The
All-of-a-Kind Family
Companion

Prepared by
The Association of Jewish Libraries
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The *All-of-a-Kind Family Companion* was produced by the Association of Jewish Libraries in celebration of the one hundredth birthday of author Sydney Taylor, born October 30, 1904.

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All-of-a-Kind Family:
What is the book about?

Summary:
Meet the All-of-a-Kind Family — Ella, Henny, Sarah, Charlotte, and Gertie — who live with their parents in New York City at the turn of the century. Together they share adventures that find them searching for hidden buttons while dusting Mama’s front parlor and visiting with the peddlers in Papa’s shop on rainy days. The girls enjoy doing everything together, especially when it involves holidays and surprises. All-of-a-Kind Family (1951) is the first book of a series. Other books in the series include More All-of-a-Kind Family (1954), All-of-a-Kind Family Uptown (1957), All-of-a-Kind Family Downtown (1972), and Ella of All-of-a-Kind Family (1978).

Amazon.com says:
There’s something to be said for a book that makes you wish you’d been part of a poor immigrant family living in New York’s upper east side on the eve of World War I. Sydney Taylor’s time-honored classic does just that. Life is rich for the five mischievous girls in the family. They find adventure in visiting the library, going to market with Mama, even dusting the front room. Young readers who have never shared a bedroom with four siblings, with no television in sight, will vicariously experience the simple, old-fashioned pleasures of talk, make-believe, and pilfered penny candy. The family’s Jewish faith strengthens their ties to each other, while providing still more excitement and opportunity for mischief. Readers unfamiliar with Judaism will learn with the girls during each beautifully depicted holiday. This lively family, subject of four more “all-of-a-kind” books, is full of unique characters, all deftly illustrated by Helen John. Taylor based the stories on her own childhood family, and the true-life quality of her writing gives this classic its page-turning appeal. (Ages 9 to 12)

“Memorable.” —The New York Times


“A captivating picture of Jewish family life and religious observances....Entertaining and heartwarming…”
—May Hill Arbuthnot, Children and Books

“Warmly related from the author’s own childhood memories…” —Chicago Sunday Tribune

“I consider the All-of-a-Kind Family books to be among the best…” —Linda Sue Park, author of the Newbery winning historical novel ‘A Single Shard’
Why is

*All-of-a-Kind Family*

an important book?

By Heidi Estrin, Chair
Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee
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The year 2004 marks the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sydney Taylor, the author of the *All-of-a-Kind Family* books. The year 2004 also marks the 350th anniversary of the settlement of Jews in America. As we look back over the years, we can see that *All-of-a-Kind Family* was a very important book in the history of American Jewish children’s publishing. It was the first book with Jewish characters to be read and loved by all kinds of children. It gave non-Jewish readers a glimpse of Jewish life. It helped Jews feel accepted in American culture.

Professor June Cummins, Sydney Taylor’s biographer, says that *All-of-a-Kind Family* inaugurated the genre of Jewish children’s literature. Before *All-of-a-Kind Family*, Jewish children’s books tended to be written for Jewish audiences. Taylor’s books reach past those ethnic boundaries with a universal family story and characters everyone can care about. Today, all readers enjoy multicultural literature about Jews, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanics, and other peoples. Sydney Taylor helped break down barriers so that all ethnic groups could have a voice in children’s literature.

The *All-of-a-Kind Family* books are also enjoyable literature. For over fifty years, readers have loved the adventures and the closeness of the family in the stories. Dr. Hasia Diner, in her book *Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America*, says:

*All-of-a-Kind Family* was the first book I ever read with Jewish characters, Americans, with whom I could identify. The minute I pulled the book off the shelf and looked at the cover, I knew instinctively that the family in the book was Jewish and that its pages contained stories that would affect me deeply. I am not sure how I knew this, but I distinctly remember the pleasure of that moment of recognition and the hours of delight (since I read it over and over again) that it, and the other volumes in the series, brought. While it would be too much of a leap to say it changed my life, finding this book did give me a sense of validation and a rush of belonging that I never experienced again as a reader.

