**MISSOURI BUILDING BLOCK PICTURE BOOK AWARD**

**Committee Member Handbook**

**Read-Aloud Picture Book Award**

Sponsored by the Youth Services Community of Interest (YSCI) of the Missouri Library Association. The Building Block Award Committee shall be a permanent subcommittee of YSCI.

**Purpose of the Award**

To accomplish the following purposes, an annual list of books and accompanying program and promotional activity ideas will be developed to help Missouri public librarians focus on the importance of picture books in fostering reading aloud to prereaders.

1. To encourage language development and early literacy skills through reading aloud.
2. To provide parents and caregivers with a selection of quality picture books to read aloud to young children.
3. To introduce children to a variety of authors and illustrators of children’s books.
4. To encourage an appreciation of diverse artistic and literary styles in current children’s literature.
5. To encourage the continuation of publication of quality picture books.
6. To encourage the development of visual perception/discrimination.
7. To introduce children to diverse themes, cultures and topics.

**Name of the Award**

The MISSOURI BUILDING BLOCK PICTURE BOOK AWARD with “P. B. Bear” as logo/mascot (P.B. = picture book).

**Committee Structure/Duties:**

* 1. The committee shall consist of up to thirty (30) members, including 2 ex-officio members and one representative from MASL. No member shall serve more than ten consecutive years on the committee with a two year absence before returning.
  2. Committee members will be selected by the committee officers from a pool of volunteers. Volunteers will be recruited through MLA e-mail discussion lists and at the MLA conference. In addition, it is strongly recommended that the committee recruit early childhood professionals such as members of the Association for the Education of Young Children – Missouri (AEYC-MO). YSCI will oversee this process.
  3. Meetings:
     1. Prescreening meeting (January)

2. Listener/Selector meeting/planning meeting (Late January or early February)

* 1. Term of office:
     1. Terms begin July 1 and end June 30.
     2. Officers serve 4-year terms. An officer will serve as Selection Chair in first year, Award Chair in second year, Committee Chair in third year, and immediate Past Chair in fourth year. Officers must be members of MLA.
     3. Each year the Committee will elect a new Selection Chair from the pool of committee members, preferably someone who has been on the committee for at least one year.
  2. Committee officers and duties
     1. Committee Chair. Duties:
        1. Arrange all meetings.
        2. See that all scheduled deadlines are met.
        3. Serve in an advisory capacity to the Award and Selection Chairs.
        4. Attend Community of Interest meetings.
        5. Authorize expenditures as arranged with YSCI Chair.
        6. Preside over the selection of new Selection Chair.
        7. Shall, in conjunction with the Award Chair and Selection Chair, appoint members other duties as needed.
        8. Assemble Listener/Selectors.

i. Create a list of all Committee members and a list of Listeners/Selectors to be distributed at the Listener meeting.

1. Publicize the program.
2. Produce and procure promotional items, ballots, clip art, etc.
3. Notify webmaster of any updates or changes needed to be made to the website, including, but not limited to officer contact information, nomination list, online voting site, updates to procedures and/or manual, etc.
4. Coordinate production/printing of idea sheets.
   * 1. Award Chair. Duties:
        1. Preside in the absence of the Committee Chair.
        2. Assume duties of the Committee Chair in the event the Committee Chair is not able to complete his/her term of office.
        3. Accept and tally ballots to determine winner of award.
        4. Announce/publicize winning book in a variety of media – MASL Newsletter, PUBYAC, MOYAC, *MO INFO*, etc.
        5. Contact winning author and illustrator.
        6. Notify MLA of winners and order award plaque.
        7. Arrange for the plaque to be created and given/sent to winner(s). (Plaques have traditionally been produced by D Sport in Columbia, MO.)
        8. After the second meeting contact publishers for thumbnail pictures of the nominee covers and send thumbnails to the webmaster.
        9. Assist the YSCI 1st Vice Chair in arranging the MLA luncheon.
        10. Print award criteria for each listener/selector to refer to during meeting. Read award criteria aloud to listener/selectors at meeting.
     2. Selection Chair. Duties:
        1. Serve as a committee member for at least one year before assuming duties of this office.
        2. Accept and tally nominations for award.
        3. Distribute preliminary list of titles to all committee members.

d. Create agenda and rating sheets for Listener/Selector meeting.

e. Take attendance of members at both meetings and send to MLA archivist.

* + 1. Committee Members. Duties:
       1. Read as many new books as possible appropriate to the target age group, noting those which might be suitable for consideration for the annual list.
       2. Submit a list of titles to the Selection Chair by November 30.
       3. Attend all scheduled or called meetings of the committee.
       4. Assist in pre-screening preliminary list to determine each title’s eligibility.
       5. Read and rate all nominated titles. Rating scale: 0-5 with 5 being the highest.

f. Read aloud titles to the Listener/Selectors at that meeting.

