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319 S. Naperville Road Wheaton, IL 60187 www.questionsgalore.net
Phone: (630) 580-5735 E-Mail: info@questionsgalore.net Fax: (630) 653-8666

STUDY GUIDE:
NEWBERRY MEDAL WINNERS

INTRODUCTION

The John Newbery Award is presented each year to the author of the most outstanding children's literature book that was published during the previous year. The award was established in 1921 by Frederic Melcher, and named for John Newbery, an English publisher and bookseller. The award was first presented in 1922. Here is a complete list of the authors who have won this award and the books for which they were honored.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Author</u>
1922	<i>The Story of Mankind</i>	Hendrik Willem Van Loon
1923	<i>The Voyages of Doctor Doolittle</i>	Hugh Lofting
1924	<i>The Dark Frigate</i>	Charles Hawes
1925	<i>Tales from Silver Lands</i>	Charles Finger
1926	<i>Shen of the Sea</i>	Arthur Bowie Chrisman
1927	<i>Smoky, the Cowhorse</i>	Will James
1928	<i>Gay Neck, the Story of a Pigeon</i>	Dhan Gopal Mukerji
1929	<i>The Trumpeter of Krakow</i>	Eric P. Kelly
1930	<i>Hitty, Her First Hundred Years</i>	Rachel Field
1931	<i>The Cat Who Went to Heaven</i>	Elizabeth Coatsworth

1932	<i>Waterless Mountain</i>	Laura Adams Armer
1933	<i>Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze</i>	Elizabeth Lewis
1934	<i>Invincible Louisa: The Story of the Author of Little Women</i>	Cornelia Meigs
1935	<i>Dobry</i>	Monica Shannon
1936	<i>Caddie Woodlawn</i>	Carol Ryrie Brink
1937	<i>Roller Skates</i>	Ruth Sawyer
1938	<i>The White Stag</i>	Kate Seredy
1939	<i>Thimble Summer</i>	Elizabeth Enright
1940	<i>Daniel Boone</i>	James Daugherty
1941	<i>Call It Courage</i>	Armstrong Sperry
1942	<i>The Matchlock Gun</i>	Walter Edmonds
1943	<i>Adam of the Road</i>	Elizabeth Janet Gray
1944	<i>Johnny Tremain</i>	Esther Forbes
1945	<i>Rabbit Hill</i>	Robert Lawson
1946	<i>Strawberry Girl</i>	Lois Lenski
1947	<i>Miss Hickory</i>	Carolyn Sherwin Bailey
1948	<i>The Twenty-One Balloons</i>	William Pene du Bois
1949	<i>King of the Wind</i>	Marguerite Henry
1950	<i>The Door in the Wall</i>	Marguerite de Angeli
1951	<i>Amos Fortune, Free Man</i>	Elizabeth Yates
1952	<i>Ginger Pye</i>	Eleanor Estes
1953	<i>Secret of the Andes</i>	Ann Nolan Clark
1954	<i>...And Now Miguel</i>	Joseph Krumgold

1955	<i>The Wheel on the School</i>	Meindert DeJong
1956	<i>Carry On, Mr. Bowditch</i>	Jean Lee Latham
1957	<i>Miracles on Maple Hill</i>	Virginia Sorenson
1958	<i>Rifles for Watie</i>	Harold Keith
1959	<i>The Witch of Blackbird Pond</i>	Elizabeth George Speare
1960	<i>Onion John</i>	Joseph Krungold
1961	<i>Island of the Blue Dolphins</i>	Scott O'Dell
1962	<i>The Bronze Bow</i>	Elizabeth George Speare
1963	<i>A Wrinkle in Time</i>	Madeleine L'Engle
1964	<i>It's Like This, Cat</i>	Emily Neville
1965	<i>Shadow of a Bull</i>	Maia Wojciechowska
1966	<i>I, Juan de Pareja</i>	Elizabeth Borton de Trevino
1967	<i>Up a Road Slowly</i>	Irene Hunt
1968	<i>From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler</i>	E. L. Konigsburg
1969	<i>The High King</i>	Lloyd Alexander
1970	<i>Souder</i>	William H. Armstrong
1971	<i>Summer of the Swans</i>	Betsy Byars
1972	<i>Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH</i>	Robert C. O'Brien
1973	<i>Julie of the Wolves</i>	Jean Craighead George
1974	<i>The Slave Dancer</i>	Paula Fox
1975	<i>M.C. Higgins, the Great</i>	Virginia Hamilton
1976	<i>The Grey King</i>	Susan Cooper
1977	<i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i>	Mildred D. Taylor