In the first chapter of the book, the girls in the family, Jewish children in immigrant New York, go to the library – on Friday afternoon – on their weekly foray for books. Here I was reading a book that I found in the public library on a Friday afternoon in which the main characters, a family of little girls, did exactly what I did: get their library books on Friday afternoon, light Sabbath candles, eat kugel, celebrate Passover, speak English to their Yiddish-speaking parents, argue with each other, get in trouble, get out of trouble, and so on. Despite the fact that the book was set in a city I had never seen and that the actions took place a half century earlier than the years of my growing up, I felt an instantaneous bond with these girls and their neighborhood. I could not think of anywhere I wanted to visit more than New York, and I expected that the Lower East Side would look and sound just like it did when Henny, Ella, Gertie, Sarah, and Charlotte ran down the steps of the library, rushing home before the Sabbath began.

Sydney Taylor’s work has been so important to American children’s literature that the Association of Jewish Libraries named both its children’s book award and its manuscript award for unpublished books in her memory. Since the awards were established, over fifty books have received medals for providing a positive and authentic picture of Jewish life, just as Sydney Taylor did in *All-of-a-Kind Family*. We hope that you will enjoy learning more about Sydney Taylor, and about the first book in the *All-of-a-Kind Family* series, published by Follett in 1951.
The Setting: the Lower East Side

By Dr. Hasia Diner, Professor of American Jewish History, New York University

Sydney Taylor grew up on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, New York. This neighborhood played an important place in American history and in American Jewish history. In the decades before and after 1900—when All-of-a-Kind-Family takes place, it was the largest Jewish neighborhood in America. In fact, it was the largest Jewish neighborhood in the world.

Not only did hundreds of thousands of Jews live there, they created much of American Jewish culture there. On the Lower East Side, Jewish immigrants published Yiddish newspapers, books, and magazines. They staged Yiddish plays. They produced and performed Jewish music. They built Jewish schools and hospitals. They established labor unions to make sure that employers paid their workers a decent wage, and even created Socialist political groups that that said that great differences between the rich and the poor should not exist. Even Jews who lived in other parts of America read the newspapers and magazines that came from the Lower East Side.

All of this made the Lower East Side a very exciting place, one where people took ideas very seriously. What and where was the Lower East Side? Why did it buzz with so much cultural creativity and political work?

The Lower East Side lay in the southern part of New York City, on the island of Manhattan. It fell roughly below Houston Street on the north and Fulton and Franklin Streets to the south. The East River, served as its eastern boundary and on the west, Broadway and Pearl Streets.

It had a history as a neighborhood long before Sydney Taylor lived there as a young girl and before the characters of All-of-a-Kind-of-Family had their adventures there. Even before the American Revolution, the neighborhood—which was not called the Lower East Side at the time—was a home for free black farmers and a number of wealthy white farmers. One of them, James de Lancey, who supported the British during the Revolution and had his land taken away, left his name—Delancey Street—as one of the most important streets of the neighborhood. After the Revolution many small merchants and shopkeepers lived in this area and in 1833 many Irish and German immigrants moved there. Of the German immigrants, a sizable number were Jewish. The first synagogues, kosher butcher shops, and other kinds of Jewish shops on the Lower East Side were built in the 1840’s.

The immigrants of the Lower East Side lived in tenements, a very distinctive New York kind of building. The first one went up in 1833. Each tenement apartment building had four stories with four apartments on a floor. They did not have indoor running water or indoor plumbing. They were usually crowded, dark, and dirty.

From the 1870’s to the 1920’s, huge numbers of immigrants came to America fleeing poverty, hunger, and oppression. Many came from eastern Europe, from Russia, Poland, Rumania, and Hungary. During that time, about three million Jews came to America. Most spoke Yiddish, although some of them came from Greece, Turkey and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. These Jews spoke Ladino.
Of that huge wave of Jewish immigrants, a majority landed in New York and stayed there. In fact, until 1910 almost all Jewish immigrants made the Lower East Side their first American home. Why did they flock to New York in such great numbers? New York had emerged as the heart of America’s garment industry. Here, women’s clothing—dresses, blouses, shirt-waists, coats—were sewn to be sold all over the country and the world. Many Jews had been tailors or seamstresses before moving to America, and came with sewing skills and experience. So New York proved to be the perfect place to live and work. Also, garment making was an industry where it was easy to achieve some kind of success, to move from being a worker to owning a shop of one’s own.

