



Notable Children's Books - 2017

Each year a committee of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) identifies the best of the best in children's books. According to the Notables Criteria, "notable" is defined as: Worthy of note or notice, important, distinguished, outstanding. As applied to children's books, notable should be thought to include books of especially commendable quality, books that exhibit venturesome creativity, and books of fiction, information, poetry and pictures for all age levels (birth through age 14) that reflect and encourage children's interests in exemplary ways.

According to ALSC policy, the current year's Newbery, Caldecott, Belpré, Sibert, Geisel, and Batchelder Award and Honor books automatically are added to the Notable Children's Books list.

According to the ALSC Notable Children's Books Committee manual, these categories loosely represent the following: **Younger Readers** – Preschool-grade 2 (age 7), including easy-to-read books; **Middle Readers** – Grades 3-5, ages 8-10; **Older Readers** – Grades 6-8, ages 11-14; **All Ages** – Has appeal and interest for children in all of the above age ranges

Younger Readers

Ada Lovelace, Poet of Science: The First Computer Programmer. By Diane Stanley. Illus. by Jessie Hartland. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman.

This engaging biography introduces nineteenth-century scientist Ada Lovelace, who developed the first algorithm used by the world's early computers.

Ada Twist, Scientist. By Andrea Beaty. Illus. by David Roberts. Abrams.

Inquisitive Ada Twist is determined to identify a mysterious smell. Her mission includes some not-so-successful science experiments, supportive parents, and insatiable curiosity.

Before Morning. By Joyce Sidman. Illus. by Beth Krommes. HMH.

Through rhythmic text and scratchboard illustrations, readers follow a family from "the deep woolen dark" of night into a snowy morning, where all is made "slow and delightful and white."

Best Frints in the Whole Universe. By Antoinette Portis. Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.

Using their own unique language, space creatures Yelfred and Omek demonstrate that friendship troubles are universal.

Counting. By Fleur Star. illus. DK.

Experience counting in the natural world with a variety of textures and shapes. Numbers and words are printed as text and Braille in this early learning board book.

Coyote Moon. By Maria Gianferrari. Illus. by Bagram Ibatoulline. Roaring Brook.

Striving to feed her pups, a coyote hunts in the moonlight until dawn. This strikingly illustrated, nonfiction offering holds many facts and celebrates this skilled predator.

Fabulous Frogs. By Martin Jenkins. Illus. by Tim Hopgood. Candlewick.
Frogs of all sizes and colors, bearing a variety of unique characteristics, hop through this beautiful nonfiction picture book.

Go, Otto, Go! By David Milgrim. Illus. by the author. Simon & Schuster/Simon Spotlight.
Extremely simple text and humorous, energetic illustrations bring to life, with surprising emotional complexity, this tale of Otto the robot who is building a spaceship to take him home. **(Geisel Honor Book)**

Good Night Owl. By Greg Pizzoli. Illus. by the author. Disney/Hyperion.
When an unfamiliar noise prevents Owl from falling asleep, his desperate efforts to find its source escalate to comedic effect. **(Geisel Honor Book)**

The Great Pet Escape. By Victoria Jamieson. Illus. by the author. Holt.
The class pets at Daisy P. Flugelhorn Elementary are on the loose! Second-grade classroom hamster GW has had enough and sets out to free his two best friends.

Horrible Bear! By Ame Dyckman. Illus. by Zachariah OHora. Little, Brown.
When a kite goes astray, an accident and misunderstanding bring together two unlikely friends in a story about the power of forgiveness.

A Hungry Lion; or, A Dwindling Assortment of Animals. By Lucy Ruth Cummins. Illus. by the author. Atheneum.
Why do a little calico kitten, a brown mouse, and a floppy-eared bunny disappear? Ask the hungry lion.