1978	<i>Bridge to Terabithia</i>	Katherine Paterson
1979	<i>The Westing Game</i>	Ellen Raskin
1980	<i>A Gathering of Days: A New England Girl's Journal, 1830-1832</i>	Joan W. Blos
1981	<i>Jacob Have I Loved</i>	Katherine Paterson
1982	<i>A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travelers</i>	Nancy Willard
1983	<i>Dacey's Song</i>	Cynthia Voigt
1984	<i>Dear Mr. Henshaw</i>	Beverly Cleary
1985	<i>The Hero and the Crown</i>	Robin McKinley
1986	<i>Sarah, Plain and Tall</i>	Patricia MacLachlan
1987	<i>The Whipping Boy</i>	Sid Fleischman
1988	<i>Lincoln: A Photobiography</i>	Russell Freedman
1989	<i>Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices</i>	Paul Fleischman
1990	<i>Number the Stars</i>	Lois Lowry
1991	<i>Maniac Magee</i>	Jerry Spinelli
1992	<i>Shiloh</i>	Phyllis Reynolds Naylor
1993	<i>Missing May</i>	Cynthia Rylant
1994	<i>The Giver</i>	Lois Lowry
1995	<i>Walk Two Moons</i>	Sharon Creech
1996	<i>The Midwife's Apprentice</i>	Karen Cushman
1997	<i>The View from Saturday</i>	E.L. Konigsburg
1998	<i>Out of the Dust</i>	Karen Hesse
1999	<i>Holes</i>	Louis Sachar

2000	<i>Bud, Not Buddy</i>	Christopher Paul Curtis
2001	<i>A Year Down Yonder</i>	Richard Peck
2002	<i>A Single Shard</i>	Linda Sue Park
2003	<i>Crispin, The Cross of Lead</i>	Avi
2004	<i>The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread</i>	Kate DiCamillo
2005	<i>Kira-Kira</i>	Cynthia Kadohata

BRIEF SUMMARIES OF SELECTED WINNERS

2004 *The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread* by Kate DiCamillo

The Tale of Despereaux is a story about a small mouse that was the last born in his family. He was a very small mouse with huge ears and open eyes. This is not normal for a mouse. This unusual mouse was born in a castle and fell in love with the princess, a human! The mouse likes to read, and loves light and music. He reveals himself to the Princess, and allows her to touch him. He even speaks to her. The Prince is also allowed to touch the mouse. Despereaux's father reports his son's behavior to the mouse council. When they hear about his behavior, they sentence him to death in the castle's dungeon. A red thread of death is attached to his neck, and he is thrown into the dark dungeon. Despereaux earns his life back by telling a story to Gregory, the Jailer.

2003 *Crispin, The Cross of Lead* by Avi

This book tells the story of a thirteen-year-old peasant, known as Asta's son, who lived in medieval England during the 14th century. His life is completely changed when his mother dies, his dwelling is burnt, and he is accused of a crime he didn't commit. He fled his village, alone and frightened, after being declared "a wolf's head" and was pursued by those he once trusted. He took nothing with him except his mother's cross and his newly discovered name of Crispin.

During his flight, he encountered Bear, a juggler who became his new "master," and who encouraged him to think and to learn survival skills. When Bear was captured and tortured by the enemy, Crispin fought to free his master and friend.

As the plot evolves, Crispin learns why he is being pursued, and uses this knowledge to his advantage.

2002 *A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park

This book is set in twelfth-century Korea and tells the story of Tree-ear, an orphan, who lives under a bridge with a crippled man called Crane-man. The boy and the man survive by sharing bits of food from the rubbish heaps.