As these immigrants wrote back home to Europe about their jobs and their earnings, other European Jews came to America as well to join friends and relatives on the Lower East Side. They opened stores of all kinds and sizes to serve the Jewish population. Many stood on street corners and sold from pushcarts. Orchard and Grand Streets in particular saw dozens of pushcart vendors selling food and clothing. Others merchants put packs on their backs or sat behind a horse on a wagon and sold from the streets. As they went about they shouted out their wares. Yet others had actual stores. They sold food stuffs, clothing, paper, hardware, hats, books, basically anything that the growing immigrant Jewish population needed and wanted. Some of them collected discarded items—junk—and resold it to people who could not afford new items.

Soon, the Lower East Side was a “city within a city.” It had its schools, libraries, playgrounds, theaters, work places, synagogues, and parks. It was a crowded neighborhood. People used every inch of space and could be found everywhere, on the streets, on the stoops of the tenements and in the hallways. In the hot weather they spent time on the roofs of their apartment buildings. Sometimes they slept out of doors on the fire escapes. Children played amidst the pushcarts and on the sidewalks. A reporter named Jacob Riis claimed that the Lower East Side was “the most densely populated district in all the world.”

All of the activity on the streets brought people into close touch with each other. They knew each other’s business. They gossiped about each other and shared information of all sorts. Each person’s problems became everyone else’s as well. The crowding made for a great deal of excitement and tumult. Children always had others to play with. They never fretted over being lonely.

The crowding had a down side as well. Certain diseases ran rampant, tuberculosis in particular. Because people lived so close together when someone got sick, everyone worried about the spread of germs and the outbreak of epidemics. People complained about the smell, the noise, and the lack of privacy. Many of the immigrant Jews saved their money and moved out to better and less crowded neighborhoods.

Sydney Taylor and her sisters and brothers grew up on the Lower East Side. As an adult, Sydney remembered the crowding, the intensity, the different kinds of people, and the ways immigrant Jewish parents and their American-born children created a very distinctive culture that flourished for a few decades and then faded. But the bustle and excitement of the Lower East Side at the beginning of the twentieth century can be experienced again whenever a reader opens the pages of All-of-a-Kind Family.
Who was Sydney Taylor?

By June Cummins, Associate Professor, Department of English and Comparative Literature, San Diego State University

The Family
At the turn of the last century, the Brenner family emigrated to the United States, as so many Jewish families did. Four years after they arrived, their third daughter, Sarah Brenner, was born on October 30, 1904. Later, Sarah changed her name to Sydney, but her four sisters, Ella, Henrietta, Charlotte, and Gertrude, kept their first names, and Sydney immortalized these names by giving them to their character counterparts in her All-of-a-Kind Family books. Three brothers were subsequently born. As of 2004, only the youngest brother, Jerry survives.

As a grown woman, Sydney remembered the early days of her family’s life on the Lower East Side. Although they were poor, like most Jewish immigrants, they had many happy times. Just like the girls in the books, Sydney and her sisters were “five little girls [who] shared one bedroom—and never minded bedtime. Snuggled in our beds we would talk and giggle and plan tomorrow’s fun and mischief.” (Something About The Author)

The Story
When Sydney had her own child, Jo, she told her stories of her childhood on the Lower East Side. Sydney felt Jo was lonely as an only child and wanted to share her past with her. “When Jo was little . . . I would sit beside her bed at night and try to make up for the lack of a big family by telling her about my own. Jo loved the stories about how papa and mama worked and how the five little girls helped out. She was delighted with the tales of our good times together and the enjoyment of simple pleasures. She loved the stories so much that I decided to write them all down especially for her. The manuscript went into a big box and stayed there.” (More Books by More People)

The Book
One summer when Sydney was away working as the drama counselor at Camp Cejwin, her husband Ralph decided to submit the manuscript to a contest sponsored by Follett. Sydney had no idea of his action until she received a letter in the mail. “No one was more surprised than I when I received a letter from Mrs. Meeks, the Children’s Book Editor of Wilcox & Follett, telling me she wanted to publish All-of-a-Kind Family. I didn’t know what she was talking about. I told my husband and the whole story came out. Then Mr. Follett telephoned me to say that All-of-a-Kind Family had won the Follett [Award].” (Something About The Author)

