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Beyond the Caldecott and Newbery

by
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The Caldecott and Newbery Medals are so well-known and well-respected that both children and adults consider them to be indicators of quality children’s literature. Winners of these awards are sought and read by young and old. Both medals are sponsored by the Association of Library Services to Children Division of the American Library Association. The Caldecott Medal is given to the illustrator of the most distinguished picture book published in the United States during the previous year. The Newbery Medal is given to the most distinguished contribution to children’s literature published during the preceding year. Recipients must be residents or citizens of the U.S.

Although these two awards are highly recognized, other literary awards, both national and international, can help guide children and adults to quality literature for young people. Parents, teachers, and librarians who are aware of these awards are better able to identify and to share quality children’s books.

Selected children’s literary awards that have gained recognition among writers, publishers, and readers of children’s literature are discussed below. The most recent award winners are included with the descriptions. The sources listed at the end of this article will be helpful in identifying prior award winners.

NATIONAL AWARDS

American Institute of Physics Children’s Science-Writing Award
Recognizes distinguished writing and illustration that improves children’s understanding and appreciation of physics and astronomy. First awarded in 1988.


Mildred L. Batchelder Award
Awarded to a publisher for a children’s book considered to be the most outstanding of those books originally published in a foreign language in a foreign country, and subsequently published in the U.S. Established in 1966. Named after the former Executive Director of the Association for...
Library service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA).


**Boston Globe—Horn Book Awards**

Awards are given in three categories: Outstanding Fiction or Poetry, Outstanding Nonfiction, and Outstanding Illustration. Awarded annually since 1967 by *The Boston Globe* and *The Horn Book Magazine*.


**Christopher Awards**

Given by The Christophers to works "of professional excellence that affirm the highest values of the human spirit." Awards are given to books, motion pictures, and television specials. Books for young people were first honored in 1970.


**Golden Kite Award**

Presented by the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) to members of SCBWI whose award-year books of fiction, nonfiction, and picture-illustration "best exhibit excellence in writing or illustration and genuinely appeal to the interests and concerns of children." First awarded in 1973.


Coretta Scott King Award
Awarded to African-American authors and illustrators of books that promote the cause of peace and brotherhood through their work, and inspire children and youth to dedicate their talents and energies to help achieve these goals. Commemorates the life and works of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. King. Established in 1969 and awarded by the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association. In 1974, an additional award for illustration was added.

New York Times Best Illustrated Children’s Books of the Year

Scott O’Dell Award for Historical Fiction
Awarded to a distinguished work of historical fiction set in the New World, and published by a U.S. publisher in English. The award was established and donated by Scott O’Dell in 1981, and the winners are selected by an advisory board of the Bulletin of the Center of Children’s Books.

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**Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children**

Honors distinction in nonfiction for children. The committee considers "accuracy, organization, design, writing style, and usefulness for classroom teaching in grades K-8." The award commemorates the work of Johannes Amos Comenius, whose book *Orbis Pictus (The World in Pictures)* is historically considered to be the first work created exclusively for children. It is administered by the Committee on Using Nonfiction in the Elementary Language Arts Classroom of the National Council of Teachers of English.


**Edgar Allan Poe Awards**

Honors the best work in the mystery, crime, suspense, and intrigue fields in several media each year. An award for "Best Juvenile Novel" has been awarded since 1962, and "Best Young Adult Novel" was added in 1989. Awarded by the Mystery Writers of America.


**INTERNATIONAL AWARDS**

**Phoenix Award**

Awarded to "a book for children published twenty years earlier which did not win a major award at the time of its publication but which, from the perspective of time, is deemed worthy of special recognition for its literary quality. The book must have been originally published in English, but not necessarily in the U.S. Awarded by the Children’s Literature Association since 1985.


**Canada**

**Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Medal**

Awarded by the Canadian Library Association to an illustrator (must be a Canadian citizen) for the most distinguished illustrations in a children’s...

**Canadian Children's Book of the Year Award**
Given by the Canadian Library Association to the Canadian author of a children's book of outstanding literary merit. Awarded annually since 1947. There is now an award given for a YA Canadian Book.

**Great Britain**

**Carnegie Medal**

**Kate Greenaway Medal**
Given by the British Library Association to the illustrator of the most distinguished work in illustration in a children's book first published in the U.K. during the preceding year. Awarded annually since 1957.

**Sources for further information on children's book awards:**


