ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LIBRARIES

NOTABLE CHILDREN'S BOOKS OF JEWISH CONTENT: THE BEST OF THE BUNCH FROM 2002

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This annual list contains outstanding books chosen from those submitted to and evaluated by the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee of the Association of Jewish Libraries. The committee recommends them for library, home, and classroom use. The 2002 committee members are: Libby K. White, Chair, Beth Israel Congregation, Owings Mills, MD; Susan Berman, Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, Baltimore, MD; Kathleen Clotfelter, Donna Klein Jewish Academy, Boca Raton, FL; Andrea Davidson, The Temple-Tifereth Israel, Beachwood, OH; Heidi Estrin, Congregation B'nai Israel, Boca Raton, FL; and Fred Isaac, Temple Sinai, Oakland, CA. Richard Fechter, Cleveland, OH, is the administrative assistant. More information about the Sydney Taylor Book Awards can be found at www.jewishlibraries.org.

2002 SYDNEY TAYLOR AWARD WINNER FOR YOUNGER READERS

Hershenhorn, Esther. **CHICKEN SOUP BY HEART.** Illus. by Rosanne Litzinger. NY: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2002. 32p. $16.95. ISBN: 0689826656. Picture book for Preschool - Grade 2.

When his sitter, Mrs. Gittel, "the Chicken Soup Queen," gets the flu, a "nice boychik" named Rudie Dinkins concocts for her, with his mama's help, the delicious soup that she makes to cure him of everything from a chest cold to a stomach ache. Knowing that Mrs. Gittel's culinary secret is to spice the soup with stories, Rudie recalls several from their times together, like when they played accountant and counted "chin hairs and liver spots and beauty marks and freckles" and the time he shuffled cards for her because her fingers hurt, prompting her to tell him "They should bottle you like medicine!" The Yiddish-flavored style in which this charming story of an inter-generational friendship is told sounds as though Mrs. Gittel herself is telling it. Winsome illustrations, rendered in gouache, watercolor, and pencil, reflect the humor and affection of the story.

2002 SYDNEY TAYLOR AWARD WINNER FOR OLDER READERS

Levine, Karen. **HANA'S SUITCASE: A TRUE STORY.** Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Second Story Press, 2002. $9.95. ISBN: 189676455X Pbk. Nonfiction for Grades 5 – 8.

This true story unites decency across time, space, and nationality to honor the memory of a Jewish girl who died at the age of thirteen in the Holocaust After the Nazis arrested their parents, Hana Brady and her older brother, George, were sent to Terezin and then to Auschwitz. Hana perished, but her suitcase became the centerpiece of the collection of a small Holocaust museum in Tokyo. Museum director Fumiko Ishioka was determined to learn and to document Hana's story. Her correspondence, visits to museums, travel to Holocaust sites, and other intrepid research led to the discovery of art work created by Hana in Terezin under the tutlelage of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis and to a meeting with Hana's brother, who had survived the Holocaust and was living in Canada. Encountering this heartbreaking yet hopeful story in a time of rising religious intolerance, readers are reminded by the author that "history matters...despite the most unspeakable evil, good people and good deeds can make a difference."

HONOR BOOKS FOR YOUNGER READERS

Pinkney, Jerry. **NOAH'S ARK.** NY: SeaStar/North-South Books, 2002. 32p. $15.95. ISBN: 587172011. Bible story for Grades 1 – 4.

The biblical flood story is told on an epic scale in this gorgeously illustrated version that closely follows the biblical text. Many of the visual images have a monumental quality, suggesting the story's archetypal significance.

Rouss, Sylvia. **SAMMY SPIDER'S FIRST TRIP TO ISRAEL**: **A BOOK ABOUT THE FIVE SENSES**. Illus. by Katherine Janus Kahn. Minneapolis, MN: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2002. 32p. $7.95. ISBN: 1580130356 Pbk. Concept picture book for Preschool – Grade 1.