Their lives change drastically when Tree-ear accidentally drops a piece of pottery made by Min, a master potter. He offers to work for the potter to repay the cost of the broken pottery, and is given several hard tasks to perform. Min's wife provides him with a free meal during the day and Tree-ear saves some of each meal for his friend, Crane-man.

Tree-ear yearns to work at the pottery wheel, but is denied the privilege. He continues to work for Min and helps the potter by taking a special order to the Royal Court for examination, in hopes of obtaining a royal commission to make more pottery.

He must travel many miles by foot with the prized pottery and is robbed along his route. The robbers toss the pottery over a cliff. Tree-ear finds a single shard of pottery and continues on with it to the Royal Court, where the shard is examined. A commission is granted to Min.

Upon returning to the potter's village, Tree-ear learns that Crane-man has died. Min and his wife give Tree-ear a home and he learns the potter's trade.

2001 *A Year Down Yonder* by Richard Peck

This award-winning book is a sequel to the 1999 Newbery Honor Book, *A Long Way from Chicago*. This first book introduces us to two Chicago children, Joey and Mary Alice, who spend each summer at their Grandma Dowdel's house in rural Illinois.

In the second book, *A Year Down Yonder*, only Mary Alice is featured. Joey has taken a job with the Civilian Conservation Corps and has moved westward. Their father lost his job during the depression, and Mary Alice is sent to live with Grandma Dowdel in her "hick-town." Her cat Bootsie accompanies her.

Mary Alice dreads living with her large, unconventional Grandmother, who is not a popular person in the small community due to her unpredictable mannerisms and her cold, "matter-of-fact" ways. However, the year provides much entertainment as Grandma frightens away the boys who attempt to knock over her outhouse on Halloween, embarrasses and ridicules some of the more elite members of the community, and crashes into a pecan tree with a tractor to jar the pecans from their branches.

Mary Alice grows to love her Grandmother more with each passing day, and they form a strong emotional bond. At the conclusion of the book, Mary Alice marries Royce McNabb in Grandma's house in rural Illinois, and Grandma Dowdel gives her away in marriage.

The author, Richard Peck, was born and raised in Decatur, Illinois. He now lives in New York City.

2000 *Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis:

Set in the 1930's in Michigan, Bud (Not Buddy) is a ten-year old orphan on the run from a succession of abusive foster homes. Armed with his own book, *Bud Caldwell's Rules and Things for Having a Funner Life and Making a Better Liar Out of Yourself*, an advertisement for a jazz band, and the belief that the legendary stand-up bass player, Herman E. Calloway, is his real father, he sets out on an adventurous pilgrimage to find his father.

1999 *Holes* by Louis Sachar

Stanley Yelnats is sent to Camp Green Lake, a juvenile detention center. Ironically, there is no lake, and he is innocent in the first place. While he is there, the warden makes him dig a five-foot by five-foot hole with the rest of the detainees. This assignment is based upon the philosophy that hard labor will convert delinquents into upstanding citizens. Ultimately, he discovers that this is only a cover. The warden really has them digging for loot buried on the detention center grounds by the legendary Kissin' Kate.

1998 *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse

This book centers around its 14-year old narrator, Billie Jo, who documents her trials during the Depression in her journal, which is written in free form poetic style. Her mother dies in an accident while her father is on an alcoholic binge. Billie Jo blames her father and herself for her mother's death. Billie Jo's hands are also badly burned during the accident, and she becomes reluctant to pursue her musical talent on her piano. She faces unspeakable grief with stoic courage and ultimately jumps a train west, but soon discovers that the "Oklahoma Dust" remains within her, and she must return to her home.

1997 *The View from Saturday* by E.L. Konigsburg

This book tells the story of a group of sixth-graders who were chosen as members of the Academic Bowl team. They win the sixth grade contest and go on to be winners during the seventh and eighth grades, too. Throughout the process, they learn more about themselves and each other, as well as scholastic bowl facts, trivia, and concepts.