The Series
After the success of the first All-of-a-Kind Family book, Sydney went on to write four more for the series (More All-of-a-Kind Family, All-of-a-Kind Family Uptown, All-of-a-Kind Family Downtown, and Ella of All-of-a-Kind Family), as well as several other books for children. She toured schools and libraries all over the country, talking to children about her work. She also continued to work at Camp Cejwin and was there for over thirty years.

The Legacy
Sydney died of cancer on February 12, 1978. Although some of her books are over fifty years old, they are still beloved by many—both old and young (and in between)—today. The All-of-a-Kind Family books were re-released in paperback just a few years ago and continue to sell well. Linking up her past with her daughter’s present, Sydney made the Lower East Side at the turn of the last century come vividly alive for thousands of readers.
Discussion Questions on *All-of-a-Kind Family*

1. If you could be any character in *All-of-a-Kind Family*, who would you most like to be? Why? Who would you least like to be? Why?

2. Why was reading so important to the sisters? Do you feel the same way about reading? Why or why not?

3. Although the stories take place in the 1910’s, does anything happen to the girls in *All-of-A-Kind-Family* which is similar to something in your life today? Describe what that is.

4. How is the *All of a Kind Family* like your own family? How is the family different?

5. Think of a holiday mentioned in the story. How is it the same as or different from the way your family celebrates this holiday?

6. What is your favorite holiday as described in the book? Why?

7. The sisters in the book must help their mother with the housework. What chores do you do to help your family? How are your chores different from those in the story?

8. What is there in your own life that would be shocking or surprising or exciting to the children in this book?

9. What did children do for fun in this book? If you went back in time to visit the characters, what would you miss from your own time?

10. The Hebrew word “mitzvot” means commandments or good deeds. Can you find examples of characters performing “mitzvot” in this book? The Hebrew word “middot” refers to good character traits. What “middot” do you think the characters in the story possess?
Extension Activities for *All-of-a-Kind Family*

1. Hide-and-Seek Buttons
   In one of the chapters, Mama hides a dozen buttons around the room. If the girls dust well they will find all twelve buttons and Mama will know they have done a good job. Hide buttons around the room and let children find them, with or without dusting!

2. Fun & Games
   Have children research the games that children used to play at the turn of the twentieth century. Ask each child to choose a game and show the others in the group how to play it.

3. Succah Arts & Crafts
   Decorate a succah like the one the family built and decorated in *All-of-a-Kind Family*, with fruits, paper chains, flowers, etc. If you cannot decorate a real succah, make a miniature one from a shoebox, or draw a picture of the family’s succah as you imagine it from your reading.

4. Oral History
   *All of a Kind Family* is based on Sydney Taylor’s own memories of her childhood. Ask children what special memories they have of family times together. Have them ask an adult in their own family about special memories of family times together when he or she was young.

5. Costumes
   The family in the story cannot afford to buy costumes for Purim; so they create costumes out of their own clothing, or by borrowing other people’s clothes. Ask children to get creative and find a way to make costumes out of ordinary clothing or household objects. Wear the costumes for Purim, for a costume party, or just for a fun dress-up day.

6. Music
   Ask children to find a song that children or adults listened to in the early part of the twentieth century. Ask them to play the song on a musical instrument, or from a CD, and teach it to the other children.
7. Immigration

Show some pictures from a book about life in the “old country,” such as *Suitcase of Dreams: Immigration Stories from the Skirball Cultural Center* by Shelly Kale, or *Golden Land: The Story of Jewish Migrations to America* by Joseph Telushkin, or find pictures of shtetl life on the Internet, such as Shtetl at http://library.thinkquest.org/C004509/shtetl.htm. Look together at the pictures for clues about shtetl life. Then discuss questions such as: What would motivate people to leave their homes to travel to a new country? Can you think of any group of people today, including Jews, who have left their homes for a new country? What were their reasons for leaving? Where would we go if we had to leave our country? What are your reasons for the country you chose? Where would Jewish people go if there were no Israel?

