

## Achievement Awards in Writing Advisory Committee

**Charge:** The NCTE [Achievement Awards in Writing](#) program makes use of an advisory committee and state coordinators.

**Achievement Awards Advisory Committee:** To advise staff on the nature, policies, and procedures regarding the NCTE Achievement Awards, including the following issues: development of a specific plan for involving more public schools in the awards, especially those with large non-white populations; revision of the structure of the award to mitigate the negative effects of competition on student identity and learning; consideration and development of diversified awards: that recognize development of English Language Learners in writing in their first language as well as English composition; that recognize remarkable improvement or growth in writing; that recognize multi-modal composition (digital or non-digital); and that recognize remarkable risk-taking with the process of writing, instead of the exclusive focus on the final draft; and consideration of revising the Achievement Awards procedure, to eliminate the test-like, single-draft, timed essay as part of the award criteria, since recent developments in high-stakes assessment already privilege those who write quickly; and to consider and make recommendations for ways that your work might interface with NCTE's [National Day on Writing](#).

**State Coordinators:** To advise the NCTE staff liaison on any changes that should be made in the Achievement Awards program; review judging procedures; recommend judges; recommend ways of publicizing the program; investigate ways of aiding the winners; and give suggestions for the impromptu theme topic.

For information on the Achievement Awards in Writing Program for 11th grade students, [click here](#).

### What major actions or projects have been completed by your group pursuant to your charge since July 1, 2010?

The Achievement Awards in Writing procedures are going green!

The submission process for the 2112 Achievement will be totally re-designed to enable submissions to the 2012 Awards to take place online through each school's designated contact teacher. Nominees will continue to be selected by local stakeholders whose eligible entrants will continue to be based on the school's enrollment (grades 10 through 12). The contest will continue to be open only to students in grade 11.

Students will submit a collection of their best work as well as a response to a specific prompt. Judges will view submissions electronically. Winning submissions will be published on the NCTE website.

### What projects, initiatives, or studies are "in progress" at this time?

Members of the Achievement Awards in Writing Advisory Committee will examine implications of the replacement of an impromptu prompt with a published prompt. The committee is attempting to partner with other committees to increase more wide spread participation.

### December 2010 Annual Report after the Orlando Convention

What projects, initiatives, or studies are "in progress" at this time?

#### 1. Investigation of an online submission process.

To date the following has been achieved:

- A survey of state coordinators regarding a change to electronic submissions was completed and the results submitted.
  - State coordinators provided thoughtful responses, expressed some concerns, but were overwhelmingly in favor of the idea.
  - State coordinators were invited to attend a session which examined the rubrics as well as other Achievement Awards in Writing procedures.
  - No state coordinator was able to attend. Stu Boyd from Colorado sent the following comments:

- [JSBOYD47@AOL.COM](mailto:JSBOYD47@AOL.COM); I'm not attending the convention but will be interested in the outcome of your discussion. Stu Boyd Colorado
- I'm a committee of one for the Achievement Awards in CO, so we won't be represented at the meeting.
- I have a few comments or questions related to the topics you'll discuss...
- 1. We need to be careful that the trait-specific scoring isn't too time-consuming for the judges. My judges usually each score 10-12 submissions, so each one already invests several hours in scoring. I've not found it easy to replace judges in recent years, so I don't want to scare anyone off and have to replace her!
- 2. Judges sometimes read and reread (and reread!) submissions; will electronic submissions make doing so difficult/uncomfortable? Probably 1/3 of the impromptu essays I receive are handwritten; will we be eliminating schools/students if we go to electronic submissions? Also, what about those students who don't compose well at the keyboard or who haven't had experience doing that? (Granted, in this day and age that's unlikely but thought I'd raise the point.)
- 3. Also, if anyone has any ideas how to promote this fine contest, I'd love to hear them. I've even written an article for our publication which goes out to members; number of submissions **declined!**
- A pilot program was tested to assess the feasibility of the process.
  - NJCTE piloted an online submission process using the National Gallery of Writing to collect and display submissions.
  - Judges viewed submissions online and submitted results in an e-mail, making the entire process a green endeavor.
  - A problem of data collection about each student while keeping submissions anonymous has been solved using GoogleDocs.
  - The online submission process requires that judges have some computer skills and follow directions. NJCTE encountered some problems here.
    - Michele Marotta, the Director of Judging for the NJCTE, created a training session that requires judges to access the submission and submit the score online for 12 different samples. Dana Maloney created a new online submission form to capture all necessary information.

What projects, initiatives, or studies are planned for the future?