The Infamous Ratsos. By Kara LaReau. Illus. by Matt Myers. Candlewick.
Trying to follow in their tough father's footsteps, Louie and Ralphie's efforts go humorously awry. **(Geisel Honor Book)**

Leave Me Alone! By Vera Brosgol. Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook.
In her endeavor to make sweaters for 30 curious grandchildren, a harried grandmother embarks on a quest for peace and quiet. **(Caldecott Honor Book)**

The Night Gardener. By Terry Fan. Illus. by Eric Fan. Simon & Schuster.
A dreary town comes to life through the efforts of a mysterious nocturnal gardener, whose fantastic topiaries amaze and empower a young boy.

Old Dog Baby Baby. By Julie Fogliano. Illus. by Chris Raschka. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.
Simple text and watercolor illustrations capture the sweet relationship between a crawling baby and a lovable old dog as they play together on the kitchen floor.

Oops, Pounce, Quick, Run! An Alphabet Caper. By Mike Twohy. Illus. by the author. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray.
In this playful abecedary, a ball and a dog interrupt mouse's nap, triggering an A to Z chase. **(Geisel Honor Book)**

Over the Ocean. By Taro Gomi. Illus. by the author. Chronicle.
Depicted through serene watercolor spreads, a young girl stands on a beach and imagines the world beyond the ocean. **(Batchelder Honor Book)**

A Piece of Home. By Jeri Watts. Illus. by Hyewon Yum. Candlewick.
In this compassionate immigration story, Hee Jun and his family slowly adjust to their new life in West Virginia after moving from Korea.

Puddle. By Hyewon Yum. Illus. by the author. Farrar.

A mother and child draw a story of themselves and their dog walking in the rain. The child splashes in a puddle, but it's only a picture—until reality mirrors art.

Rudas: Niño's Horrendous Hermanitas. By Yuyi Morales. Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.

Wild adventures ensue when young luchador Niño is pitted against his little sisters, the lucha wrestling queens.

School's First Day of School. By Adam Rex. Illus. by Christian Robinson. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.

In this charming account of first-day jitters, a brand new school building is the one wracked with nerves as the school year begins.

Thunder Boy Jr. By Sherman Alexie. Illus. by Yuyi Morales. Little, Brown.

Named after his father, Thunder Boy Jr. seeks a new name that's all his own and celebrates something cool that he has done.

We Are Growing! A Mo Willems' Elephant and Piggie Like Reading! Book. By Laurie Keller. Illus. by the author. Disney/Hyperion.

The exuberance felt by a few blades of grass as they celebrate their individuality and quick growth is cut short in the face of an approaching lawn mower. (**Geisel Medal Book**)

We Found a Hat. By Jon Klassen. Illus. by the author. Candlewick.

Two turtles unexpectedly explore the depths of their friendship and loyalty when they come across a good-looking hat without an owner.

Weekends with Max and His Dad. By Linda Urban. Illus. by Katie Kath. HMH.

On weekends, third-grader Max visits his dad's new apartment and begins to adjust to his parents' divorce.

When Andy Met Sandy. By Tomie dePaola and Jim Lewis. Illus. by Tomie dePaola. Simon & Schuster.

A story of gentle friendship begins when one child courageously asks another to play.

Where Are You Going, Baby Lincoln? By Kate DiCamillo. Illus. by Chris Van Dusen. Candlewick.

Baby Lincoln goes on a "necessary journey," taking the opportunity to explore, grow, and find herself. In the end she realizes that there is no place like home.

Middle Readers

The Best Man. By Richard Peck. Dial.

Four men in Archer's family become his heroes in this story of small-town life, family, and marriage.

Dory Fantasmagory: Dory Dory Black Sheep. By Abby Hanlon. Dial.

Dory's best friend Rosabelle can read big chapter books. Feeling left out, Dory decides she will learn to read, no matter what it takes.

Full of Beans. By Jennifer L. Holm. Random.

Bean and his gang of friends find the resources to survive the Great Depression's hardships in their hometown of Key West, Florida.

Frank and Lucky Get Schooled. By Lynne Rae Perkins. Illus. by the author. Greenwillow.

A boy and his newly adopted dog learn about math, science, and other school subjects through everyday interactions in nature and with each other.