8. Home Sweet Home

Show pictures of tenement homes from a source such as *Tenement: Immigrant Life on the Lower East Side* by Raymond Bial, or the Tenement Museum web site at www.tenement.org, to give children an idea of what the homes were like on the Lower East Side where the sisters are growing up in the story. Ask the children to compare the rooms where the family lived with their own homes, with questions such as “Do you have your own bedroom, or do you share with a sister or brother? Describe a room in your home.” As a follow-up activity, readers could draw a floor plan with furniture on graph paper, create a diorama of a room, or make a plasticine model of a room from their own homes or from the home in the story.

9. Movie Time

Show the video *Dreams in the Golden Country*, based on the *Dear America* book by Kathryn Lasky (the video is available for purchase through Scholastic at www.scholastic.com - click on The Scholastic Store). The story is about a Jewish immigrant family in New York in 1903, the challenges facing the family as they adjust to life in America, and the crisis they face when one of the daughters wants to marry an Irish boy. The movie provides the opportunity to discuss the challenges and compromises faced by immigrants during that time in history, many of which are still relevant today. Ask children to compare and contrast the characters’ experiences in *All of a Kind Family* to those in the movie.

10. Jewish Life Then & Now

*All-of-A-Kind Family* gives readers a sense of what Jewish life was like in the early twentieth century on the Lower East Side in New York. What was Jewish life like at that time in the place where you live? Have children conduct research at a local synagogue library, academic library, or community archives to find out about local history, buildings, clothing, food, customs, etc. You can also contact your local Jewish Historical Society to find out about the history of the Jewish community in your area (Go to www.ajhs.org and click on “Academic Activities” and then “Other Historical Societies” to get contact information for the organization in your area). Many large cities offer local Jewish history tours that you can take. If you live close to New York, visit Ellis Island, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, the Eldridge Street Synagogue, or the Center for Jewish History. You can also arrange for a walking tour of the Jewish Lower East Side or of Immigrant New York through Big Onion Walking Tours (www.bigonion.com).
By June Cummins, Associate Professor, Department of English and Comparative Literature, San Diego State University

The book *All-of-a-Kind Family* was based on Sydney Taylor’s real family. “Sarah” in the book was Sydney in real life. Here is what happened to the children of *All-of-a-Kind Family* when they grew up.

### Ella

Ella was born in 1900 in Germany, and came to America with her family as a baby. When she grew up, she married Joseph Kornweitz. She had two children, Leonard and June. After her first husband died, she remarried Albert Schoolman in the late 1980’s. Ella was involved with Camp Cejwin, a Jewish summer camp, for many years, writing music and creating costumes for plays put on by the campers. Just like in the books, Ella was very musical and always loved to sing.

### Henny

Henrietta (Henny) was born in 1902 in New York. She married Morris Fried (who changed his last name to Roberts) and had a daughter, Harriet, in 1925. She later married another man, Harry Davis. Henny ran the kitchen at Camp Cejwin, a Jewish summer camp. She was a voracious reader her whole life long. Her daughter says, “Henny was very pretty and attractive and loved to dance and was active and vivacious.” She always took care of other people, including Ralph Taylor after Sydney died.

### Sarah

Sarah was born in 1904 in New York. When she was in high school, she changed her name to “Sydney.” She married Ralph Taylor in 1925, and had one daughter, Joanne, born in 1935. She was a dancer with the Martha Graham Dance Company, and she worked at Camp Cejwin, a Jewish summer camp, writing, directing, and choreographing plays for the campers. In addition to the *All-of-a-Kind Family* books, she wrote other children’s books such as *Mr. Barney’s Beard, The Dog Who Came to Dinner,* and *Danny Loves a Holiday.* She died in 1978.

### Charlotte

Charlotte was born in 1907 in New York. She married Lou Himber and had one daughter, Susan, born in 1944. Charlotte became a writer and editor for the *New York Times Magazine* and the YMCA *Circulator,* as well as the author of a book called *Famous In Their Twenties.* She lost much of her hearing, and at age 83 wrote a book for the deaf entitled *How to Survive Hearing Loss.* She died in 1997.

