2007 Notable Children’s Books

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

For your convenience, Notable Children’s Books that have also received other ALA awards, such as the Coretta Scott King Award, Michael L. Printz Award, Schneider Family Book Award, and/or were named a Best Book for Young Adults are noted on this list.

Younger Readers

A runaway monkey discards a banana peel, setting in motion a hilarious sequence of events in this nearly wordless picture book, punctuated by a series of rhyming street signs.

Bachelet, Gilles. My Cat, the Silliest Cat in the World. illus. Abrams. (0-8109-4913-X).
This silly cat doesn’t always act like other cats. Could that possibly mean it’s not really a cat? That's the question in a picture book that will have readers giggling.

When Death comes calling for his soul, Colin the cobbler thinks on his feet and promises the Grim Reaper a new pair of sandals—then boots, then walking shoes—in a lighthearted variant of the traditional tale about outwitting death.

Beaumont’s cumulative, patterned text is expanded by Dyer’s watercolors, which contain text clues to tell the story of creatures, from Squirrel to Skunk, that seek shelter by squeezing into Rover’s doghouse. Geisel Honor Book.

Muscrat Cork, who is older, has serious problems when he decides that he should be taller than his possum friend, Fuzz.

Two best friends have a fight that separates them—no more hugs, no more sharing toys until the fight is over. Preschoolers will see themselves in this loving story.

The world underneath the steps comes to life when Jack plans the rescue of action-figure Guy, who has fallen “below.”
Amina loses her tooth while on vacation in Mali, but instead of a visit from the Tooth Fairy, she gets a chicken!

Mr. Watson’s pig, “the porcine wonder,” finally gets behind the wheel of a 1959 pink convertible. Van Dusen’s gouache illustrations add a retro appearance to DiCamillo’s superb, dialogue-filled, 14-chapter story. *Geisel Honor Book.*

When Rabbit goes to the library and checks out a book about wolves, he learns things he would rather not know.

An irreverent look at the old nursery rhyme takes the dish and spoon off on a romantic getaway involving vaudeville, crime, and, of course, true love.

When her teacher announces he is getting married, the irrepressible Lilly automatically assumes she will be his flower girl. That’s not quite what happens, but she does save the day.

When Duck and Goose find a large, round, spotted “egg,” they both claim it. Then these rivals become friends as they care for and imagine a future for their mysterious charge.

In 1931, near their Manhattan home, a boy and his dad keep a close watch as the world’s tallest building is built in record time. Published in honor of the building’s seventy-fifth anniversary.

While Houndsley the dog tries not to discourage Catina the cat’s authorial ambitions, Catina encourages Houndsley to enter a cooking contest. The two friends realize that their friendship is more valuable than elusive dreams of fame.

The popular fox sisters return in this book, which includes three adventures precipitated by the foxes’ need to avoid the dreaded cucumber sandwiches Dad is preparing. *Geisel Medal Book.*

Jenny struggles with her feelings when her family celebrates the marriage of Uncle Peter in a traditional Chinese way.

A childless woman prays for “a child, even if it is nothing more than a cooking pot!” She gets what she wishes for in this rollicking Palestinian folktale.

“I am not thin, but I am beautiful,” says Mr. Beefy, a self-satisfied pug. Oil portraits of various canine breeds are paired with brief, humorous, and poignant first-person poems.

As he makes his way home with his big sister Adèle, forgetful Simon manages to lose his hat, gloves, and more all over Paris. A whimsical pictorial ode to the City of Light.

This black-and-white iconic alphabet book is sophisticated enough to intrigue and captivate readers of any age. A contemporary interpretation of an illuminated alphabet melds animals and letters into 26 unique and elegant graphic images. Caldecott Honor Book.

Spanish and English words blend perfectly in this original and spooky Halloween poem. ¡Delicioso!

An absent-minded zoo keeper places the Hippo sign in front of the rhino’s enclosure. Ignorant visitors mistake the rhino for a hippo even though the youngest reader can plainly see the truth, and say, “No, rhino!”

Oh joy of joys! There is yummy bread to be made, but who will help the little red hen?

Spare line drawings and minimal text show a personified bunny playing with, in, and on a cardboard box. Beginning readers will delight in discovering the rabbit’s unlimited imaginative play in this square, brown book. Geisel Honor Book.

A delightfully interactive concept book presents children with pairs of opposites in die-cuts that lead them from one element to another in a parade of happy contradictions.

