

THE ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LIBRARIES NOTABLE BOOKS OF JEWISH CONTENT FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS 2008

These outstanding books were selected from among the over one hundred thirty titles evaluated by the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee of the Association of Jewish Libraries during 2007. The Committee recommends them for library, classroom, and home use. Visit www.SydneyTaylorBookAward.org for more information about the Sydney Taylor Book Awards.

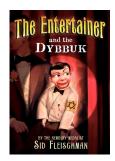
THE SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARD WINNER FOR YOUNGER READERS:



Gershman, Sarah. *The Bedtime Sh'ma: A Good Night Book*. Illustrations by Kristina Swarner. Oakland, California: EKS Publishing, 2007. 40 p. \$24.95. ISBN: 0-939144-55-7. CD included.

With accessible language, this book helps young children understand the meaning of the Sh'ma prayers. The stunning artwork matches the mood of the text, and the words of the prayer in Hebrew, English, and transliteration are beautifully integrated into double spread illustrations. A CD with the prayers set to music is also included. (Preschool-Grade 2)

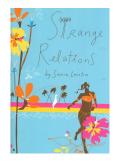
THE SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARD WINNER FOR OLDER READERS:



Fleischman, Sid. *The Entertainer and the Dybbuk*. New York: Greenwillow Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2007. 180 p. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-06-134445-9.

When the spirit of a 12-year old Jewish boy, murdered by the Nazis, possesses the body of an American GI traveling through Europe as a second-rate ventriloquist, the pair is able to unmask the Nazi responsible for the boy's death. (Grades 6-8)

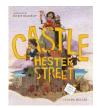
THE SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARD WINNER FOR TEEN READERS:



Levitin, Sonia. *Strange Relations*. New York: Knopf, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2007. 298 p. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-0-375-63751-7.

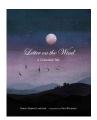
Fifteen-year-old Marne decides to spend the summer with her Aunt Carole in Hawaii. But, Aunt Carole is now Aunt Chaya who is married to a Chabad Rabbi with seven children. What Marne anticipates will be a relaxing summer of jogging on the beach, surfing, sun tanning, and shopping turns out to be a summer of exploration, spirituality, and growth. (Grades 8-10)

SYDNEY TAYLOR HONOR AWARD WINNERS FOR YOUNGER READERS:



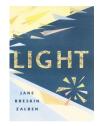
Heller, Linda. *The Castle on Hester Street*. Illustrated by Boris Kulikov. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2007. \$15.99. 40 p. ISBN: 978-0-689-87434-5.

A young girl visiting her grandparents learns the story of their immigration to the United States, their life on the Lower East Side of New York City, and how they met in this 25th anniversary edition of a beloved classic. (Kindergarten-Grade 2)



Lamstein, Sarah Marwil. *Letter on the Wind: A Chanukah Tale*. Illustrated by Neil Waldman. Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Boyds Mills Press, 2007. 32 p. \$16.95. ISBN: 978-1-932425-74-1.

When his village suffers a drought leaving no olive oil for the Chanukah menorahs, Hayim, a poor and humble man, writes a letter to the Almighty to request enough oil for the entire village. (Grades 1-4)



Zalben, Jane Breskin. *Light*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers Group, 2007. 40 p. \$17.99. ISBN: 978-0-525-47827-0.

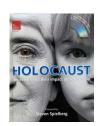
The concepts of *tikkun olam* and making the world a better place are explained simply yet lyrically in this picture book inspired by the writings of Rabbi Isaac Luria, a 16th century Kabbalist. (Grades 1-4)

SYDNEY TAYLOR HONOR AWARD WINNERS FOR OLDER READERS:



Taylor, Peter Lane with Christos Nicola. *The Secret of Priest's Grotto: A Holocaust Survival Story*. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007. 64 p. \$18.95. ISBN: 1-58013-260-X.

The amazing story of how a group of thirty-eight Jews managed to survive during World War II in the underground caves of the Western Ukraine is told with captivating narratives and descriptions, sharp full-color photographs, and an attractive layout design. (Grades 5-8)



Wood, Angela Gluck. *Holocaust: The Events and Their Impact on Real People*. New York: DK Publishing in association with USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education, 2007. 192 p. \$29.99. ISBN: 978-0-7566-2535-1.

This highly visual history spans from the origins of the Jews, Jewish life in Europe, and the history of anti-Semitism to World War II, concentration camps, stolen property, Nazi trials, and present-day memorials. The book is supplemented by a DVD of personal testimonies from the archive of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education. (Grades 6-12)





Pressler, Mirjam. *Let Sleeping Dogs Lie.* Translated by Erik J. Macki. Asheville, North Carolina: Front Street/Boyds Mills Press, 2007. 207 p. \$16.95. ISBN: 978-1-932425-84-0.