1996 *The Midwife's Apprentice* by Karen Cushman

Brat, a poor homeless girl in medieval England, gets a lucky break and rises to the rank of apprentice to the rude midwife, Jane Sharp. Finally she discovers a caring family and becomes known as Alyce. Thinking that she knows as much as the midwife, she attempts a delivery, but she fails on this first delivery attempt. Instead of confronting her failure, she runs from the town. This is the story of her struggles, her mistakes, and her self-realizations.

1995 *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech

Salamanca Tree Hiddle is 13. Her mother has disappeared. She tells the story of her trip with her grandparents from Ohio to Idaho to Phoebe, a friend whose mother has also vanished. Phoebe claims to be receiving intermittent notes from her missing mother. One of these notes said, "Don't judge a man until you have walked two moons in his moccasins." Over the course of their interaction, Salamanca embraces her Native American ancestry and discovers the truth of her mother's disappearance.

1994 *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

This story is based upon a futuristic utopian society in which there is no poverty, sickness, unhappiness, or unemployment. Twelve-year-old Jonas is named the official Receiver of Memories. In time, he discovers the truth of his society's hypocrisy and chooses to stand up for what is right.

1993 *Missing May* by Cynthia Rylant

May, one of Summer's adoptive parents has died, and Summer and her adoptive father, Ob, are preoccupied with their grief over May's absence. Cletus, one of Summer's playmates, tries to help Summer and Ob contact May's spirit. Although they will always miss May, they discover that their togetherness lessens the pain of their loss.

1992 *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

Marty Preston, an 11-year-old boy, finds a hungry beagle near Shiloh school. He brings him home and names him after the school. Later he discovers that the dog belongs to Judd Travers, who mistreats the dog and he's forced to return the dog to Judd. The book tells of Marty's adventures and emotions as he tries to save the dog from his cruel master.

1991 *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli

Jeffrey Lionel "Maniac Magee" ran away from his aunt and uncle's house after his parents died. He ended up in a town named Two Mills, where the blacks and whites refused to intermingle due to their mutual fear and distrust. He shook things up in this small town and calmed down some of the tensions. He performs some amazing feats and learns much about racism.

1990 *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry

This is a story of two friends, Ellen and Anne Marie, during World War II. It takes place in 1943. Ellen is Jewish, and Anne Marie is not. When Ellen has to flee the Nazis, she stays in Anne Marie's apartment for a short time and pretends to be Anne Marie's sister when the guards arrive. Anne Marie shows much courage and persistence when trying to help her friend.

1989 *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman

This comical book of poetry is designed with two separate columns on each page so that children can alternate reading the verse aloud. The poems consist of stories about insects and are accompanied by vivid illustrations and large text.

1988 *Lincoln: A Photobiography* by Russell Freedman

This biography combines photographs, art, and written text to recreate the story of Abraham Lincoln's life and career.

1987 *The Whipping Boy* by Sid Fleischman

This is the story of the relationship between Prince Brat, the royal heir, and an orphan named Jemmy. Since royal heirs could not be spanked, Jemmy was appointed to take the Prince's whippings. Jemmy intended to run away, but the Prince ran away first, and took Jemmy with him. The authorities then charged Jemmy with kidnapping the Prince.

1986 *Sarah, Plain and Tall* by Patricia MacLachlan

Sarah lives in Maine. She answers an advertisement from a widowed Midwestern farmer named Caleb, who is searching for a new wife and a mother for his two children. She travels to Kansas to meet Caleb and his family. At first she is homesick and the children worry that she will abandon them, but in the end, Sarah decides to stay. She realizes that she would miss Caleb and his children more than she misses Maine.

1985 *The Hero and the Crown* by Robin McKinley

Aerin has been an outcast all her life because she is the daughter of the notorious "witchwoman" who was mistress to the king. Aerin's mother died of grief, because Aerin was a girl instead of the son the king so desperately wanted. Despite her gender, Aerin was destined to become a hero, and was ultimately endowed with the power of the Blue Sword. She became a legendary dragon slayer and was known throughout the land as Lady Aerin, Dragon-Killer.

1984 *Dear Mr. Henshaw* by Beverly Cleary

Leigh Botts, a second grade boy, writes to his favorite author, Mr. Henshaw, in the pages of his diary. He shares his activities, inner thoughts, and actual feelings that reveal truths about his painful and awkward transition from childhood to adolescence.