When the ever-inquisitive Sammy stows away on the Shapiro family's trip to Israel, he uses his sight, smell, touch, hearing, and taste to sample the remarkable country.

Zalben Jane Breskin. **PEARL'S PASSOVER: A FAMILY CELEBRATION THROUGH STORIES, RECIPES, CRAFTS, AND SONGS.** NY: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2002. 48p. $16.00. ISBN: 0689814879. Holiday story and activity book for Preschool – Grade 2.

A family of sheep romps through Passover in this collection of stories, recipes, crafts, songs, and games that focuses on the origins of the festival and its observance at the Seder.

NOTABLE BOOKS FOR YOUNGER READERS

Goldin, Barbara Diamond. **NIGHT LIGHTS: A SUKKOT STORY.** Illus. by Laura Sucher. NY: UAHC Press, 2002. $12.95. Unpaged. ISBN: 0807408034. Holiday picture book for Preschool – Grade 2.

A little boy is scared to sleep outdoors in a sukkah but with his older sister for companionship, he comes to see the stars in the sky as night lights. The new illustrations for a story first published in 1995 are gentle and comforting.

Greene, Rhonda Gowler. **THE BEAUTIFUL WORLD THAT GOD MADE.** Illus. by Anne Wilson. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2002. 32p. $16.00. ISBN: 0802852130. Bible story for Preschool – Grade 2.

A free rendering of the Creation story is given by a short, rhyming verse that builds in cumulative detail. Adding drama to the narrative are outstanding ink and collage illustrations.

Howland, Naomi. **MATZAH MAN.** NY: Clarion/Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 32p. $15.00. ISBN: 061811750. Holiday picture book for Preschool – Grade 2.

"Hot from the oven I jumped and ran, so clever and quick, I'm the Matzah Man!" Sprightly illustrations show all of the action in this Passover version of "The Gingerbread Boy."

Kropf, Latifa Berry. **IT'S CHALLAH TIME!** Photographs by Tod Rosen. Minneapolis, MN: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2002. Unpaged. $10.95. ISBN: 1500130364 Pbk. Picture book for Preschool.

Color photographs of adorable children in a real Jewish preschool are engaging companions to a simple text that captures the fun of making challah in preparation for Shabbat.

Kuskin, Karla. **THE ANIMALS AND THE ARK.** Illus. by Michael Grejniec. NY: Atheneum, 2002. 32p. $16.95. ISBN: 0689830955. Bible story for Preschool – Grade 2.

A poem based on the Bible story of Noah's Ark, published originally in 1957, is enhanced with splashy, rollicking illustrations, a creative book design, and a typeface called "Kentucky Fried."

Newman, Leslea. **RUNAWAY DREIDEL.** Illus. by Kyrsten Brooker. NY: Henry Holt, 2002. 32p. $17.95. ISBN: 0805062378. Holiday picture book for Preschool – Grade 2.

"Twas the first night of Chanukah and on the fifth floor, there was holiday hustling and bustling galore" begins this engaging tale of a dreidel that leads a little boy, his family, and neighbors on a merry chase.

Vorst, Rochel Groner. **THE SUKKAH THAT I BUILT.** Illus. by Elizabeth Victor-Elsby. NY: Hachai, 2002. 24p. $9.95. ISBN: 1929628072. Holiday picture book for Preschool – Grade 1.

A read-aloud story modeled on the classic nursery rhyme, "The House That Jack Built." As a little boy smugly relates how he is doing all the building of the sukkah, his bemused family looks on.

Wilson, Anne. **NOAH'S ARK**. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2002. 32p. $17.95. ISBN: 0811835634. Bible story for Preschool – Grade 1.

Written in a spare style and illustrated with flat, bright colors and simple lines, this faithful retelling of the biblical account of the flood celebrates obedience to God and the beauty of the world God made.

