

Carolyn W. Field Award

Winners

2026

Oatman High, Linda

Somebody's Someone

12-year-old Ruby Bean has become an Accidental Expert on Missing Mothers. When Ruthie, her mother goes missing again due to mental illness and addiction – Ruby and her aunt leap into action to search for Ruthie.

A jewelry store robbery and unexpected kindness from the victim bring more twists to the journey. From Georgia to Washington to New York City Ruby discovers that sometimes even the worst events can bring the best surprises into one's life.

2025

Grimes, Shaunta

Here I Am

When seventeen-year-old Marcella Boucher asks Lou Duncan to her high school's "reverse prom" she expects a few snickers. After all, no one else knows that outside school the star football player has a thing for the girl everyone calls Moocella. However, she could never have anticipated the splashy aftermath of her very public display of affection. Or how it would send her to the edge of despair. But life has a way of putting exactly what, and who, you need in front of you at the right time...you just need to be brave enough to accept them.

2024

Parnum, Laura

Peril at Price Manor

Halle dreams of becoming a scream queen. She practices her loudest scream every day and has learned a lot from studying the horror movies of her favorite director, Maximus Price. Maximus lives just outside town, and when the chance to go to his home arises, Halle grabs it with both hands. She doesn't realize that real life horrors await her at Price Manor.

Paisley and Argyle, Maximus's twin children, think that the creepy, squid-like creatures that have attached themselves to the faces of the manor's staff, putting them in a zombie-like stupor, are just another one of their prankster dad's tricks. When Halle arrives and is attacked by one of the creatures, she meets the twins and assures them that this is no joke. The three kids will have to work together using all of their unusual talents to defeat the monsters—and maybe even save the world.

Blending quirky humor and poignant heart with delightfully creepy monsters, this debut middle grade novel is a perfect entry point for young readers to the horror genre.

2023

Barker, Brooke

How Do Meerkats Order Pizza?

In this “pleasing and informative” (Kirkus Reviews) illustrated nonfiction book for middle grade readers, Brooke Barker of Sad Animal Facts introduces readers to incredible animals and the bizarre things human scientists do to understand them.

Did you know that crows never forget a face? Or that jaguars have a favorite cologne? Have you ever wondered how to pet a yeti crab? Or whether dogs can tell if you're smiling? And just what is a burrowing bettong?

Meet these weird, wonderful animals and the equally weird and wonderful scientists who study them. From crafting fake poop to slurping up bugs with a straw, there's nothing these amazing humans won't do to help us learn more about the animals around us. Packed with fascinating facts, this hilarious book from the bestselling creator of Sad Animal Facts reveals secrets like why roosters crow and how meerkats make decisions as a group—and how humans can better understand the wild creatures we share the planet with.

2022

Myers, Alison Green

A Bird Will Soar

A heartfelt and hopeful debut about a bird-loving autistic child whose family's special nest is in danger of falling apart.

"Axel loves everything about birds, especially eagles. No one worries that an eagle will fly too far and not come home—a fact Axel wishes his mother understood. Deep down, Axel knows that his mother is like an osprey—the best of all bird mothers—but it's hard to remember that when she worries and keeps secrets about important things. His dad is more like a wild turkey, coming and going as he pleases. His dad's latest disappearance is the biggest mystery of all."

"Despite all this, Axel loves his life—especially the time he spends with his friends observing the eagles' nest in the woods near his home. But when a tornado damages not only Axel's home but the eagles' nest, Axel's life is thrown into chaos. Suddenly his dad is back to help repair the damage, and Axel has to manage his dad's presence and his beloved birds' absence. Plus, his mom seems to be keeping even more secrets."

"But Axel knows another important fact: an eagle's instincts let it soar. Axel must trust his own instincts to help heal his family and the nest he loves."

2021

Castillo, Lauren

Our Friend Hedgehog

"Hedgehog lives on a teeny-tiny island with only her stuffed dog, Mutt, for company. When a great storm carries Mutt away, she embarks on a quest to find her friend. Following the trail of clues Mutt left behind, brave Hedgehog meets a wiggly Mole, a wordy Owl, a curmudgeonly Beaver, a scatterbrained Hen and Chicks, and a girl who's new to the neighborhood, Annika May. With bravery and teamwork, there's nothing that can stop these seven from finding Mutt, but along the way they discover something even more important: each other."