### Gertie

Gertrude (Gertie) was born in 1908 in New York. She married Murray Shiner and had one daughter, Judy, born in 1945. Gertie often wrote witty letters to companies to complain about their products, and would sometimes receive answers from the companies. She once wrote to Jergens to tell them that their oblong bottles of hand lotion always fell over. She told them “You should make their bottoms round like ours, so they can stay seated!” The company sent her a whole box of lotions, and Gertie thought it was quite funny that many of the bottles fell over and broke in the mail. Gertie died in 1993.

### “Charlie”

Irving was born in 1912. In *All-of-a-Kind Family* he was called “Charlie.” He grew up to marry Ethel, and had two sons, Michael and Joel. He worked in the junk business (like his father). Irving was an expert Scrabble-player. He died in 1999.

### Jerry

Jerry was born in 1919. Readers learn of him in *Ella of All-of-a-Kind Family* when Mama tells Ella she’s pregnant. Jerry married Norma and had a daughter named Laurie, and a son named Charlie. Jerry was in the freight transportation business until he retired. Jerry is still living, and recently donated “The Brenner Collection” to the Library of Congress. This is a collection of 1,261 letters exchanged between Jerry and Norma while he served as a soldier in World War II. You can see part of The Brenner Collection online at [www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/homefront-corrrespond.html](http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/homefront-corrrespond.html).
Read-Alikes
“If you liked All-of-a-Kind Family, you’ll also like...”

Two Cents and a Milk Bottle by Lee Chai’ah Batteman
In 1937, twelve-year-old Leely and her financially struggling Jewish family move one more time into yet another New York neighborhood where they begin a new life.

Brooklyn Doesn’t Rhyme by Joan Blos
At the request of her sixth grade teacher, Edwina Rose Sachs records events in the lives of her Polish immigrant family and their friends living in Brooklyn in the early 1900s.

Avram’s Gift by Margie Blumberg
On Rosh Hashanah, Mark views a photo of his great-great-grandfather in a very different light.

Gooseberries to Oranges by Barbara Cohen
A young girl reminisces about the journey from her cholera-ravaged village in Eastern Europe to the United States where she is reunited with her father.

Molly’s Pilgrim by Barbara Cohen
Told to make a Pilgrim doll for the Thanksgiving display at school, Molly is embarrassed when her mother tries to help her out by creating a doll dressed as she herself was dressed before leaving Russia to seek religious freedom.

Immigrant Girl: Becky of Eldridge Street by Brett Harvey
Becky, whose family has emigrated from Russia to avoid being persecuted as Jews, finds growing up in New York City in 1910 a vivid and exciting experience.

Letters from Rifka by Karen Hesse
In letters to her cousin, a young Jewish girl chronicles her family’s flight from Russia in 1919 and her own experiences when she must be left in Belgium for a while when the others emigrate to America.

Love You, Soldier by Amy Hest
Katie, a Jewish girl living in New York City during World War II, sees many dynamic changes in her world as she ages from seven to ten waiting for her father to return from the war. Sequels include The Private Notebook of Katie Roberts, Age 11 and The Great Green Notebook of Katie Roberts Who Just Turned 12 on Monday.

When Jessie Came Across the Sea by Amy Hest
A thirteen-year-old Jewish orphan reluctantly leaves her grandmother and immigrates to New York City, where she works for three years sewing lace and earning money to bring Grandmother to the United States, too.
Dear Hope...Love Grandma by Hilda Abramson Hurwitz
Letters between a grandmother and granddaughter describe Jewish life in St. Louis at the beginning of the 20th century.

The Rabbi's Girls by Johanna Hurwitz
Moving to a new town, the birth of a sister, and the death of her rabbi father make 1923 a bittersweet year for eleven-year-old Carrie Levin.

Faraway Summer by Johanna Hurwitz
In the summer of 1910, Dossi, a poor Russian immigrant from the tenements of New York, spends two weeks with the Meade family on their Vermont farm, and all their lives are enriched by the experience. A sequel is entitled Dear Emma.