HONOR BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS

Bunting, Eve. **ONE CANDLE**. Illus. by K. Wendy Popp. NY: Joanna Cotler Books/HarperCollins, 2002. 32p. $15.99. ISBN: 0060281154. Holiday/Holocaust Fiction for Grades 4 – 6.

Stunning illustrations grace this story about "being strong in the bad times and remembering in the good times."

Hautzig, Esther. **A PICTURE OF GRANDMOTHER**. Illus. by Beth Peck. NY: Frances Foster/ Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002. 82p. $15.00. ISBN: 0374359202. Historical Fiction for Grades 4-7.

Set in pre-war Vilna and seen through the eyes of a child named Sara, this portrays a cultivated Jewish family who were part of a thriving community on the eve of unthinkable disaster.

Rogasky, Barbara. **SMOKE AND ASHES: THE STORY OF THE HOLOCAUST**, Revised and Expanded. NY: Holiday House, 2002. 256p. $27.50. ISBN: 08234161277 Nonfiction for Grades 7 – 10.

This new edition of a prize-winning 1998 work expands the treatment of many Holocaust-related topics and discusses the forms that bigotry has taken in our own times.

NOTABLE BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS

Burstein, Chaya. **THE KID'S CARTOON BIBLE.** Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2002. 129p. $17.95. ISBN: 0827607296 Pbk. Bible stories for Grades 4 – 7.

In a rousing rendition of the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings, the dialogue is colloquial and the cartoon illustrations are often inspired.

Chaikin, Miriam. **ALEXANDRA'S SCROLL: THE STORY OF THE FIRST HANUKKAH**. Illus. by Stephen Fieser. NY: Henry Holt, 2002. 115p. $18.95. ISBN: 0805063846. Historical Fiction for Grades 4 - 7.

A young female scribe records the political, social, and religious complexities of the Maccabean world in this believable portrait of a Judean family at war.

Chaikin, Miriam. **ANGELS SWEEP THE DESERT FLOOR: BIBLE LEGENDS ABOUT MOSES IN THE WILDERNESS.** Illus. by Alexander Koshkin. NY: Clarion/Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 112p. $19.00. ISBN: 0395978254. Bible stories for Grades 5 –8.

A companion to the author's *Clouds of Glory* (2001), these stories draw on biblical text and Midrash to tell how Moses and the liberated Israelites were guided by angels.

Cheng, Andrea. **MARIKA.** Ashville, NC: Front Street, 2002. 163p. $16.95. ISBN: 1886910782. Holocaust Fiction for Grades 4 to 7.

A fifteen-year-old Hungarian girl, nominally Roman Catholic but with Jewish ancestry, seeks an identity and a way out after the Germans march into Budapest.

Cooper, Ilene. **JEWISH HOLIDAYS ALL YEAR ROUND: A FAMILY TREASURY**. Illus. by Elivia Savadier. In Association with the Jewish Museum of New York. NY: Harry N. Abrams, 2002. 80p. $18.95. ISBN: 0810905507. Holiday collection for all ages.

The history and message of each Jewish holiday are combined with stories, legends, photographs of objects from the Jewish Museum, and delightful original illustrations

Finkelstein, Norman H. **FORGED IN FREEDOM: SHAPING THE JEWISH-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE.** Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society., 2002. 204p. $27.50. ISBN: 08276074827. Nonfiction for Grades 6 – 10.

From the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam to the nomination of a Jew for Vice President, Finkelstein surveys trends and highlights events and personalities that shaped Jewish American history, especially in the 20th century.

Gellman, Rabbi Marc. **AND GOD CRIED, TOO: A KID'S BOOK ABOUT HEALING AND HOPE.** Illus. by Harry Bliss. NY: Harper Trophy/HarperCollins, 2002. 111p. $5.99. ISBN: 0060098864 Pbk. Nonfiction for Grades 3-6.

Through a fictional dialogue between Mikey, an angel-in-training, and the chief angel, Gabe, the author gives readers honest yet hopeful answers to questions about injustice and evil. Inspired by the attacks of 9/11.