The Girl Who Drank the Moon. By Kelly Barnhill. Algonquin.
Saved by a witch as a baby, Luna is accidentally filled with extraordinarily powerful magic. (***Newbery Medal Book***)

I Am Not a Number. By Jenny Kay Dupuis and Kathy Kacer. Illus. by Gillian Newland. Second Story.
Sent to a residential boarding school in Canada, Irene reminds herself that her family, language, and Anishinaabe culture are a source of great strength and pride.

I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Makes Her Mark. By Debbie Levy. Illus. by Elizabeth Baddeley. Simon & Schuster.

Discover the life of Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in this picture-book biography about how one small yet powerful woman persisted against great odds.

Juana & Lucas. By Juana Medina. Illus. by the author. Candlewick.
Juana, a spirited young girl in Bogotá, Colombia, shares her frustrations and successes in learning English. (***Belpré Author Medal Book***)

Ms. Bixby's Last Day. By John David Anderson. HarperCollins/Walden Pond.
Ms. Bixby is the sort of teacher that makes going to school worthwhile. When she is diagnosed with cancer, three boys decide to make sure her last day is perfect.

Pax. By Sara Pennypacker. Illus. by Jon Klassen. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray.
Readers join a stirring search for peace in this poignant tale of loss and reconciliation, told in the alternating views of a fox and his boy.

A Poem for Peter: The Story of Ezra Jack Keats and the Creation of The Snowy Day. By Andrea Davis Pinkney. Illus. by Lou Fancher and Steve Johnson. Viking.
This homage to Ezra Jack Keats takes the form of a biographical poem, telling of his creation of Peter, the young, black protagonist of *The Snowy Day*, and Keats' impact on children's literature.

Preaching to the Chickens: The Story of Young John Lewis. By Jabari Asim. Illus. by E. B. Lewis. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen.
Civil rights leader and Georgia Congressman John Lewis grew up in rural Alabama. Emulating preachers at church, young John literally fed and ministered to his farmyard congregation of chickens.

The Princess and the Warrior. By Duncan Tonatiuh. Illus. by the author. Abrams.
The origin of two volcanoes near Mexico City, Iztaccíhuatl (the Sleeping Woman) and Popocatepetl (from words meaning smoking and mountain), is told in this original version of an ancient legend. (***Belpré Illustrator Honor Book***)

Raymie Nightingale. By Kate DiCamillo. Candlewick.
DiCamillo's writing sparkles with humor and hope as new friends Raymie, Beverly, and Louisiana endeavor to find their places in the world.

The Secret Keepers. By Trenton Lee Stewart. Illus. by Diana Sudyka. Little, Brown/Megan Tingley.
When 12-year-old Reuben finds a peculiar, magical watch that has the power to turn its owner invisible, he's propelled on the adventure of a lifetime.

The Sound of Silence. By Katrina Goldsaito. Illus. by Julia Kuo. Little, Brown.
After a musician tells Yoshio her favorite sound is ma (silence), the boy seeks ma amidst the daily bustle of his life in Tokyo.

Steamboat School. By Deborah Hopkinson. Illus. by Ron Husband. Disney/Jump at the Sun.
When James' school is closed by a law forbidding the education of African Americans, he helps create a clever alternative.

Step Right Up: How Doc and Jim Key Taught the World about Kindness. By Donna Janell Bowman. Illus. by Daniel Minter. Lee & Low.

Born a slave, William “Doc” Key, became a self-taught veterinarian. With much kindness, he raised a remarkable horse, named Jim Key, which he taught to answer questions, spell, and write.

The Storyteller. By Evan Turk. Illus. by the author. Atheneum.

During a time of drought, a storyteller and his apprentice weave a complex tale to rescue their city from a menacing sandstorm.

The Tragic Tale of the Great Auk. By Jan Thornhill. Illus. by the author. Greenwood.

Great Auks, flightless birds resembling penguins, were prolific in the icy waters of the northern Atlantic until human hunters, egg collectors, and climate change led to their extinction.

A Voyage in the Clouds: The (Mostly) True Story of the First International Flight by Balloon in 1785. By Matthew Olshan. Illus. by Sophie Blackall. Farrar.