Dreams in the Golden Country: The Diary of Zipporah Feldman, A Jewish Immigrant Girl by Kathryn Lasky
Twelve-year-old Zippy, a Jewish immigrant from Russia, keeps a diary account of the first eighteen months of her family's life on the Lower East Side of New York City in 1903-1904.

The Store that Mama Built by Robert Lehrman
In 1917 twelve-year-old Birdie and her siblings, the children of Jewish immigrants from Russia, help their recently widowed mother run the family store, picking up where their father left off in his struggle to succeed in America.

My Name is Not Gussie by Mikki Machlin
A young girl describes the difficulties and joys that she and her family experience when they come from Russia to settle in New York City in the early twentieth century. Based on stories from the author's mother.

Gotch! Rosie in New York City by Carol Matas
When Mama falls ill and Papa invests all the family's money in a new business, eleven-year-old Rosie Lepidus must go to work in a garment factory and soon gets involved in union activities. Sequels include Play Ball: Rosie in Chicago and Action! Rosie in Los Angeles.

Hannah's Journal by Marissa Moss
In the Russian shtetl where she and her family live, Hannah is given a diary for her tenth birthday, and in it she records the dramatic story of her journey to America.

Strudel Stories by Joanne Rocklin
Seven generations of a Jewish family hear stories of their family history, all told while making apple strudel.

The Rose Horse by Deborah Lee Rose
When Lila goes to Coney Island to visit her newborn sister, she learns about the art and traditions of the Jewish woodcarvers who make the carousel animals there.

The Other Side of the Hudson: A Jewish Immigrant Adventure by Kenneth Roseman
As a young Jewish immigrant from Bavaria in the mid-nineteenth century, the reader makes decisions that mirror the choices made by new Jewish Americans as they settled in the United States.

Journey to the Golden Land by Richard Rosenblum
Having left oppressive czarist Russia in search of better living conditions, Benjamin and his family endure the difficult journey and land at Ellis Island to start a new life in America.

Escaping to America: A True Story by Rosalyn Schanzer
Tells how the author's family left difficult conditions in Poland to make a better life for themselves in America early in the twentieth century.

Welcome to the Grand View, Hannah! by Mindy Warshaw Skolsky
Living in rural New York State during the 1930's, Hannah begins to see her parents and herself in a different light as they settle into their new apartment behind the Grand View Restaurant. Sequels include You're the Best, Hannah! and Love From Your Friend, Hannah.

Just Call Me Joe by Frieda Wishinsky
A touching look at life in 1910 New York City through the eyes of a 10-year-old who has just emigrated from Russia.

The Memory Coat: An Ellis Island Story by Elvira Woodruff
In the early 1900s, two cousins leave their Russian shtetl with the rest of their family to come to America, hopeful that they will all pass the dreaded inspection at Ellis Island.
The Sydney Taylor Book Award

The Sydney Taylor Book Award was established in memory of Sydney by her husband Ralph. Each year, a committee of librarians from the Association of Jewish Libraries reads approximately one hundred new books, looking for the best Jewish children’s books of the year. They pick one winner for Younger Readers and one winner for Older Readers. Runners-up receive Honor medals. The authors and illustrators of the winning books are asked to come to the Association’s annual convention to give acceptance speeches and receive their awards. This list shows the winning titles for every year since the award was established through 2003. The first book listed under each year is the Younger Readers winner, and the second is the Older Readers winner.

2003
Bagels From Benny by Aubrey Davis, ill. by Dusan Petricic
Who Was the Woman Who Wore the Hat? by Nancy Patz

2002
Chicken Soup by Heart by Esther Hershennorn, ill. by Rosanne Litziinger
Hana’s Suitcase by Karen Levine

2001
Rivka’s First Thanksgiving by Elsa Okon Rael, ill. by Maryann Kovalski
Sigmund Freud: Pioneer of the Mind by Catherine Reef

2000
Gershon’s Monster by Eric A. Kimmel, illustrated by Jon J. Muth
The Key is Lost by Ida Vos, translated by Therese Edelstein