Giblin, James C. **THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER**. NY: Clarion/Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 246p. $21.00. ISBN: 0395903718. Biography for Grades 7 - 10.

This outstanding biography of the 20th century's greatest monster includes information about his legacy of hatred, carried on by neo-Nazis and skinheads.

Lawton, Clive A. **AUSCHWITZ: THE STORY OF A NAZI DEATH CAMP.** Cambridge. MA: Candlewick Press, 2002. 48p. $17.99. ISBN: 07636115951. Nonfiction for Grades 8 – 10.

The author traces the history of Auschwitz from construction to liberation and comments on its post-war legacy in this visually powerful presentation.

Lee, Carol Ann. **ANNE FRANK'S STORY: HER LIFE RETOLD FOR CHILDREN.** Mahwah, NJ: Troll Communications, 2002. 105p. $4.95. ISBN: 0816774277 Pbk. Biography for Grades 3-5.

The important events in Anne Frank's brief life and the essence of her personality are conveyed to readers of this accessible biography.

Matas, Carol. **SPARKS FLY UPWARD.** NY: Clarion/Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 181p. $15.00. ISBN: 061859649. Historical Fiction for Grades 5 – 8.

A Jewish immigrant girl in Winnipeg, Canada is sent to a foster home after the family farm burns down. Learning to stand up for herself and to make her own decisions doesn't come easy but Rebecca is a plucky heroine.

Michelson, Richard. **TOO YOUNG FOR YIDDISH.** Illus. by Neil Waldman. Watertown, MA: Talewinds/Charlesbridge , 2002. 32p. $15.95. ISBN: 0881061182. Picture book for Grades 3 – 5.

Inspired by the work of Aaron Lansky, founder of the National Yiddish Book Center, this is the story of a boy who learns to love Yiddish from his grandfather, who has almost given up on it.

Roseman, Kenneth. **JEREMIAH'S PROMISE: AN ADVENTURE IN MODERN ISRAEL**. NY: UAHC Press, 2002. 205p. $8.95. ISBN: 0807407879 Pbk. Fiction for Grades 5 –8.

Readers are presented with choices…and consequences. Signing on here means learning a great deal about Israel, kibbutz life, archaeology, the religious divide, the role of women, diplomacy, and military exploits.

Schwartz, Howard. **INVISIBLE KINGDOMS: JEWISH TALES OF ANGELS, SPIRITS, AND DEMONS**. Illus. by Stephen Fieser. NY: HarperCollins, 2002. 68p. $16.99 ISBN: 0060278552. Folktales for Grades 3 – 8.

Folktales like these have been part of the Jewish oral tradition since biblical times. These tales are simply told but they treat profound human issues from an unaccustomed perspective.

Vogiel, Eva. **FACING THE MUSIC**. Brooklyn, NY: Judaica Press, 2002. 290p. $19.95. ISBN: 1880582945. Fiction for Grade 5 –8.

In Vogiel's third novel set in an Orthodox girls' school in England in the late 1940's, a caring faculty helps a student adjust to the discovery that she has a twin sister.

Waldman, Neil. **THE PROMISED LAND: THE BIRTH OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE.** Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press. 2002. 41p. $21.95. ISBN: 1563973324. Nonfiction for Grades 6 – 9.

Why have Jews survived? The author presents his views, based on God's promise of Israel to the Jewish people. Evocative illustrations and an unusual book design add interest.

Watts, Irene N. **FINDING SOPHIE: A SEARCH FOR BELONGING IN POSTWAR BRITAIN**. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Tundra Books, 2002. 136p. $6.95. ISBN: 0887766137 Pbk. Historical Fiction for Grades 5 – 8.

Following *Good-bye Marianne* (1999) and *Remember Me* (2000), this riveting novel, set in London, completes the author's "Kindertransport Trilogy."