2. **The development of a specific plan for involving more public schools in the awards, especially those with large non-white populations.**
  - A scheduled session entitled *Daring to Change the Rubric* featured writing trends and hands on experiences of Dr. Barbara Rahal and Dr. Linda Irby as we examined current practices.
    - The impromptu prompt  
Members of the committee, especially Linda Irby, were quite vocal about the need to replace the impromptu prompt with one or more published prompts.
    - The timed element  
Although the ability to organize and compose quickly is a desirable skill, classroom teachers emphasize the need for revision and contemplation in good writing. This requirement seems to be diametrically opposed to good classroom practices.
    - If neither of these adjustments can be made this year, Dr. Barbara Rahal suggested the need to adjust the weight given to the impromptu. She suggested 25% for the impromptu and 75% for the portfolio.
  - Following the practices of NJCTE, we might decide to post a specific essay prompt, provide writing pointers, supply models, and encourage several drafts before a final submission.

3. **The revision of the structure of the award to mitigate the negative effects of competition on student identity and learning.**
  - The proposed change in the approach will enable the classroom teacher to embrace the contest as a writing unit which in turn may result in more public school participation and should mitigate the negative effects of competition.
  - The names of all participants in the process should be listed locally by each participating teacher who then (following the guidelines for submissions based on school population) helps the selected student to submit to the gallery.
  - All students who enter should receive a handsome certificate of participation.
4. **The consideration and development of diversified awards.**
  - The committee considered an award for poetry, an award for fiction, and an award for essay with the elimination of the portfolio as an aspect of the submission. No decision was made.
  - While the essay will have a specific prompt (much like those we now use) the call for poetry and short story submissions may be made to be reflective of the theme of the previous year's convention. No decision was made.
  - Multi-modal compositions may best be served, recognized, and awarded in a separate category.
5. **There are no plans at this time to recognize the development of English Language Learners in writing in their first language as well as English composition or that recognize the remarkable improvement or growth in writing.**
  - Although the committee feels that this is indeed a worthwhile endeavor, the initial response was that this goal can best be achieved by a separate group, perhaps ELL teachers.

**What significant changes or trends in our field require action from the Council soon?**

We would like the Council to embrace the online submission process for the Achievement Awards in Writing.

**What research or action is needed to fill gaps you see in information currently available from NCTE?**

The Achievement Awards in Writing Program could benefit from more state affiliate involvement and from more involvement from state coordinators before the nomination process begins. We would also like to partner with other groups that promote writing such as The National Writing Project.

**What trends need to factor into medium- to long-term NCTE planning?**

Long-term plans need to maximize the use of electronic processes.

Jennifer Beach suggested that we identify ways to reward teachers who take on the labor of love that is needed to organize the writing contest at the school level, find nominees, help them develop their portfolios, proctor the timed writing, and contact the state coordinator with submissions. We discussed ideas like sending press releases to principals, making teachers eligible for a prize drawing (perhaps NCTE books or free conference registration), and forming an online community so that they can share ideas. If one goal is to expand the number of schools involved, it seems that the teachers at the school level are a crucial building block.

The members that now comprise the Achievement Awards in Writing Advisory Committee are indeed an extraordinary group of people. I would like to add 5 to 10 new members with this level of commitment for next year.

I find that attendance of committee members at the convention is crucial in achieving our goals.

**Those in attendance at the 2010 NCTE Convention:**

CHAIR, Susan Reese (2011)

(Ocean Township High School, Oakhurst, NJ)

Jennifer Beach (2012)

(West Springfield High School, MA)

Tom Beach (2012)

(St. Ignatius High School, Cleveland, OH)

Linda R. Irby (2012)  
(Mississippi State University, MS)  
Dana Maloney (2012)  
(Tenafly High School, NJ)  
Barbara Rahal (2012)  
(Edinboro University of Pennsylvania)  
Duane Roen (2012)  
(Arizona State University, Tempe)

**Those unable to attend the AAW Advisory Committee Meeting**

Elizabeth Claytor (2012) (Chatham University/Community College of Allegheny County, PA)	Death of a family member
Carol L. Hopson (2012) (Timber Creek High School, Ft. Worth, TX)	Medical emergency
Reva Sias (2012) (Syracuse University, NY)	Academic commitment re Ph.D.
Executive Committee Liaison, Kylene Beers (Teachers College, New York, NY)	Other NCTE meetings scheduled at the same time

**Strategic Governance: Over the past few years, the NCTE Executive Committee has established outcomes and priorities relating to these key topics in our field Documenting Professional Learning, Assessment, [Closing the Achievement Gap](#), [NCTE and International Involvement](#), [Reading Research](#), [21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacies](#), and [Attracting, Supporting, and Advancing Early Career Educators](#). Currently, they are working on performance assessment of teachers and student learning. Does your group have research findings or suggestions to contribute that are relevant to on-going work on these strategic governance topics?**

This change will enable the Achievement Awards in Writing to advance the strategic Policy Goals of NCTE most importantly 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacies which calls for the development of proficiency with the tools of technology, and Multi-modal Literacies which is defined as “Integration of multiple modes of communication and expression [to] enhance or transform the meaning of the work beyond illustration or decoration.”