2020

Morris, Brittney

Slay

"By day, seventeen-year-old Kiera Johnson is an honors student, a math tutor, and one of the only Black kids at Jefferson Academy. But at home, she joins hundreds of thousands of Black gamers who duel worldwide as Nubian personas in the secret multiplayer online role-playing card game, SLAY. No one knows Kiera is the game developer, not her friends, her family, not even her boyfriend, Malcolm, who believes video games are partially responsible for the "downfall of the Black man."

But when a teen in Kansas City is murdered over a dispute in the SLAY world, SLAY is labeled a racist, exclusionist, violent hub for thugs and criminals, and an anonymous troll infiltrates the game, threatening to sue Kiera for “anti-white discrimination.” Kiera must preserve her secret identity and harness what it means to be unapologetically Black in a world intimidated by Blackness. But can she protect her game without losing herself in the process?"

2019

Bates, Amy June

The Big Umbrella

By the door there is an umbrella. It is big. It is so big that when it starts to rain there is room for everyone underneath. It doesn't matter if you are tall. Or plaid. Or hairy. It doesn't matter how many legs you have.

Don't worry that there won't be enough room under the umbrella. Because there will always be room.

2018

Sonnenblick, Jordan

The Secret Sheriff of Sixth Grade

In sixth grade, bad things can happen to good kids. Bullies will find your weakness and jump on it. Teachers will say you did something wrong when really you didn't mean to do anything wrong.

Maverick wants to change all that. One of the last things his father left him was a toy sheriff's badge. Now he likes to carry it around to remind him of his dad -- and also to remind him to make school a better place for everyone . . . even if that's a hard thing to do, especially when his own home life is falling apart.

2017

Phelan, Matt

Snow White

With a moody, dramatic feel reminiscent of film noir, acclaimed graphic novelist Matt Phelan has retold a well-known fairy tale in a wholly new way, showcasing the Depression era's cultural dynamism and vivid personalities, both those who are pure of heart and those who are pure evil.

2016

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell

Terrible Typhoid Mary

The true story of the "Deadliest Cook in America" tells the story of Mary Mallon, a quiet, hard-working Irish immigrant and who worked as a cook in New York at the turn of the 20th century. Mary caught typhoid disease and spread it to the various families for whom she worked.

2015

Auxier, Jonathan

The Night Gardener

The Night Gardener follows two abandoned Irish siblings who travel to work as servants at a creepy, crumbling English manor house. But the house and its family are not quite what they seem. Soon the children are confronted by a mysterious spectre and an ancient curse that threatens their very lives.

2014

O'Hara, Zachariah

No Fits, Nilson!

Amelia must continually remind her gorilla friend, Nilson, not to have fits, especially when they are running errands with her mother, but sometimes Amelia stomps and growls, too.

2013

King, A. S.

Ask the Passengers

Astrid Jones deals with the narrow-mindedness of her small town by town by sending her love to the passengers in the planes that fly above her backyard. She has no idea how it will affect their lives and her own.

2012

Phelan, Matt

Around the World

Challenged with circling the world at the end of the nineteenth century, three very different adventurers--avid bicyclist Thomas Stevens, fearless reporter Nellie Bly, and retired sea captain Joshua Slocum--embark on epic journeys. Presented in comic book format.

2011

Sonnenblick, Jordan

After Ever After

Although Jeff and Tad, encouraged by a new friend, Lindsey, make a deal to help one another overcome aftereffects of their cancer treatments in preparation for eighth-grade graduation, Jeff still craves advice from his older brother Stephen, who is studying drums in Africa.

2010

Fantaskey, Beth

Jessica's Guide to Dating on the Dark Side

Seventeen-year-old Jessica, adopted and raised in Pennsylvania, learns that she is descended from a royal line of Romanian vampires and that she is betrothed to a vampire prince, who poses as a foreign exchange student while courting her.

2009

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell

The Boy Who Dared

In October 1942, seventeen-year-old Helmuth Hubener, imprisoned for distributing anti-Nazi leaflets, recalls his past life and how he came to dedicate himself to bring the truth about Hitler and the war to the German people.

2008

White, Ruth

Way Down Deep

In the West Virginia town of Way Down Deep in the 1950s, a foundling called Ruby June is happily living with Miss Arbutus at the local boarding house when suddenly, after the arrival of a family of outsiders, the mystery of Ruby's past begins to unravel.

2007

Barretta, Gene

Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin

What would you do if you lived in a community without a library, hospital, post office, or fire department? If you were Benjamin Franklin, you'd set up these organizations yourself.

2006

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell

Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow

The story of a generation of German young people who devoted all their energy to the Hitler Youth and the propaganda that gave Hitler his power, and the youths that resisted the Nazi movement.

2005

Spinelli, Eileen

Do You Have a Hat?