1. Serve on subcommittees as needed.
2. Promote the award within your library system and community.
3. Create idea sheets.
4. Perform other duties as directed by Chairs.
   * 1. MASL Representative. Duties:
        1. Carry out Committee Member duties.
        2. Update MASL membership on Building Block Award nominees and winners.
        3. Assist at the Building Block table at the annual MASL conference in April.
     2. Ex-officio Committee Members shall consist of:
        1. The YSCI 2nd Chair
        2. Public Library Services Consultant from the Missouri State Library

These members may attend any meetings of this committee, participate in discussions, make suggestions as warranted, submit titles for consideration, vote on titles at the Selector meeting and read titles at the Listener meeting.

* 1. Listener/Selectors

A group of up to 30 listener/selectors will be selected by the committee each year. Volunteers will be recruited through MLA, DESE, and MASL e-mail discussion lists and from names suggested by Committee members solicited from the community at large. Listener/Selectors should have a fundamental knowledge of children’s literature and work with children as part of their job function. The Committee Chair is responsible for assembling the Listener/Selector group. No member shall serve more than ten consecutive years on the Listener/Selector committee with a two year absence before returning.

* 1. Book Selection Criteria & Limitations

Books selected for the list must meet the “Purposes of the Award” as stated above. The following limitations and criteria should also be considered:

Limitations:

* + 1. Copyright date must be within last two years (e.g. if current year is 2016 books considered for list must be 2015 and 2016.)
    2. Any title may appear on final list only one time.
    3. Must be a picture book. Cannot include: board books, early chapter books, beginning readers, wordless books, toy books, textbooks, reprints, abridgements, or books that are available only in book/cassette or CD combinations.
    4. Must be English or bilingual/English.
    5. May be fiction or non-fiction.
    6. May be lap book or story time book, but majority of titles on final list must be suitable for group sharing.
    7. May not be a holiday book as determined by LC subject headings.
  1. Criteria:
     1. Reads well aloud – rich vocabulary, language flows, accurate grammar, sense, natural sounding dialogue, literate text, builds language skills.
     2. Pictures and words work well together. Theme is developed through text and illustration.
     3. Age appropriate (birth up to first grade).
     4. Has child appeal.
     5. Does not injure the self-esteem of a child or reinforce a biased view of those in some way different from the listener.
     6. Avoids sex, race, and other stereotypes. (See “Guide for Evaluation of Picture Books”.)

**Selection & Award Procedure**

July

* July 1st Committee terms of office begin

September

* Participating libraries begin publicity and circulation of nominated books; provide ballots to parents.
* Committee Chair must have budget turned into YSCI Chair by September 30.

October – MLA Conference

* Present YSCI volunteer forms for Committee and Listener/Selectors.
* Have an informational booth with sample ballots, the list of nominees, and volunteer forms.

November

* Picture book titles for preliminary list will be nominated by public librarians, preschool and kindergarten teachers, and other child care providers from around the state. All nominees will be submitted to the Selection Committee Chair. All nominations should consist of complete bibliographic information.
* Nominations will also be submitted by each Committee member. Nominations due November 30.
* Publishers that wish to send titles for consideration may send them to the Award’s committee chairs as listed on the website.
* Committee officers will follow their individual library policies regarding receiving books from publishers and distribution of said books.

December

* Selection Chair tallies nominations, develops list of books eligible, sends list to committee members.
* Committee Chair determines date for January meetings.
* Deadline for voting by patrons/customers at local library level is December 31st.

January

* Committee members read and rate each title. Rating scale is 0-5 with 5 being the highest.
* Public libraries tally ballots and mail, email, fill out online form or fax the results to the Award Chair. Deadline is January 15th.
* Committee Chair contacts volunteers to serve as Listener/Selectors.
* Award Chair tallies votes and determines winner.
* Award Chair announces winner by January 20 in *MO INFO* and other sources, both print and online and notifies publisher, author and illustrator of winning title.
* Arranges for plaque to be made through MLA office.
* Selection Chair presides over pre-screening and planning meeting. Committee members tally their votes and finalize the list of 30 titles. If committee fails to find 30 eligible titles, they may consult book review sources to select additional titles for Listener/Selector meeting. List must contain 30 titles.
* New Selection Chair is appointed to begin office July 1.
* Determine need for additional promotional items

Listener/Selector Meeting

* All committee members and 15-20 Listener/Selectors gather for a full-day meeting to read, discuss, evaluate and vote on the 20-30 nominated titles.
* Listener/Selectors only will vote on the 10 titles for the final list. Committee members will not vote at this meeting. Persons who will not be voting in this meeting will read aloud to the group.

February

* Committee members will create/develop activity sheets and turn them into the Selection Chair by February 15th.
* Committee Chair submits a list of the new nominees to be included in *MO INFO* and the MASL newsletter. Should also be announced on MOYAC and any other appropriate e-mail discussion list or newsletter.
* Committee Chair should notify the MLA Webmaster of new titles for updating The Missouri Building Block Picture Book Award Page.
* Award Chair will notify publishers of their titles that made the list.