Shannon humorously portrays the daily antics of Fergus, a West Highland terrier, who gets into all kinds of trouble, but is always a “good boy.”

An endearing, fuzzy monster creates an appetizing tart made of hundreds and thousands of succulent flies. The irreverent, tongue-twisting verse is paired with squiggly black-and-white line drawings accented in bright lime green.

Scaredy Squirrel’s safe life in his nut tree is insured by his emergency kit, which includes antibacterial soap, bug spray, and sardines (in case of sharks). When he loses the kit while evading a killer bee, something amazing happens.

“Stepping, stomping, marching, tromping. Watch out, wooly mammoths!” The rhyming text sings as the dramatic scratchboard-and-watercolor paintings portray the migratory journey of these fascinating prehistoric creatures.
From his difficult childhood through the creation of bebop, the jazz great Dizzy Gillespie’s life is told in syncopated rhythms in this swinging picture-book biography.

**Middle Readers**

Bardoe’s picture-book biography of the father of genetics describes his early life, his quest for education, and the research that resulted in his significant contribution to the world of science.

Barrows, Annie. *Ivy and Bean*. Illus. by Sophie Blackall. Chronicle. (0-8118-4903-1).
Bean knows she won’t like the new girl (“Next train for Boring is leaving now!”), but when Bean gets into trouble, Ivy is the one who comes to her rescue.

When her mother leaves home, Rachel learns to communicate with and to love her father, while adjusting to disturbing truths about her mother's past. A free-verse novel about loss and reconciliation.

This richly illustrated biography illuminates the life of the eleventh-century Chinese poet, scholar, and statesman.

A self-important china rabbit finds himself on a journey that spans years and miles, bringing special people into his life and changing him forever.

A wordless picture book in graphic-novel format depicts the fantastic voyage of a dapper dog above and below the water, then across the ocean floor.

Have you ever thought about where that chocolate-chip cookie came from? As Grandma bakes her cookies, Cat and Dog learn about each ingredient, from butter to chips.

When Owen, a baby hippo, loses his mother in the 2004 tsunami, he bonds with Mzee, a giant Tortoise.

Derived from one of the first recorded stories on earth, this tale of Ancient Iraq introduces Lugalbanda and his heroic deeds to assist the kingdom of Uruk during a war.

Three friends have wonderful adventures, explore their world, and learn more about themselves in this tale. Illustrations by Caldecott Medal-winner Paul O. Zelinsky add to the story’s charm.

American families from many different cultures and backgrounds share their love, laughter, and challenges.

Two poisons chemically combine to make salt—a substance necessary for all mammals to survive. Kurlansky tells the story in lucid text, decorated with whimsical illustrations.

During the Year of the Dog, Chinese-American Grace makes new friends, learns more about her family, and finds her place in the world.

In this second Ruby Lu book, a new cousin’s emigration from China brings changes—some good and some challenging—into second-grader Ruby Lu’s life.

“A boy can take off his shirt to swim, but not his shorts.” Twelve-year-old Catherine creates rules for her younger, autistic brother, David in an attempt to normalize his life and her own. But what is normal? Lord’s heroine learns to use words to forge connections with David, her workaholic father, and a paraplegic friend. *Newbery Honor Book and a Schneider Family Book Award Winner.*

Marrin takes us on an icky, scary, and fascinating exploration of the life of rats, and considers why we are so afraid of them.

This is the radio broadcast that sent listeners into a panic. This dramatic picture book introduces young children to a fascinating piece of history. The art is reminiscent of the comics of the 1930s.

Biologist Lisa Dabek and her multinational team search for the beautiful, elusive Matschie’s tree kangaroo in the cloud forests of Papua New Guinea. Dramatic color photographs vividly portray their quest through the mysteriously foggy forest. *Sibert Honor Book.*

Stunning paintings and thrillingly musical poems bring jazz to life for young readers. *King Illustrator Honor Book.*

In the California desert community of Hard Pan (population 43), 10-year-old Lucky Trimble eavesdrops on 12-step program meetings from her hiding place behind Hard Pan’s Found Object Wind Chime Museum & Visitor Center. Eccentric characters and quirky details spice up Lucky’s life just as parsley embellishes her guardian Brigitte’s French cuisine. *Newbery Medal Book.*
Pennypacker, Sara. **Clementine**. Illus. by Marla Frazee. Hyperion. (0-7868-3882-5).
Perceptive text and animated line drawings bring to life third-grader Clementine, who is not an easy child. Despite good intentions, things often go wrong for her; she pays attention, but not to the things that grownups think are important.

