The American Indian Youth Literature Awards

Discussion and Reflection
Naomi Bishop, MLIS, AHIP
What are the AILA Youth Literature Awards?

The American Indian Youth Literature Awards (AIYLA) identify and honor the best writing and illustrations by Native Americans and Indigenous peoples of North America. Books selected to receive the award present Indigenous North American peoples in the fullness of their humanity.
About the Award

Presented every two years in three categories:

Best Picture Book
Best Middle Grade Book
Best Young Adult Book

54 Books Recognized
43 Publishers
50+ Creators
Diversity in Children’s Books 2015

Percentages of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds.
Based on the 2015 publishing statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children’s
Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison:
ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp

Illustration by David Huyck, in consultation with Sarah Park Dahlen & Molly Beth Griffin
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Statistics compiled by the
Cooperative Children’s Book Center,
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* About a quarter of the total children’s books published in 2015 were picture books, and about half of those depict non-human characters, like animals & trucks.
** The remainder depict white characters.
Children's Books By and/or About First/Native Nations Received by the CCBC*--US Publishers Only- 2015 -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>By</th>
<th>About</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
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Data on books by and about people of color and from First/Native Nations published for children and teens compiled by the Cooperative Children’s Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison. [https://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp](https://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp)
## Children's Books By and/or About First/Native Nations Received by the CCBC* 2002 - 2018

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History of the Award

2006
First AILA Youth Literature Awards
JCLC Dallas, TX

2008
ALA Annual
Anaheim, CA

2010
First Honor Books
ALA Annual
Anaheim, CA

2012
ALA Annual
Las Vegas, NV
4 Picture Books
5 Middle Grade
5 Young Adult

2014
ALA Annual
Orlando, FL
7 Picture Books
15 Middle Grade Books
8 Young Adult Books

2016
ALA Midwinter
Denver, CO
30 Picture Books
12 Middle Grade
7 Young Adult

2020 YMAs
50 books total
14 books selected
PB- 24
MG-13
YA-13

2019 ALA Midwinter
Seattle, WA

Criteria for Nominations

1. Author and or illustrator must be recognized by the Indian community of which they claim to be a part and be connected to the people.

2. Books should be published within three years since the last awards were given.

3. Books may be nominated for consideration by the AIYLA Jury, publishers, librarians, authors, illustrators, or others.
Timeline of Awards Cycle

October 2020-2022 Awards Cycle Open

November 2020- Letter to publishers

Nominations open till October 2021

Awards Ceremony for 2020 Award

Books will be online January 2021

Deadline for 2022 submissions October 31, 2021

Announcement at ALA Midwinter 2022

- Winners are notified days before the ALA Youth Media Awards.
- Awards ceremony is in odd years when no winners are announced.
- New criteria for 2020 awards required the committee to be U.S. AILA members.
AILA Youth Literature Awards Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Appointment</th>
<th>Committee requirement</th>
<th>Committee membership composition</th>
<th>Committee members duties</th>
<th>Terms limits</th>
</tr>
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<td>7 members minimum and 10 member maximum with chair and co-chair.</td>
<td>AILA Member Live in the U.S. Experience working with Native children and youth</td>
<td>Majority (⅔) representation of recognized members of nation/tribe. Geographic on/near U.S. rez., villages, and rural, suburban, and urban communities</td>
<td>1) Nominate titles in each category 2) Commit to four virtual meetings 3) Assist with AILA awards ceremony</td>
<td>Indigenous Jury members may serve an unlimited number of years as needed. Non-Native Jury members may serve for two award cycles or four years.</td>
</tr>
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What are we looking for in Award winning books?

- Meets all the awards criteria
- Honors communities and cultures
- Book brings joy to children, youth, and families
- Something Native children/youth would want to read over and over again

“The Awards go beyond merely naming the best creator of a particular art form in a certain year to representing the ideals of our multiple communities. Native authors and illustrators are role models for young people. For that reason, AILA does not endorse authors who appropriate other cultures or who behave in ways that dishonor others.”
CRITERIA FOR NOMINATION

● Authors (for illustrated books, both author AND illustrator) must be recognized by the Native community of which they claim to be a part and be connected to the people of that community.

● For anthologies, at least \( \frac{2}{3} \) of the authors must be recognized members of the community to which they claim affiliation.

● Books must have been published after October of the year before the last awards were given (i.e., the odd-numbered year preceding the previous award cycle; after October 2019 for the 2022 awards.)
CRITERIA FOR NOMINATION

https://ailanet.org/activities/american-indian-youth-literature-award/

- Books may be nominated for consideration by the AIYLA Jury, publishers, librarians, authors, illustrators, and others.

- The Awards go beyond merely naming the best creator of a particular art form in a certain year to representing the ideals of our multiple communities. Native authors and illustrators are role models for young people. For that reason, AILA does not endorse authors who appropriate other cultures or who behave in ways that dishonor others.
Discussions and Reflections

What are some things that you notice about AILA award winning books?

Why do you think there are so few books published in the USA vs. Canada?

What will bring change to the publishing industry in the US?

Who publishes Native authors and illustrators?
Empowering Youth and Families to Read

https://indiancountrytoday.com/news/empower-native-kids-to-read-jiT3qWspQU2tzubYakiXtQ
Significance of ALA Youth Media Awards

American Indian Youth Literature Award
Next Award Announcements in 2020
For More Information Visit https://aiianet.org

https://youtu.be/CM3njHKbwv4?t=910
AILA Youth Literature 2020 Award Winners & Honors
How to order/buy AILA awards books?

- Direct from Publishers Websites
- Native Bookstores
- From distributors
- Online from that place with an A
Every local educational agency (LEA) must teach a balanced curriculum adhering to State adopted standards and mandates for the content areas, using complementary materials that address the contributions of diverse cultures.

Schools must consciously build educational environments which value the rich heritage of all communities and cultures, fostering appreciation for all, so that all students and their families are treated equitably and with respect.

While planning lessons across all subjects, integrate culturally inclusive instruction that takes into account the unique stories, accomplishments, and struggles of all of people, especially Indigenous Peoples.

## Contemporary Native Kids

### Native Children and Youth today

- Cultural Appropriation and misrepresentations of their identity
- Stereotypes in children’s literature and media, school and sports mascots
- Tribal Sovereignty and telling our stories
- Health disparities and environmental social justice
- Language and cultural revitalization projects

### How Libraries can help

- Collection Development policy that reviews books for stereotypes and misrepresentations
- Buy Books from Native authors and illustrators
- Invite local tribal communities to be guest speakers
- Discuss, display, and learn about Indigenous health and environments.
- Buy books in Native Languages
Promoting AILA Awards
Celebrate with AILA

AILA Youth Literature Awards
Virtual Ceremony

January 2021

More information coming soon!
Nominate a Book

Vanessa Centeno (Vigil)
AILA 2022 Youth Literature Awards Chair
Ailaawards2022@gmail.com
Questions?
References
AILA Youth Literature Awards
https://ailanet.org/activities/american-indian-youth-literature-award/

Cooperative Children's Book Center Publishers List
https://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pclist.asp

Burt Award for First Nations, Metis and Inuit Literature (CODE)
https://www.burtaward.org/burt-award-canada

Native Change Makers At-Home Learning
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f-7g27H6JdvA_yApTahFGKiMY5YMd6-q/view?fbclid=IwAR3-_phW-rkfqjATqNgCccbedpRonJz8pO-VtO9-ilbJon2_SdxeC6DOgdo

Teaching Books Net  https://TeachingBooks.net/AIYLA2020