Johanna Riemenschneider takes a class trip from Germany to Israel, where she discovers that her own family's wealth is based on the business they stole from Jewish neighbors during the Third Reich. She struggles with issues of justice, secrets, and guilt before adjusting to her new reality and confronting her family. Originally published in German. (Grades 9-12)

NOTABLE BOOKS FOR YOUNGER READERS:

Abraham, Michelle Shapiro. *My Cousin Tamar Lives in Israel*. Illustrated by Ann D. Koffsky. New York: URJ Press, 2007. \$6.95. 16 p. ISBN: 0-8074-0989-8.

A young North American boy compares his observances of the Jewish holidays to those of his cousin Tamar who lives in Israel. (Preschool-Grade 3)

Baker, Sharon Reiss. *A Nickel, a Trolley, a Treasure House*. Ilustrated by Beth Peck. New York: Viking Children's Books, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers Group, 2007. 32 p. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-670-05982-9.

Young Lionel loves to draw, a hobby not much appreciated by his immigrant parents. When his teacher sees his drawings, she arranges to take him, by trolley, to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (Grades 1-4)

Benjamin-Farren, Joan. *Shuli and Me: From Slavery to Freedom*. Sharon, Massachusetts: Black Jasmine, 2007. 109 p. \$19.95. ISBN: 0-9788802-0-X.

Accompanied by the text for counting the Omer in Hebrew and English, a young girl narrates what happens to the Children of Israel from their first Passover until the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. (Kindergarten-Grade 3)

Cohen, Deborah Bodin. *Papa Jethro*. Illustrations by Jane Dippold. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007. 32 pages. \$17.95. ISBN: 978-1-58013-250-3.

A young girl asks her grandfather why she goes to synagogue and he goes to church. He explains that she is Jewish and he is Christian, and retells the biblical story of Jethro, the Midianite father-in-law of Moses. (Kindergarten-Grade 3)

Da Costa, Deborah. *Hanukkah Moon*. Illustrated by Gosia Mosz. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007. \$17.95 32 p. ISBN: 978-1-58013-244-2.

Isobel spends the first three nights of Hanukkah with her Aunt Luisa who has just emigrated from Mexico. She learns how to take pictures with her new camera, creates a bird scrapbook, bakes dreidel-shaped cookies while singing "I have a little dreidel" in English and in Spanish, and observes Rosh Hodesh, the celebration of the new moon. (Kindergarten-Grade 3)

- Heiligman, Deborah. *Celebrate Passover with Matzah, Maror, and Memories* (Holidays Around the World). Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2007. 31 p. \$15.95. ISBN: 978-1-4263-0018-9.
- ----- Celebrate Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur with Honey, Prayers, and the Shofar (Holidays Around the World). Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2007. 31 p. \$15.95. ISBN: 978-1-4263-0076-9.

Full-color photographs and an attractive layout combine with an informative text to create a wonderful introduction to the Jewish holidays of Passover, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The photographs include contemporary Jews in the United States, Peru, Portugal, Morocco, Ukraine, Thailand, Israel, Zimbabwe, Yemen, Uganda, and China. (Grades 1-4)

Horowitz, Dave. *Five Little Gefiltes*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers Group, 2007. \$12.99. 32 p. ISBN: 978-0-399-24608-1.

Instead of ducklings, it's five little gefilte fish balls wearing black bowler hats who daily wander away from their worried mother as they set out to see the sights of New York. (Preschool-Grade 3)

NOTABLE BOOKS FOR YOUNGER READERS: (continued)

Hyde, Heidi Smith. *Mendel's Accordion*. Illustrated by Johanna Van Der Sterre. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007. 32 p. \$16.95. ISBN: 1-58013-212-X

Mendel plays the accordion in his small village but when things become difficult for the Jews of Eastern Europe, Mendel takes his accordion to America. When his great-grandson discovers the old accordion in the attic, he repairs it and pledges to learn to play. (Kindergarten-Grade 4)

Jules, Jacqueline. *Abraham's Search for God*. Illustrated by Natascia Ugliano. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007. 32 p. \$17.95. ISBN: 978-58013-243-5.

Based on *midrashim*, this is the story of how Abraham came to believe in only one God when everyone around him worshipped idols. (Kindergarten-Grade 3)

Meltzer, Amy. *A Mezuzah on the Door*. Illustrations by Janice Fried. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007. \$17.95. 32 p. ISBN: 978-1-58013-249-7.

When Noah's family moves from an apartment in the city to a house in the suburbs, his family plans a *Hanukkat Habayit* party to put up the *mezuzot* and celebrate their new home. (Kindergarten-Grade 3)

Topek, Susan Remick. *Ten Good Rules: A Counting Book*. Photographs by Tod Cohen. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007. 24 p. \$15.95. ISBN: 0-8225-293-1.

With the same simple, child-friendly text as the original 1991 edition, this new version features full-color photographs of contemporary children illustrating the Ten Commandments. (Preschool-Grade 2)

NOTABLE BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS:

Grimberg, Tina. *Out of Line: Growing Up Soviet.* Toronto: Tundra Books, 2007. 128 p. \$22.95. ISBN: 978-088776-803-3.