Photographer Cindy Sherman asks, "How much of your real self can be captured in a painting, or even in a photograph? And what exactly is a self-portrait anyway?" Raczka analyzes 14 self-portraits by well-known artists from the fifteenth to the twentieth century.

Rubin, Susan Goldman and Weissberger, Ela. **The Cat with the Yellow Star: Coming of Age in Terezin**. illus. Holiday. (0-8234-1831-6).
Rubin and Weissberger (who portrayed the cat in the original production of *Brundibar* in the Terezin Ghetto) describe the hope offered imprisoned children by caring adults and the theater they created.

This collection of more than 70 poems about girls celebrates their yearnings, challenges, and triumphs.

Sidman, Joyce. **Butterfly Eyes and Other Secrets of the Meadow**. Illus. by Beth Krommes. Houghton. (0-618-56313-X).
Readers are challenged to guess the answers to pairs of lyrical, thematically-connected riddles in verse about meadow phenomena, plants, and animals.

Siegel dramatizes the struggle and fulfillment of becoming a professional ballerina—lifting the curtain on a dream shared by many young dancers. Partnered by husband Mark Siegel's evocative, elegant illustrations in graphic-novel format, her memoir leaps off the page. **Sibert Honor Book**.

Singh, Vandana. **Younguncle Comes to Town**. Illus. by B.M. Kamath. Viking. (0-670-06051-8).
When the eternally childlike Younguncle breezes into the life of one Indian family, he brings with him stories, a touch of magic, and a zest for life that makes for an utterly refreshing read.

Thimmesh, Catherine. **Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon**. illus. Houghton. (0-618-50757-4).
With heart-stopping prose and stunning NASA photographs, Thimmesh's book celebrates the men and women who solved a series of unfolding crises that threatened the mission of Apollo 11. Personal interviews and oral histories recreate the immediacy of the event for a new generation. **Sibert Medal Book and a YALSA Best Book for Young Adults**.

A Choctaw angel leads seven slaves to freedom by walking on Bok Chitto, a river in Mississippi, which was a boundary between freedom and slavery before the Civil War.

Nelson's dramatic renderings evoke the spiritual and physical journey of Harriet Tubman. Emotionally powerful images combined with poetically evocative text portray a strong woman who
followed her star to an extraordinary destiny. **Caldecott Honor Book and King Illustrator Book Winner.**

**Older Readers**

In fourteenth-century England, Crispin and his friend Bear face danger as they flee from their enemies to the coast in order to find freedom and safety.

The 1961 Freedom Rides come to life through the unflinching personal stories of two men united for a common cause. The dynamic book design includes civil rights song lyrics, firsthand accounts, and provocative black-and-white photographs layered with lavender-and-gray panels. Exemplary documentation and end notes further illuminate the journey. **Sibert Honor Book and a YALSA Best Book for Young Adults.**

After his parents are murdered by itinerant criminal Angel, young Paolo and the killer haltingly discover their capacity for love and forgiveness. The two tempt fate when they accept a stranger into their lives and then venture beyond their bleak homestead on the southern tip of Chile. **Batchelder Honor Book and a YALSA Best Book for Young Adults.**

In the wake of 9/11, with their father detained at the Canadian border, Nadira and her sister navigate tense circumstances as they seek their father's release. **YALSA Best Book for Young Adults.**

By competing in the contest herself, Princess Meg foils her father's plans to marry her to the prince who destroys a dragon, a witch, and a group of bandits.

The transformative powers of art and soccer receive due appreciation in this very funny tale of how one small Welsh town is brought to life when the National Gallery moves into the mountain next door.

With the help of two bewildered but kindly humans and, later, a feisty orphan, a young elf and irascible dragon, attempt to fulfill a prophecy that tests their courage and resilience. The tale offers adventure, romance, and a wonderfully realized magical world. **Batchelder Honor Book.**

While spending the summer on an island in British Columbia with his grandmother and five girl cousins, Kip finds a lively family and a disturbing secret about his father.

Harry Houdini's journey from poverty to world renown is dramatically captured by a fine writer and fellow magician. **YALSA Best Book for Young Adults.**

In a well-documented biography, the Fradins trace Jane Addams’ life from her awkward childhood to her accomplishments as social activist, pacifist, and winner of the 1931 Nobel Peace Prize.

This gorgeously illustrated volume leads readers from thirteenth-century Venice to the Far East and back, asking them to consider this question: Was Marco Polo the world’s greatest explorer or the world’s biggest liar?