March

* Committee Chairpersons present a workshop at the DESE Conference on the Young Years.

April

* Committee Chairpersons present a workshop at the MASL Spring Conference and promote the Building Blocks Award at the MLA table.

June

* Committee terms of office end.

**Promotional Ideas:**

* Bookmarks
* Annotated reading lists

**Idea Packets**

* Reproducible sheets – children’s ballots, bookmark with lists of books, logo designs, booklist, button design.

**Voting Procedures**

* Although the award is designed for kindergarteners and younger, any child who benefits from the Building Block Award may vote for their favorite title from the list (parents may fill out ballot.) Children may only vote once.
* Must read or listen to five (5) books from list before eligible to vote.
* Program begins September 1. Voting can be anytime between September 1 and

December 31. Local librarians will decide when voting is to take place in their libraries.

* Local librarians are responsible for counting their ballots and completing their tally sheet and program evaluation form. Mail, email, fill out online form or fax results to Award Chair by January 15

**Budget and Expenditures**

* Budget submitted by Committee Chair to YSCI Chair who submits to MLA Budget Committee by September 30.
* Types of expenditures: lunch for listener’s meeting**, hotel/meal expense for 1 night at DESE/ MASL conferences and** award plaque(s) for winning author and illustrator.

**Amendments**

* Changes in the award program guidelines may be suggested by a majority vote of the award committee.
* Major changes must be approved by the YSCI Board.

Guidelines Amended: November 1996   
Guidelines Further Amended by Committee: March 1997

Revisions by Committee: October 2003   
Revisions by Committee: Fall 2010   
Revisions by Committee: Spring 2016

The Public Library is located at [address] and is open [hours]. Call [phone number] for more information.

Reading aloud to young children forms the building blocks of reading, literacy and a love of books;; it is also a wonderful way for children and adults to spend time together. Stop by your local library to participate in the Missouri Building Block Picture Book Award program.

**Ballot Sheet**

**(for children and parents)**

Ask your librarian for a list of the ten books which have been nominated to receive the Missouri Building Block Picture Book Award.

Ask someone to read aloud at least five books from the list to you. Which one did you like best? (please write the title on the line below).

Your Name Age \_

Return this ballot to your children’s librarian.

**Tally Sheet (for librarian’s use)**

**Title of Book Number of Votes**

1. \_

2. \_

3. \_

4. \_

5. \_

6. \_

7. \_

8. \_

9. \_

10. \_

**Evaluating Picture Books**

**Contents:**

* + - Content is appropriate to the age of the intended audience.
    - Characters are well-developed, interesting, believable, few in number and do not perpetuate any sex, race, age or ethnic stereotypes. Children can relate to the characters’ experiences and emotions.
    - Plot makes sense, is interesting, and is simple enough so it is easily understood by children. Story develops an idea through action and characterization instead of through lecturing and moralizing. It should have child appeal and not be for adults.
    - Text and illustrations work well together and develop the theme.
    - Writing style is clear and easy to read with appropriate vocabulary for the age of the intended audience.
    - Text is simple, yet pleasing.
    - Humor is childlike and understood by children.
    - Tone does not patronize.
    - Book presents a message with positive values/illustrates the importance of determination, creativity, integrity, cooperation, etc.
    - Story has a natural climax.
    - Facts are accurate.
    - Sexism: Doesn’t use words that are demeaning to women, shows women in a variety of lifestyles, occupations, and with positions of authority; does not depict the two- parent family as superior to other types of families; pictures of females as often as males and with males taking care of children, doing housework, showing emotion, etc.; does not picture women in trivial or ridiculous ways; shows women in active roles.

**Illustrations:**

* + - Are integral parts of the text; help to create the meaning of the text; provide clues to the action; help to build a story so a non-reader can follow the action.
    - Match the mood and style of the story.
    - Are consistent and accurate with the text.
    - Are visually attractive (i.e. large, clear, simple, colorful, imaginative and well- designed), inviting and pleasing.
    - Are located near the text they illustrate.
    - Can stand alone as art.
    - Style and medium used is appropriate for the mood of the story.
    - Line, shape and color extend the story.
    - There is balance in the composition.
    - Characters are lively and show emotion or action when appropriate.

**Format:**

* + - Size of the book is appropriate to the content.
    - Cover design and endpapers express the theme and spirit of the story.
    - Title page anticipates the story that follows.
    - Typography matches the theme and purpose of the story.
    - Good quality paper with a durable binding and firm covers.
    - Good production quality (i.e. illustrations or text on one side of the page should not show through the reverse side; clear prints.)
    - Visually pleasing overall with a simple and attractive design.
    - Sufficient spacing between lines and text and between text and illustrations.

**Comparison with Others:**

* + - How is this work similar to or different from other works by the same author and/or illustrator?
    - How is this story similar to or different from other books on the same subject or on the same theme?
    - What do reviewers have to say about the book? Do you agree or disagree?
    - Will the book make a contribution to the growing body of children’s literature? How lasting will it be?