

UKLA BOOK AWARDS

The United Kingdom Literacy Association is very proud of its annual Book Awards, now in their fourteenth year. Ours is the only children's book awards judged entirely by teachers, who sign up as teacher judges from a different UK location each year. **At a time when other organisations are withdrawing support for children's book awards, the UKLA is determined to celebrate the vital role that newly published and contemporary work can have in the education and development of children and young people.**

Our judging criteria ensure that the teacher judges, working in small book groups led by experienced book group leaders, select from the very best of recently published children's books. The awards cover fiction, poetry, picture books and information books in age ranges from 3 to 14+. The introduction of an Information Books category in 2019 has opened up a wealth of creative non-fiction from a diverse range of voices and perspectives, which emanates from the writer's passion about a subject rather than an obvious curriculum objective.

"The award is given every year for books in which the language is powerful. Language can be used in many ways when telling a story, giving information or even when adding meaning to picture books. Sometimes it is the effect of the use of language which remains with us well after we have read the story or book. This award seeks specifically to honour those writers whose use of language engages the young reader in just such a way. Language can be funny, expressive, descriptive, serious, explanatory, stark, telegraphic, observational but most of all it should be powerful. It must have an effect on the child reader and be memorable in some way because of the way it is used. The current award seeks to recognise the use of language in a fiction, non-fiction or picture book from those books nominated by a wide and inclusive range of publishers of children's books."

The awards celebrate the work of authors, illustrators, translators and publishers, ensuring that every year the shortlisted books are representative of the children and young people who read them and of the world in which they are growing up. Our teacher judges have the opportunity, over a school year, to read and share the longlisted books with their school communities, to discuss and debate the books with their colleagues and their book groups, to engage in professional development and to choose the shortlists in each of the four categories which have the capacity to engage, excite and delight their readers. They are chosen because they have impact in the classroom and on individual readers.

At the end of the school year, when the final panel of teacher judges have chosen the winners and made presentations to the winning authors and illustrators, our judges reflect on the process as the best professional development in their role as "teachers who read and readers who teach" which they have experienced. It takes a great deal of work to organise a children's book award, but the UKLA believes that every moment of this is worthwhile.

C Lockwood

Chris Lockwood, Chair, UKLA Book Awards

Promoting knowledge and understanding about all forms of literacy learning and teaching

Room 9, VAL, 9 Newarke Street, Leicester, LE1 5SN

Tel: 07933 724030 . Email: admin@ukla.org . Web: www.ukla.org . Registered Charity: 1190848