

NASSAU LIBRARY SYSTEM

Strengthening Nassau's Public Libraries



NOVEMBER 1, 2011

TO: MEMBER LIBRARY DIRECTORS
CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANS

FROM: RENEE MCGRATH, MANAGER OF YOUTH SERVICES

SUBJECT: ***ANNUAL MOCK NEWBERY DISCUSSION DAY***
9:00AM – 12:00PM, MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2012
(PLEASE NOTE EARLIER START TIME)
(COFFEE & TIME TO EXPLORE MOCK NEWBERY TITLES AT 9:00AM)
ANDREW GEDDES MEETING ROOM
NASSAU LIBRARY SYSTEM

Our annual Mock Newbery Discussion Day is here! This is a wonderful opportunity to examine and evaluate some of the many titles that have been published for children in 2011, and to select our top choices for this prestigious award. **Attached to this memo is a list of 8 titles that all participants are expected to have read along with an agenda and guidelines for discussion.**

Again we will start this year's Mock Newbery discussion with **eight** "statements of defense." **Eight** individuals will volunteer to speak out for their favorite book and give a 2-3 minute statement that explains how the book is distinguished according to the criteria and why it should be the 2012 Mock Newbery winner. After that, participants will discuss the same eight titles in two small groups. We will then vote together on our winner and any honor books we wish to select.

If you are interested in volunteering to defend a book, please fill in the form below, and fax or email it to Judy at jburkhoff@nassaulibrary.org as soon as possible. You will be notified by Judy if that title is available.

PLEASE RETURN TO JUDY BURKHOFF, NLS YOUTH SERVICES

___ I will attend the Mock Newbery Workshop on Monday, January 9, 2012.

Name _____

Library _____

I would be willing to give a 2-3 minute "defense" of the following title(s):

The
**John
Newbery
Medal**



NASSAU LIBRARY SYSTEM

ANNUAL MOCK NEWBERY DISCUSSION DAY

The list of **eight** books selected for our Annual Mock Newbery Discussion follows. Each title, published in 2011, meets the established criteria for the Newbery Award. The books are some of the best of the year and are included in other Mock Newbery discussions across the country. Of course, there are *many* other well-reviewed books and potential Newbery winners. This is only a small selection of what the Newbery Committee is actually discussing and there is no guarantee that they will choose one of these titles, but we will have a wonderful day discussing these terrific books and coming up with winners of our own!

Our format will be the same as last year. We will be breaking into small discussion groups led by some of your colleagues. Each group will have an opportunity to discuss every title, so please read all **8** titles.

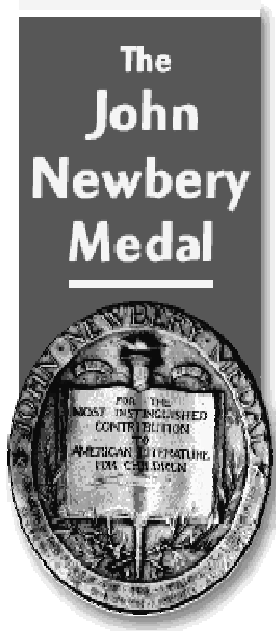
After our discussions, we will come together as a group and vote for the winner. Our guidelines for voting will be similar to the ones used by the actual Newbery Committee. Criteria for the Newbery Award and General Discussion Guidelines, which you might want to read over before participating in the event, is also included.

Engaging in a process that is both vital and dear to the continuation of excellence in literature for young people, the mock discussions allow librarians to become familiar with *some* of the most outstanding books of the year. Participants will learn how the awards are decided and begin to think more critically about literature.

This has always been one of my favorite meetings and I hope to see you on January 9.

Agenda

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 9:00 - 9:15 | Coffee & Time to look over nominated books |
| 9:15 - 9:30 | Announcements |
| | General discussion of Newbery Award criteria |
| 9:30 - 10:00 | Statements of Defense |
| 10:00 - 11:50 | Small Discussion Groups |
| 11:50 - 12:00 | Group Voting & Award Ceremony |



Titles for Discussion

Barnhill, Kelly. *The Mostly True Story of Jack*

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker. *Jefferson's Sons*

Lai, Thanhha. *Inside Out and Back Again*

MacLachlan, Patricia. *Waiting for the Magic*

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Bird in a Box*

Schmidt, Gary. *Okay for Now*

Selznick, Brian. *Wonderstruck*

Venkatraman, Padma. *Island's End*

Terms and Criteria

The Newbery Medal was named for eighteenth-century British bookseller John Newbery. It is awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children published in the United States during the preceding year. Honor Books may be named. These shall be books that are also truly distinguished. The Award is restricted to authors who are citizens or residents of the United States. The committee in its deliberations is to consider only the books eligible for the award, as specified in the terms.

The committee shall consider all forms of writing - fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Reprints and compilations are not eligible. Children (up to and including the age of 14) are a potential audience and the book must display respect for children's understandings, abilities, and appreciations. The committee is not to consider the entire body of the work by an author or whether the author has previously won the award. The committee's decision is to be made following deliberation about books of the specified calendar year.

In identifying "Distinguished Writing" in a book for children, committee members need to consider interpretation of the theme or concept; presentation of information including accuracy, clarity, and organization; development of a plot; delineation of characters; delineation of setting; appropriateness of style. Committee members must consider excellence of presentation for a child audience. Each book is to be considered as a contribution to literature. The committee is to make its decision primarily on the text. The committee should keep in mind that the award is for literary quality and quality presentation for children. The award is not for didactic intent or for popularity.

ANNUAL MOCK NEWBERY DISCUSSIONS



GENERAL DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are adapted from:

The Newbery & Caldecott Mock Election Kit: Choosing Champions in Children's Books from the Association for Library Services to Children. Published by the American Library Association in 1994.

- Speak loudly enough to be heard.
- Private conversations during the discussion are discouraged.
- Speak briefly when it is your turn.
- Listen carefully to the substance of what is being said.
- Respond to the comments of others.
- Talk with each other rather than to the chairperson.
- No right or wrong answers exists.
- Acknowledge positive points first.
- After all positive points have been made, discuss negatives.
- Speak only to the terms, criteria, and definitions for the award.
- Avoid generalities such as "This was a nice book" without critical analysis of why this is so.
- Make comparisons but only to those other books being considered for the award. Do not consider the author's past work.
- Each participant is expected to have read the books and to express their opinions to the group.