

Children's Book Awards in the United States

In 1901, the first Nobel Peace Prize for Literature was awarded. This honor could be given for plays, novels or poetry. The American Library Association decided that children's books should also receive recognition. They began the first award program for children's books in the world, called the John Newbery Medal. This award was named for an 18th century English bookseller.

The Newbery Medal is presented annually to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American children up to age 14. It is only given to United States citizens or residents. The first author to receive this honor in 1922 was Hendrik Willem van Loon for his book "The Story of Mankind."

Fifteen years later, Frederic Melcher suggested a new medal for illustrators of children's books. Many people were concerned that these artists were not being honored for their contribution. Named for a 19th century English illustrator, the Randolph Caldecott Medal is also awarded by the American Library Association annually. The first recipient of this award was Dorothy Lathrop in 1938 for the book "Animals of the Bible, A Picture Book." Until 1977, a book could only win one of the ALA awards, and not both.

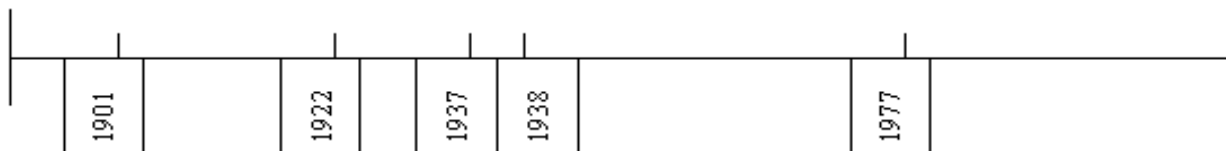
There are many more awards for children's books today. The Jane Addams Book Award is presented to books that promote peace, social justice and world community. The Scott O'Dell Award is given for historical fiction. Award for Excellence in Poetry for Children is another. Take a closer look at the book you are reading. Has it received one of these honors? Find out what the award was given for. How many award winning books can you read this year?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Children's Book Awards

1. The first children's book award was the _____.
2. Newbery and Caldecott Medals are only awarded to _____, of the _____.
3. The Caldecott Medal was named for a 19th century _____.
4. A recipient is _____.
5. The Nobel Peace Prize for Literature is an _____ book award.
6. The _____ Medal was named for an 18th century bookseller.
7. Who was Dorothy Lathrop? _____

Directions: Fill in the correct letter on the time line.



- A. 1st Caldecott Medal Awarded
- B. 1st Nobel Peace Prize for Literature
- C. A book could win both the Newbery and Caldecott medals
- D. 1st Newbery Medal Awarded
- E. Award proposed for illustrators

Book Donation Activity

There are many children in the US and abroad who do not have access to good children's books. Many charities work to distribute books. Work out a plan for donating either books or money for books to one of these organizations. Make a petition to deliver to your school principal (lesson to follow).

Some charities to consider:

Your own or neighboring school library

First Book - <http://www.firstbook.org/>

Reading is Fundamental - <http://www.rif.org/how/>

Books for Africa - <http://www.booksforafrica.org/>

Reach Out and Read - <http://www.reachoutandread.org/>

You can also check with local groups to see if they have any programs for needy families. Children on Indian Reservations often do not have access to libraries and good books.

Some of these organizations only accept money donations, so please be sure to check before you decide on a money fundraiser or a book drive!

Children's Book Awards Activity Suggestions

1. Develop a classroom writer and illustrator award, with criteria and voting process
2. Have each child write a children's story with illustrations
3. Have class vote for their favorite story/illustrator
4. Interview the winners of your classroom award
5. Write a news story about the awards and the winners
6. Have an awards ceremony
7. Write a letter to your favorite author/illustrator telling them why you think they should win an award
8. Have a debate on who should decide who wins book awards...should it be the readers of the books, other authors/illustrators, or librarians?

Pros and Cons

Sometimes we have to weigh the pros and cons of each situation to decide what would be best. A “Pro” would be something you like. A “Con” would be something you don’t like. Complete the chart below to write down the pros and cons for each book donation you are considering. Your class can break into groups to work on a list for each program you are trying to make a decision about.

Book Donation Program: _____

Pros

--

Cons

--

What is a Petition?

A petition is a paper with signatures of people who agree with your opinion. We use them to show support for an idea or a complaint. For example, a group of citizens might send a petition to the mayor because they want a new traffic light put up in town. Someone might start a petition to build a new playground.

Petitions are also a way to let others know about a problem or idea. When you ask someone to sign your petition, they will want to know all about it. You should be prepared to talk about your goal. Sometimes people agree with you and will sign it, and sometimes they disagree and will not want to sign.

To start a petition, you need to have a title. You also have to decide where to send it. This would be to the person who is most likely to act on the idea, or fix the problem. You also have to tell who your group is, and describe the reason and goal of your petition.

Some petitions only list signatures, but it is a good idea to have a little more information about each person signing. You might include your printed name, school or business, grade, city, or even your address. Not everyone will want to give all of this information, but they can still sign the petition.

Petitions are a great way to let leaders know that many people have the same opinion about something. Knowing how to write a petition is important because your leaders need to know exactly what you want to see happen. Look at the sample petition, then write your own.

(Title)

To: _____

Name

Grade/Title

Class

Signature

Name: _____

Title _____

Author (s) _____

Illustrator _____

Year of Publication _____

Award Won _____

Award Description _____

Why do you think an award was given for this book?

Do you have a favorite book that would match the award description?

Draw a picture of the award below.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Children's Book Awards Spelling Cryptogram

Directions: Each letter of the alphabet has been replaced! Try to find out which letter has taken its place. The new code will be the same for each word.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

1. R T T V O C I L C X I

2. E X B C I R J V C R X B

3. I H E R U R H B C

4. L O O X E R L C R X B

5. N R O C X I R E L T

6. I H E X A B R C R X B

7. Z R O C R B A V R O N H Z

8. H P E H T T H B E H

9. U I X F X C H

10. L B B V L T T G

recognition

distinguished

contribution

promote

excellence

illustrator

annually

recipient

historical

association

Honorable Mention

For an Outstanding Illustrator

This Certificate presented to

Congratulations!



Presented by

Honorable Mention

For an Outstanding Author

This Certificate presented to

Congratulations!



Presented by



Illustrator's Award

Presented to

Congratulations for winning
This prestigious award
For your excellent illustration!



Presented by



Writer's Award

Presented to

Congratulations for winning
This prestigious award
For your excellent writing!



Presented by

Children's Book Awards Answer Key

1. Newbery Medal
 2. citizens (of the) United States
 3. illustrator
 4. someone who receives
 5. international
 6. Newbery
 7. First recipient of the Caldecott Medal
-
- A. 1938
 - B. 1901
 - C. 1977
 - D. 1922
 - E. 1937

Cryptogram Answer Key

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. illustrator | 2. contribution |
| 3. recipient | 4. association |
| 5. historical | 6. recognition |
| 7. distinguished | 8. excellence |
| 9. promote | 10. annually |