Based on the first hot air balloon trip from England to France, this is the funny and wise account of two adventurous men who must work together to avoid disaster.

Wet Cement. By Bob Raczka. Roaring Brook.

Children will enjoy the unusual format of the poems and their titles in this kid-friendly collection of concrete poetry.

When Mischief Came to Town. By Katrina Nannestad. Harcourt.

Recently orphaned, Inge Maria goes to live with her grandmother. Through her wild and spirited ways, Inge soon endears herself to the villagers, bringing joy to all.

When the Sea Turned to Silver. By Grace Lin. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown.

Chinese folklore intertwines with Pinmei and Yishan’s perilous journey to save Pinmei’s storyteller grandmother from the clutches of the evil Tiger Emperor.

The Wild Robot. By Peter Brown. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown.

An inquisitive and lonely robot mothers an orphaned gosling and befriends an island of animals in a story of survival, where nature and technology collide.

Older Readers

As Brave As You. By Jason Reynolds. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy.

As their parents try to repair their marriage, brothers Ernie and Genie uncover family history and the extent of their own bravery, while spending an eye-opening summer with their grandparents in Virginia.

The Ballad of a Broken Nose. By Arne Svingen. Tr. by Kari Dickson. Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry.

Seventh-grader Bart has a difficult home life but finds hope in his secret love of opera. (***Batchelder Honor Book***)

The Bitter Side of Sweet. By Tara Sullivan. Putnam.

Three children band together to escape a life of slavery on a cacao farm in the modern-day Ivory Coast.

Blood Brother: Jonathan Daniels and His Sacrifice for Civil Rights. By Rich Wallace and Sandra Neil Wallace. illus. Boyds Mills/Calkins Creek.

Jonathan Daniels devoted his life to helping others, leading him to stand up and march for civil rights. Through journal entries, letters, and insight, readers experience his heartfelt fight for human rights.

Booked. By Kwame Alexander. HMH.

Twelve-year-old Nick excels on the soccer field but struggles to deal with his parents' divorce in this touching yet humorous novel in verse.

Brown v. Board of Education: A Fight for Simple Justice. By Susan Goldman Rubin. illus. Holiday. This thorough look at the landmark Supreme Court case that ended school segregation illuminates an important part of U.S. history.

Cloud and Wallfish. By Anne Nesbet. Candlewick.

Noah is whisked by his parents to a new life behind the Iron Curtain in 1989 East Germany. Mystery, intrigue, and friendship interweave as he questions everything he knows and loves.

Cry, Heart, but Never Break. By Glenn Ringtved. Illus. by Charlotte Pardi. Tr. by Robert Moulthrop. Enchanted Lion.

The figure of Death gently eases the pain of four siblings as they accept the loss of their grandmother. **(Batchelder Award Book)**

Garvey's Choice. By Nikki Grimes. Boyds Mills/Wordsong.

Utilizing tanka poems, this novel in verse relates how Garvey's family, new friend, and love of music lead him to personal discovery and self-acceptance.

Ghost. By Jason Reynolds. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy.

Ghost wants to be the fastest sprinter on his elite middle-school track team, but his past slows him down.

In the Shadow of Liberty: The Hidden History of Slavery, Four Presidents, and Five Black Lives. By Kenneth C. Davis. illus. Holt.

The lives of five enslaved people owned by four U.S. presidents reveal the contradictions of a land founded upon the idea of freedom.

The Inquisitor's Tale; or, The Three Magical Children and Their Holy Dog. By Adam Gidwitz. Illus. by Hatem Aly. Dutton.

On a dark night in 1242 France, travelers tell the story of three mysterious children: William, Jacob, and Jeanne, and their dog Gwenforte, recently brought back from the dead. **(Newbery Honor Book)**

The Lie Tree. By Frances Hardinge. Abrams/Amulet.

In Victorian Britain, Faith Sunderly investigates the mysterious murder of her father, discovering a tree that feeds that feeds upon lies and gives visions to those who eat its fruit.

Lowriders to the Center of the Earth. By Cathy Camper. Illus. by Raul the Third. Chronicle.

