER & MIDDLE

- Kate DiCamillo
 - Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
- Sharon Creech
 - Granny Torelli Makes Soup

- Pam Munoz Ryan
 - Becoming Naomi Leon
- Patricia Reilly Giff
 - Pictures of Hollis Woods

BRIGHT SPOTS - CHAPTER BOOKS OLDER

- Paul Fleischman
 - Seedfolks
- Dear America series
 - Dreams in the Golden Country
- Bauer, Joan
 - Hope Was Here

Recommended Authors

Picture Books

Jan BrettMarguerite HenryEve BuntingLois LenskiLois EhlertJean Little

Mem Fox

Johnny Gruelle Patricia MacLachlan
Kevin Henkes Linda Sue Park
Eric Hill Katherine Paterson
Russell Hoban Diane Stanley
Steve Jenkins William Steig
Ezra Jack Keats Jane Yolen

Arnold Lobel

Patricia Polacco Upper Level Chapter and Adolescent

William Steig Joan Bauer

Jane Yolen Russell Freedman
Chapter Books Brian Jacques
Eve Bunting C. S. Lewis
Andrew Clements David Macaulay

Kate DiCamillo Jim Murphy Jean Craighead George Jane Yolen

Recommended Titles

Picture Books

Stewart, Sarah The Friend + The Gardener

Polacco, Patricia Mrs. Katz and Tush

Henkes, Kevin Owen

Weitzman, Jacqueline Preiss You Can Take a Balloon into the Museum of Fine Arts

Chapter Books

Mains, David and Karen Tales of the Resistance + series (Christian allegory)

Fleischman, Paul Seed folks (Multicultural)

McAllister, M.I. *Urchin of the Riding Stars* (Animal fantasy)

Flanagan, John Ranger Series (Fantasy)

Adolescent

Rivers, Francine The Last Sin Eater (Christian historical fiction)

Smith, Charles Rimshots: Basketball Pix, Rolls, and Rhythms + other sports poetry

Larson, Kirby *Hattie Big Sky* (Historical fiction - pioneering)

Bauer, Joan Hope Was Here (Contemporary)

Phillips, Michael & Journals of Corrie Belle Hollister series (Christian pioneer – Family -

Pella, Judith Growing up)

Classics

Burnford, Sheila *Incredible Journey* (Animal adventure) Streatfield, Noel *Theatre Shoes* (and other shoe stories)

Porter, Gene Stratton Freckles and Girl of the Limberlost (Conservation and family relations)

Moody, Ralph Little Britches (Pioneer and family)
Hunt, Irene Up a Road Slowly (Girl growing up)