1999
The Peddler’s Gift by Maxine Rose Schur, ill. by Kimberly Bulcken Root
Speed of Light by Sybil Rosen

1998
Nine Spoons by Marci Stilerman, illustrated by Pesach Gerber
Stones in Water by Donna Jo Napoli

1997
When Zaydeh Danced on Eldridge Street by Elsa Okon Rael, ill. by Marjorie Priceman
The Mysterious Visitor: Stories of the Prophet Elijah by Nina Jaffe, ill. by Elivia Savadier

1996
Shalom, Haver: Goodbye, Friend by Barbara Sofer
When I Left My Village by Maxine Rose Schur, ill. by Brian Pinkney

1995
Star of Fear, Star of Hope by Jo Hoestlandt, ill. by Johanna Kang
Dancing on the Bridge of Avignon by Ida Vos, translated by Terese Edelstein & Inez Smidt

1994
The Always Prayer Shawl by Sheldon Oberman, ill. by Ted Lewis
The Shadow Children by Steven Schnur, ill. by Herbert Tauss

1993
The Uninvited Guest by Nina Jaffe, ill. by Elivia Savadier
Sworn Enemies by Carol Matas

1992
Something from Nothing by Phoebe Gilman, author and illustrator
Letters from Rifka by Karen Hesse

1991
Cakes and Miracles: A Purim Tale by Barbara Diamond Goldin, ill. by Eric Weis, co-winner with
Daddy’s Chair by Sandy Lanton, ill. by Shelly O. Haas
Diamond Tree, The: Jewish Tales from Around the World by Howard Schwartz and Barbara Rush, ill. by Uri Shulevitz

1990
The Chanukah Guest by Eric Kimmel, ill. by Giora Cammi
My Grandmother’s Stories by Adele Geras, ill. by Jael Jordan

1989
Berchick by Esther Silverstein Blanc, ill. by Tennessee Dixon
Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

1988
The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco, author and illustrator
The Devil’s Arithmetic by Jane Yolen

1987
The Number on My Grandfather’s Arm by David Adler, photos by Rose Eichenbaum
The Return by Sonia Levitin

1986
Joseph Who Loved the Sabbath by Marilyn Hirsh, ill. by Devis Grebu
Beyond the High White Wall by Nancy Pitt

1985
Brothers by Florence B. Freedman, ill. by Robert Andrew Parker
Ike and Mama and the Seven Surprises by Carol Snyder

1984
Mrs. Moskowitz and the Sabbath Candles by Amy Schwartz, author and illustrator
The Island on Bird Street by Uri Orlev

1983
Bubby, Me, and Memories by Barbara Pomerantz, photos by Leon Lurie
In the Mouth of the Wolf by Rose Zarin
The Sydney Taylor Manuscript Award

Since 1985, the Association of Jewish Libraries has given an award each year to the best manuscript of an unpublished Jewish children’s book. Sydney Taylor was unknown as an author when she won Follett’s manuscript competition with *All-of-a-Kind Family*, but she went on to become famous. The librarians who judge the manuscripts each year hope that these authors will someday be famous too.

2004 Brenda A. Ferber for *Cara’s Kitchen*
2002 Karen Schwabach for *A Pickpocket’s Tale*
1999 June E. Nislick for *Zayda Was a Cowboy*
1998 Linda Press Wulfe for *Deborah*
1997 Tovah S. Yavin for *All Star Brothers;* Honorable Mention to Vera Propp for *When the Soldiers Were Gone* (published by G.P. Putnam’s Sons in 1999)
1996 Donna Brawn Agins for *Passover Promise*
1991 Lois Raismans for *Leaving Egypt;* Honorable Mention to David Meir-Levi for *Garden of the Gentle Giant*
1990 Hanna Bandes for *Rabbi Aaron’s Treasure* (published by Targum/Feldheim in 1993 under new title); Honorable Mention to Aviva Cantor for *Tamar’s Cat;* Second Prize to Dr. Kirby Rogers for *Operation Dewey* (published by Luthers Publishing in 2002)
1988 Suzi Wizowaty for *Borders*
1987 Frances Weiisengberg for *The Streets Are Paved With Gold* (published by Harbinger House in 1990)
1986 Elaine Soloeway for *Cubs of the Lion of Judah*
1985 Rosalie Fleisher for *Spirit*
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