Rhyming text describes a great variety of hats worn by celebrities throughout history.

2004

Spinelli, Jerry

Milkweed

Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli takes us to one of the most devastating settings imaginable -- Nazi-occupied Warsaw of World War II -- and tells a tale of heartbreak, hope, and survival through the bright eyes of a young orphan.

2004

Woodruff, Elvira

The Ravenmaster's Secret

The eleven-year-old son of the Ravenmaster at the Tower of London befriends a Jacobite rebel being held prisoner there.

2003

Schachner, Judith Byron

Yo, Vikings!

Emma's research on Erik the Red soon extends beyond the classroom.

2002

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell

Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-1850

Black Potatoes is the story of men, women, and children who searched empty fields for scraps of harvested vegetables and edible weeds to eat, who walked several miles each day to hard-labor jobs for meager wages and to reach soup kitchens.

2001

Howard, Elizabeth Fitzgerald

Virgie Goes to School With Us Boys

In the post-Civil War South, a young African American girl is determined to prove that she can go to school just like her older brothers.

2000

Anderson, Laurie Halse

Speak

A traumatic event near the end of the summer has a devastating effect on Melinda's freshman year in high school.

2000

Woodruff, Elvira

The Memory Coat

In the early 1900s, two cousins leave their Russian shtetl with the rest of their family to come to America, hopeful that they will all pass the dreaded inspection at Ellis Island.

1999

Springer, Nancy

I Am Mordred: A Tale from Camelot

When Mordred learns the identity of his father, he struggles with feelings of hatred, but also fights the fate which determines that he kill the good and gracious king.

1998

Spinelli, Jerry

Wringer

As Palmer comes of age, he must either accept the violence of being a wringer at his town's annual Pigeon Day or find the courage to oppose it.

1997

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell

Growing Up in Coal Country

Describes what life was like, especially for children, in coal mines and mining towns in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

1996

Wojciechowski, Susan

The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey

The widow McDowell and her seven-year-old son Thomas ask the gruff Jonathan Toomey, the best woodcarver in the valley, to carve the figures for a Christmas creche.

1995

Priceman, Marjorie

How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World

Since the market is closed, the reader is led around the world to gather the ingredients for making an apple pie. Includes recipe.

1994

Lyon, George Ella

Dreamplace

Illustrated by Peter Catalanotto

Present-day visitors describe what they see when they visit the pueblos where the Anasazi lived long ago.

1993

McDonald, Megan

The Great Pumpkin Switch

An old man tells his grandchildren how he and a friend accidentally smashed the pumpkin his sister was growing and had to find a replacement.

1992

Keehn, Sally M.

I am Regina

In 1755, as the French and Indian War begins, ten-year-old Regina is kidnapped by Indians in western Pennsylvania, and she must struggle to hold onto memories of her earlier life as she grows up under the name of Tskinnak and starts to become Indian herself.

1991

Spinelli, Jerry

Maniac Magee

After his parents die, Jeffrey Lionel Magee's life becomes legendary, as he accomplishes athletic and other feats which awe his contemporaries.

1990

George, William T.

Box Turtle at Long Pond

Illustrated by Lindsay Barrett George

On a busy day at Long Pond, Box Turtle searches for food, basks in the sun, and escapes a raccoon.

1989

Le Guin, Ursula K.

Catwings

Illustrated by Steven Schindler

Four young cats with wings leave the city slums in search of a safe place to live, finally meeting two children with kind hands. (1989)

1988

Cummings, E. E.

Little Tree

Illustrated by Deborah Kogan Ray

Inspired by a poem by E.E. Cummings, this is the story of a little tree that finds its own special place in the world as a much-loved Christmas tree.

1987

Alexander, Lloyd

The Illyrian Adventure

On a visit to a remote European kingdom in 1872, a fearless sixteen-year-old orphan and her guardian research an ancient legend and become enmeshed in a dangerous rebellion.

1986

Rogers, Fred

The New Baby

Explains the needs of toddlers faced with a new baby in the family and some of the changes and disruptions the baby can cause in the life of the older brother or sister.

1985

Hodges, Margaret

Saint George and the Dragon

Retells the segment from Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, in which George, the Red Cross Knight, slays the dreadful dragon that has been terrorizing the countryside for years and brings peace and joy to the land.

1984

Zolotow, Charlotte

Some Things Go Together

Illustrated by Karen Gundersheimer

A colorful book with charming full-color, linoleum-cut illustrations provides a heartwarming celebration of the magic and joy of all the wonderful things that can be found in the world around us.