As Kent Williams stated in 4/14/11 email, [NCTE has] budgeted for a new software system, similar to the Mailer awards system, that could really simplify, expedite, and make friendlier the whole Achievement Awards process.

*Susan Reese, Chair*

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Academic Studies Advisory Committee

**Charge:** *To develop plans to assist teachers in making schools, colleges, and universities safe and welcoming places for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender nonconforming, intersex, queer, and questioning people, and their allies to initiate and sustain conversation about the relevance of gendered, sexual, and affectional identities to reading and writing lives, to teaching lives, and to the well-being of students; to promote inquiry into issues of sexuality and gender identity and expression in the teaching of literacy and literature; to encourage proposals for presentation of such inquiry through public meetings such as the [NCTE Annual Convention](#); to support individuals in the production of publishable written reports of such inquiry; and to select excellent proposals for inclusion in Annual Convention.*

The work of the LGBT Advisory Committee for 2010-11 was laid out during the Committee's meeting at the 2010 Convention in Orlando.

The first business was a recommendation that NCTE's charge to the Committee should be amended to read as follows:

To develop plans to assist teachers in making schools, colleges, and universities safe and welcoming places for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender nonconforming, intersex, queer, and questioning people, and their allies to initiate and sustain conversation about the relevance of gendered, sexual, and affectional identities to reading and writing lives, to teaching lives, and to the well-being of students; to promote inquiry into issues of sexuality and gender identity and expression in the teaching of literacy and literature; to encourage proposals for presentation of such inquiry through public meetings such as the NCTE Annual Convention; to support individuals in the production of publishable written reports of such inquiry; and to select excellent proposals for inclusion in the Annual Convention and the NCTE Connected Community.

In January President Runyon put this recommendation on the agenda for the next meeting of the Executive Committee. In February we received word from Linda Walters that that the NCTE Executive Committee had approved our request, with one small change: the omission of "and the NCTE Connected Community" since proposals are not posted on the Connected Community but committee members are free to post and contribute to the conversations at any time. The updated charge appears on the Web at <http://www.ncte.org/volunteer/groups/lgbtadcom>.

Efforts were then put toward enhancing the LGBT presence on NCTE's Connected Community by including links to a variety of resources for teachers. The result, a joint project with the Gay Straight Educators' Alliance, at: <http://ncte.connectedcommunity.org/resources/viewdocument/?DocumentKey=1c90f76f-9fb6-4109-810a-2ffcf38d34fe>

See also the general page "Resources for Teachers, Gay and Straight, Teaching Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues": <http://ncte.connectedcommunity.org/directory/communitydetails/?CommunityKey=e0aecdd8-f04c-4023-b5c1-920013f03f26>.

A third activity for the year was to seek the reconstitution of the Advisory Committee for 2011-14.

We submitted the following request for reconstitution in January:

### **Request for Reconstitution**

Name of Committee: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Academic Studies Advisory Committee

Name of Chair: Joseph Dial Date: January 15, 2011

**Rationale:** Brief explanation of why the group should continue.

There remains much work to be done to make the NCTE Convention a safe and welcoming environment for Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals attending and participating in the work of the Council. At the 2010 Convention, for example, the room assigned for the meeting of the LGBT Advisory Committee was a closet-sized space in use as a storage room for Convention registration materials. Members expressed a feeling of being back in the closet again.

Moreover, safety in the schools continues to be a major concern, one which schools are beginning to acknowledge and address. The Advisory Committee has taken a leadership role in working with the Gay Straight Educators' Alliance for providing, through NCTE's Connected Community, resources for teachers to use in addressing this concern.

The Advisory Committee's continued activity is crucial to help NCTE and its members create and maintain a welcoming environment everywhere English is studied.

Our request was honored and the Committee was reconstituted for the period from 2011 to 2014.

The Committee set to work immediately for greater representation of people of color on the reconstituted Committee and is committed to this goal as it continues to seek individuals to fill positions becoming vacant between now and 2014. The known members of the Committee through 2014 and the year their terms expire are now listed on the Web at <http://www.ncte.org/volunteer/groups/lgbtadcom>.

*Joseph Dial, Chair*

## NCTE Award for Excellence in Poetry for Children Selection Committee

**Charge:** To recommend on a regular basis every two years a living American poet to the NCTE Executive Committee for the [NCTE Award for Excellence in Poetry for Children](#) in recognition of his or her aggregate work; to sustain the collection of poetry books of award winners, past and future, in the [University of Minnesota, Kerlan Collection](#); to recognize and foster excellence in children's poetry by encouraging its publication; and to explore ways to acquaint teachers and children with poetry through such means as publications, programs, and displays.