The Lowriders journey to the center of the earth to retrieve their beloved cat, Genie, in this energetic graphic novel. **(Belpré Illustrator Medal Book)**

March: Book Three. By John Lewis and Andrew Aydin. Illus. by Nate Powell. Top Shelf.

This third graphic novel in Congressman John Lewis' personal account of the Civil Rights Movement begins with the Birmingham church bombing and ends with the signing of the Voting Rights Act. **(Sibert Medal Book)**

The Only Road. By Alexandra Diaz. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman.

Travel with Jaime and his cousin Angela, as they make the heartbreaking and life-changing journey from Guatemala to New Mexico. **(Belpré Author Honor Book)**

Presenting Buffalo Bill: The Man Who Invented the Wild West. By Candace Fleming. illus. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.

Fleming digs for truth behind the myth of showman William "Buffalo Bill" Cody, the development of the Wild West, and the treatment of the American Indians during late nineteenth century.

Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story. By Caren Stelson. illus. Carolrhoda. Sachiko was six years old when the atomic bomb fell on Nagasaki, Japan. Her incredible story of survival, loss, and courageous perseverance is one that must be heard. **(Sibert Honor Book)**

Samurai Rising: The Epic Life of Minamoto Yoshitsune. By Pamela S. Turner. Illus. by Gareth Hinds. Charlesbridge.

Turner reveals the thrilling life of twelfth-century samurai Minamoto Yoshitsune, the bloody feud between his family and the Taira clan, and his undoing by the political machinations of his brother.

To Stay Alive: Mary Ann Graves and the Tragic Journey of the Donner Party. By Skila Brown. Candlewick.

Follow Mary Ann Graves and her family as they travel across the country in a tale of survival against all odds. Powerful, first-person narration characterizes this novel in verse.

Uprooted: The Japanese American Experience during World War II. By Albert Marrin. illus. Knopf. This generously illustrated account of the shameful history of the U.S.' internment of Japanese Americans during WWII is thorough, thoughtful, and provocative. **(Sibert Honor Book)**

We Will Not Be Silent: The White Rose Student Resistance Movement That Defied Adolf Hitler. By Russell Freedman. illus. Clarion.

In this impeccably researched history, drawn from primary sources, readers learn about Hans and Sophie Scholl, former members of the Hitler Youth, who sacrificed their lives to spread the truth about the Nazi regime. **(Sibert Honor Book)**

What Elephants Know. By Eric Dinerstein. Disney/Hyperion.

Nandu grows up in an elephant stable in the jungles of Nepal. When the stable is threatened with closure, Nandu must convince his father to transform it into an elephant-breeding center.

Wolf Hollow. By Lauren Wolk. Dutton.

In this coming-of-age story, spunky and courageous Annabelle defends a veteran who has become the target of local bullying attacks. **(Newbery Honor Book)**

The Wolf's Boy. By Susan Williams Beckhorn. Disney/Hyperion.

Two outcasts, a boy and a wolf, band together to survive the harsh, Ice-age winter.

You Can Fly: The Tuskegee Airmen. By Carole Boston Weatherford. Illus. by Jeffery Boston Weatherford. Atheneum.

This collection of free-verse poems offers an evocative portrait of the U.S.' first African American military pilots, who trained at the Tuskegee Institute during WWI.

All Ages

Animals by the Numbers: A Book of Infographics. By Steve Jenkins. Illus. by the author. HMH.

The animal kingdom is presented in easy-to-understand, colorful infographics that allow the reader to appreciate the world of animals by comparing and contrasting one species to another.

As Time Went By. By Jose Sanabria. Illus. by the author. North-South.

An abandoned ship finds new purpose when displaced villagers make it their new home. **(Batchelder Honor Book)**

Daniel Finds a Poem. By Micha Archer. Illus. by the author. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen.

What is poetry? Maybe it's glistening morning dew, a cool pond, or crunchy leaves. A young boy spends a day talking to animals and discovering poetry in the world around him.

Du Iz Tak? By Carson Ellis. Illus. by the author. Candlewick.