Tina Grimberg's memoir of growing up in the Soviet Union in the 1960's and 1970's provides the detailed descriptions of family, school, and home that bring history to life. (Grades 6-9)

Kimmel, Eric A. A Picture for Marc. Illustrated by Matthew Trueman. New York: Random House Children's Books, 2007. 101 p. \$11.99. ISBN: 978-0-375-83253-6.

Very loosely based on the life of Marc Chagall, this highly fictionalized, light-hearted biography focuses on the beginning of the artist's experience with drawing. (Grades 3-5)

Kramer, Ann. *Anne Frank: The Young Writer Who Told the World Her Story* (World History Biographies). Washington, D. C.: National Geographic, 2007. 64 p. \$17.95. ISBN: 978-1-4263-0004-2.

Presented in simple language and enhanced by a wealth of photos, maps, timelines, and information boxes, this well-designed book nicely combines the Frank family's experiences with events in Europe before and during the war. (Grades 5-8)

Leeds, Constance. *The Silver Cup.* New York: Viking Children's Books, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers Group, 2007. 214 p. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-670-06157-0.

The Crusades, as well as the superstitions and bleakness of Germany in 1096, are the backdrop for the story of Anna, a young girl who befriends Leah, the lone Jewish survivor of the massacre of the Worms ghetto. (Grades 5-8)

NOTABLE BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS: (continued)

Lehman-Wilzig, Tami. *Passover Around the World*. Illustrated by Elizabeth Wolf. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007. 48 p. \$15.95. ISBN: 1-58013-213-8.

The customs and observances of Passover are described in this colorful book that includes stories, recipes, and a brief history and description of the Jewish communities of the United States, Gibraltar, Turkey, Ethiopia, India, Israel, Iran, and Morocco. (Grades 3-6)

Matas, Carol. *The Whirlwind*. Victoria, Canada: Orca Book Publishers, 2007. \$8.95. 128 p. ISBN: 978-1-55143-703-3.

Fifteen year old Ben immigrates to Seattle in 1942 with his family. He quickly befriends John, a Japanese-American classmate, as both boys endure taunting from their peers because of their origins. (Grades 5-8)

O'Connell Rebecca. *Penina Levine Is a Hard-Boiled Egg*. Illustrated by Majella Lue Sue. New Milford, Connecticut: Roaring Brook Press, 2007. \$16.95. 164 p. ISBN: 978-1-59643-140-9.

Penina Levine is one of only two Jewish children in her sixth grade class. When her teacher gives the class an assignment – writing a letter as the Easter Bunny – Penina balks. Is she standing up for a meaningful principle, or is it okay to willingly participate in someone else's culture? (Grades 3-5)

Yavin, T.S. *All-Star Season*. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2007. 160 p. \$15.95. ISBN: 978-58013-211-4.

Brothers Reuven and Avi are the best pitcher and catcher duo in the league. But, when only one player from each team makes the All-Stars, which brother will be selected? (Grades 4-6)

NOTABLE BOOKS FOR TEENS:

Elkeles, Simone. *How to Ruin My Teenage Life*. Woodbury, Minnesota: Flux, 2007. 281 p. \$8.95. ISBN: 0-7387-1019-8.

Continuing her adventures from *How to Ruin a Summer Vacation*, Amy Nelson-Barak is now living with her Israeli father in Chicago, and spending her senior year at the Chicago Academy, while she waits for the summer so she can return to Israel to see her family and her "non-boyfriend" Avi again. (Grades 9-12)

Rabb, Margo. *Cures for Heartbreak*. New York: Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2007. 256 p. \$15.99. ISBN: 978-0-385-73402-8.

Mia Pearlman's mother dies just days after being diagnosed with melanoma, leaving Mia, her older sister Alex, and her father bereft. Mia and Alex's lives become further complicated when their father has a heart attack only months later. A poignant and insightful study of grief and life in one Jewish family. (Grades 9-12)

DeSaix, Deborah Durland and Ruelle, Karen Gray. *Hidden on the Mountain: Stories of Children Sheltered from the Nazis in Le Chambon*. New York: Holiday House, 2007. 275 p. \$24.95. ISBN: 978-0-8234-1928-9.

A small, Protestant town in the plateau region of South Central France became an example of faith and courage during World War II when the citizens sheltered thousands of refugees, most of them Jewish, and protected them from the Nazis. (Grades 6-10)

Wolfman, Marv. *Homeland: The Illustrated History of the State of Israel*. Illustrated by Mario Ruiz. Skokie, Illinois: Nachshon Press, 2007. 124 p. \$34.95. ISBN: 978-0-9771507-1-7.

This over-sized graphic non-fiction volume begins with Biblical Israel, proceeds through Jewish history, the creation of the modern state of Israel, the wars, the Intifada, Arab terrorism, efforts toward peace, and includes the broad contemporary accomplishments of Israelis in various fields. (Grades 8-12)

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The Secret of Priest's Grotto: A Holocaust Survival Story by Peter Lane Taylor & Christos Nicola.

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