The story of the civil rights movement’s landmark victory is told through the eyes of the people who were there. *YALSA Best Book for Young Adults*.

Eleven-year-old Penny looks forward to spending the summer rooting for the Brooklyn Dodgers and scheming with her cousin Frankie. Instead, she navigates the space between her two families and uncovers the reason for their estrangement in this funny, touching tale of intergenerational love, set in 1953. *Newbery Honor Book*.

The voices of Slaves, sharecroppers, and millworkers trace the threads of cotton from the Industrial Revolution through the Great Depression. *YALSA Best Book for Young Adults*.

This entry in the Giants of Science series offers readers an engaging and elucidating account of the great physicist’s life and works.

The fascinating life, career, revolutionary ideas, and far-ranging influence of the Austrian father of psychoanalysis are explored in this volume in the Giants of Science series.

Sixteen-year-old orphan Hattie Brooks is looking for a place to belong—a home. In 1918, she leaves Iowa for the Montana prairie, where she strives to forge a new life. Told in first-person narrative and distinguished by vivid imagery and careful attention to historical detail, this memorable novel portrays her struggle to prove her claim. *Newbery Honor Book and a YALSA Best Book for Young Adults*.

In this story of abuse, love, and patience, Littlest One and Thin Elderly, both dream givers, come into the lives of three people and work their transformative magic.

Lupica, Mike. *Heat*. Philomel. (0-399-24301-1).
A refugee from Cuba, 12-year-old Michael Arroyo is a pitching prodigy whose right to play Little League baseball is challenged by a hostile coach.

This contemporary version of the Tom Thumb story follows charismatic Yann, the youngest and smallest of seven brothers, as he silently leads his siblings across the rain-soaked French countryside. Their harrowing flight from abusive parents is described through the boys’ recollections and the distinctive voices of those who witness or abet their journey. *Batchelder Award Book*.
A man who was born a slave and survived in the wilderness of the American West becomes one of the most successful lawmen of his time, a real hero.

In alternating voices, students in an urban middle school tell of their triumphant construction of the world's largest tetrahedron and the way the project changed their lives.

Thirteen-year-old Tiffany Aching didn't mean to make the Wintersmith fall in love with her—it just happened. But now Winter holds the world in his frozen fist, all for the love of Tiffany. What's an apprentice witch to do? *YALSA Best Book for Young Adults*.

A rip-snorting Victorian science fiction adventure pulls out all the stops as Art and his big sister, Myrtle, strive to save the British Empire and its planetary territories from a race of sinister, space-going white spiders.

This free-verse novel recounts the life of four-year-old Syvia and her family, who are forced to live in the Lodz Ghetto during the Nazi occupation of Poland.

A strikingly designed biography explores the development of the Pop artist whose paintings of mundane objects had a radical impact on our thinking about art.

One year after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, 13-year-old Tomi Nakaji is determined to raise his father's fishing boat, which was sunk by the army in the wake of the attack. A sequel to *Under the Blood-Red Sun*.

Dive into this how-to guide for creating and appreciating the zine alternative art-form.

Enriched by historical quotes, photographs, and drawings by battle warriors, this book offers an insightful examination of the bloody battles at Little Bighorn in 1876.

Grace Forcier and her family withstand the living and working conditions in a Vermont textile mill town in the early 1900s. When Lewis Hine and his camera come to visit, she dares to hope for a better life.

All Ages
Campoy, F. Isabel and Ada, Alma Flor. *Tales Our Abuelitas Told: A Hispanic Folktale Collection*. Illus. by Felipe Dávalos and others. Simon & Schuster/Atheneum. (0-689-82583-8). This glorious—and gloriously illustrated—collection presents a grand variety of tales of many different origins, united in their telling by Spanish-speaking peoples and by the appreciation of the compilers.

Harris, Robie H. *It's Not the Stork!: A Book about Girls, Boys, Babies, Bodies, Families, and Friends*. Illus. by Michael Emberley. Candlewick. (0-7636-0047-4). If it's not the stork, where do babies come from? Share this book with children as young as four to answer their questions about their bodies, their families, and how babies grow.


Wiesner, David. *Flotsam*. illus. Clarion. (0-618-19457-6). A vintage camera washed up on the beach provides a young boy with a surprising view of fantastical images from the bottom of the sea. From fish eye to lens eye, readers see a frame-by-frame narrative of lush marinescapes ebbing and flowing from the real to the surreal. *Caldecott Medal Book*.

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