As a tiny plant springs from the ground, curious bugs watch it grow and marvel in their own buggy language. Whimsically detailed paintings showcase their activities and the subtly passing seasons. (***Caldecott Honor Book***)

Esquivel! Space-Age Sound Artist. By Susan Wood. Illus. by Duncan Tonatiuh. Charlesbridge. Self-taught musician Juan Garcia Esquivel blended traditional Mexican music and unconventional techniques to create a new, unique sound. (***Belpré Illustrator Honor Book***)

Freedom in Congo Square. By Carole Boston Weatherford. Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. little bee. In rhythmic text and exuberant illustrations, Weatherford and Christie tell the story of slaves who, after toiling all week, had one afternoon free to dance, sing, and play music in New Orleans' Congo Square. (***Caldecott Honor Book***)

Freedom over Me: Eleven Slaves, Their Lives and Dreams Brought to Life by Ashley Bryan. By Ashley Bryan. Illus. by the author. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy. In the U.S., slaves were erroneously considered objects with a monetary value. Here, Bryan humanizes 11 enslaved people, imagining the dreams and personal reflections that belong only to them. (***Newbery Honor Book***)

Giant Squid. By Candace Fleming. Illus. by Eric Rohmann. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter. Plunging into the "depths of the sunless sea," readers are wrapped in the tentacles of Fleming's text and Rohmann's illustrations, gaining an appreciation for the ever-elusive giant squid. (***Sibert Honor Book***)

Jazz Day: The Making of a Famous Photograph. By Roxane Orgill. Illus. by Francis Vallejo. Candlewick. Art Kane's iconic photograph of great jazz musicians gathered on a New York City street is brought to life through exuberant poems and paintings.

The Journey. By Francesca Sanna. Illus. by the author. Flying Eye. In the face of war and the loss of her husband, a mother and her children leave everything behind to make a dangerous journey to find safety in a new land.

Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood. By F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell. Illus. by Rafael Lopez. HMH. With paint, brushes, and artistic spirit, a muralist transforms Mira's gray neighborhood into a place of color, joy, and unity. Based on a community art movement in San Diego, California.

¡Olinguito, de la A a la Z! / Olinguito, from A to Z! Descubriendo el bosque nublado / Unveiling the Cloud Forest. By Lulu Delacre. Illus. by the author. Lee & Low. Explore the Ecuadorian Andes and its cloud forest in this bilingual alphabet book.

Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. By Javaka Steptoe. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown. The short yet brilliant life story of Jean-Michel Basquiat and his determination to become an artist are revealed through poetic language and illustrations dramatically influenced by Basquiat's own style. (***Caldecott Medal Book***)

Some Writer! The Story of E. B. White. By Melissa Sweet. Illus. by the author. HMH. This enticing biography of beloved children's book author E. B. White seamlessly incorporates photographs, personal letters, pages from his books, and collage illustrations with engaging text.

Somos como las nubes / We Are Like the Clouds. By Jorge Argueta. Illus. by Alfonso Ruano. Tr. by Elisa Amado. Groundwood. Twenty poems, in Spanish and English, present first-person vignettes of unaccompanied youths traveling from Central America to the U.S., hoping to find a safer life and reunite with family.

They All Saw a Cat. By Brendan Wenzel. Illus. by the author. Chronicle.
Readers observe a cat from a variety of perspectives as he sees and is seen by a cast of characters. (***Caldecott Honor Book***)

The Water Princess. By Susan Verde and Georgie Badiel. Illus. by Peter H. Reynolds. Putnam.
Princess Gie Gie walks miles every morning to collect water for her family, while dreaming of bringing clean drinking water to her parched African village.

When Green Becomes Tomatoes. By Julie Fogliano. Illus. by Julie Morstad. Roaring Brook/Neal Porter.
Quiet, whispered poems capture the internal world of a diverse cast of children, who delight in the changing seasons.

2017 Notable Children's Books Committee

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We'd like to thank Patty Saidenberg, a member of the 2017 Notable Children's Books Committee, who was unable to attend the Midwinter Meeting and vote on the final list.