1979 *The Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin

This book is about a group of sixteen potential inheritors who gather for the reading of Mr. Samuel W. Westing's will. To their surprise, the will prescribes a contest whose outcome will determine the disbursement of the murdered man's fortune. One of them is his murderer and the group is challenged to discover the murderer's identity. The possible inheritors are each paired up with a "perfect" partner, given \$10,000, and provided with some clues. The question is, can they solve the mystery and reveal the name of the murderer before someone gets hurt?

1972 *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* by Robert C. O'Brien

The central character, Mrs. Frisby, is a widowed mouse. She needs to move her four children to summer quarters immediately to escape death. Unfortunately, it is not so easy. Her youngest, Timothy, has pneumonia and can't be moved. Luckily, she meets the rats of NIMH, who are extremely intelligent escapees from a laboratory experiment. They help her solve her problem and several other problems that occur within the plot.

1971 *Summer of the Swans* by Betsy Byars

A young girl, Sara, and Charlie, her mentally disturbed brother, have been living with their aunt after their mother's death. The story begins during summer vacation. During this season, swans frequent a lake near their home, and Sara and Charlie visit them during the day. One day the brother runs away. Sara assumes that he has gone to visit the swans. During the frantic search for the retarded child, Sara realizes how much Charlie really means to her.

1970 *Sounder* by William H. Armstrong

This book centers around a Southern African-American family during the 1800's. The mother is a maid for a rich family. The father is a sharecropper. They have three boys and a mongrel dog named Sounder. The father is taken to jail for stealing a hog to feed his family. At this point, Sounder is shot and can't be found. Ultimately, a battered Sounder returns, but in the meantime, the oldest son has to take on the father's work to feed the family, thus quickly transforming him from a child to an adult.

1967 *Up a Road Slowly* by Irene Hunt

This is the story of a young protagonist named Julie, whose mother dies when she is seven. She goes to live with her Aunt Cordelia, who is a spinster. The book chronicles the many growing changes and emotional traumas that she undergoes between the ages of seven to eighteen.

1957 *Miracles on Maple Hill* by Virginia Sorenson

In this book we meet Marly, Joe, Mr. Chris, and Margie, as well as other family members and friends. It's based upon the experiences of a family that helps old friends with their maple syrup crop, and is told from the view of a small girl. They live in the countryside where miracles do happen, and each chapter of this book depicts a separate miracle of nature, thus inspiring the reader to appreciate the everyday miracles.

1956 *Carry on, Mr. Bowditch* by Jean Lee Latham

This biography centers around the figure of Nat Bowditch, a historical mathematician, astronomer, and sailor. Nat fulfilled his dream of becoming a captain and was the author of The American Practical Navigator. Action and adventure intersperse with historical detail in this exciting book.

1946 *Strawberry Girl* by Lois Lenski

This book is about a girl and her family who move to a new house. They struggle to produce crops, relate to their "not-so-nice" new neighbors, who are consumed with feuding, and triumph over other life's other hardships.

1942 *The Matchlock Gun* by Walter Edmunds

This short book centers around Edward, a young boy who lived during the French and Indian War. His father left home to go fight against the Indians in the war, but he left an old Spanish gun with Edward, and told him to use the gun, if necessary, to protect his mother and sister. The gun was so large and awkward that Edward wondered if he would be able to use it to defend their home if the situation occurred.

1939 *Thimble Summer* by Elizabeth Enright

This book is about a girl named Garnet who finds a silver thimble in the ground. Shortly afterwards, a slew of lucky occurrences ensue. A rain finally comes to end the drought that prevented her father from making a living. The government loans their family some money to build a new barn, and they adopt Eric, a nice orphan. She also adopts a pig that she names Timmy. She takes care of Timmy all summer and wins a blue ribbon and prize money for him at the fair in September. She concludes that the thimble must have been magical, and spends the rest of the summer exuberant.

1935 *Dobry* by Monica Shannon

This book is about a young boy, Dobry, who grows up on a farm in Bulgaria in the 1920's and 30's. As he gets older, he realizes that his true dream is to be a sculptor.