[Read more](#) about the NCTE Poetry Award winners.

### What major actions or projects have been completed by your group pursuant to your charge since July 1, 2010?

The NCTE Award for Excellence in Poetry for Children Selection Committee continued to review the poetry books of possible nominees for the next award—to be announced at the 2010 NCTE Convention and presented at the 2011 NCTE Convention—prior to its working committee meeting in November 2010. Initial conversations on the topic began at the Philadelphia convention, and continued through the poetry listserv throughout the summer, culminating in the consideration of three poets whose body of poetic work seemed to stand them in good stead as poets worthy of this honor. In Orlando, the committee met in a closed session, and selected J. Patrick Lewis as the sixteenth winner of the NCTE Award for Excellence in Poetry for Children. The 2011 recipient has written more than 65 children's books and is known for his versatility as a poet. His poems are often humorous, but also, often tackle serious subjects. Once the nomination was voted on and Lewis was declared the unanimous recipient, the committee members phoned him at home to share the news. Needless to say, he was absolutely thrilled. At the Books for Children Luncheon, Committee Chair provided a brief rationale for Lewis's selection in announcing the 2011 Award Winner. (The award will be given during this year's annual convention in Chicago.)

Poetry Committee members Rebecca Kai Dotlich, Elaine Maglioro, Mary Napoli, and Terrell Young, appointed in 2009, continued to serve out their three-year terms while members Jonda C. McNair and Barbara A. Ward continued to serve their second three-year terms on the committee.

Additionally, the current committee (Dotlich, Maglioro, McNair, Napoli, Ward, & Young) presented its favorite poetry books from 2009 as well as a handful of favorites from 2010 at a well-attended session in Orlando. Handouts featuring notable poetry titles were provided to those in attendance at this interactive session featuring slides of the poetry book covers and plenty of audience participation. The current committee (Dotlich, Maglioro, McNair, Napoli, Ward, Young) also agreed to continue the committee's tradition of reading and annotating 2010 poetry titles for an article highlighting the best poetry titles of 2010 for an article in *Language Arts*. The article, submitted in January, appeared in the July issue of the journal under the title of "Tasting Seasoned Words of Joy: Notable Poetry Published in 2010. Images of the book jackets and detailed descriptions of the poetry books that caught the committee's attention filled 9 pages of the journal. For those interested, check out *Language Arts*, 88(6), 459-467. The editors of *Language Arts* have provided an attractive venue for bringing attention to children's poetry, and the Poetry Committee is hopeful that they will remain interested in doing so. Poetry books featured included: *Amazing Faces* (edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins), *Another Jar of Tiny Stars: Poems by More NCTE-Award Winning Poets* (edited by Bernice E. Cullinan & Deborah Wooten), *The Carnival of the Animals* (written by Jack Prelutsky), *Dark Emperor and Other Poems of the Night* (written by Joyce Sidman), *In the Wild* (written by David Elliott), *Lots of Spots* (written by Lois Ehlert), *Mirror Mirror: A Book of Reversible Verse* (written by Marilyn Singer), *One Big Rain: Poems for Rainy Days* (written by Rita Gray), *Our Farm: Written by the Animals of Farm Sanctuary* (written by Maya Gottfried), *Poetrees* (written by Douglas Florian), *Sharing the Seasons* (edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins), *Skywriting: Poems to Fly* (written by J. Patrick Lewis), *Switching on the Moon: A Very First Book of Bedtime Poems* (selected by Jane Yolen and Andrew Fusek Peters), *Time You Let Me In: 25 Poets Under 25* (selected by Naomi Shihab Nye), *Ubiquitous: Celebrating Nature's Survivors* (written by Joyce Sidman), and *Volcano Wakes Up!* (written by Lisa Westberg Peters); novels in verse included *Borrowed Names* (written by Jeannine Atkins), *The Firefly Letters: A Suffragette's Journey to Cuba* (written by Margarita Engle), *Three Rivers Rising: A Novel of the Johnstown Flood* (written by Jaime Richards), and *Wicked Girls: A Novel of the Salem Witch Trials* (written by Stephanie Hemphill)

Judging from the titles alone, publishers continue to be interested in publishing a broad selection of poetry, some from established poets and some from novices. The committee took care to include some novels in verse on the

list this year by request of former committee members and the *Language Arts* editors to show the expanding nature of poetry today.

Two members of the Poetry Committee also submitted two separate proposals for the 2011 NCTE Convention to share the members' passion for poetry. One session is intended to celebrate the life and words of the 2011 Poetry Award winner J. Patrick Lewis and will feature a speech by Lewis as well as the committee members sharing snippets of their favorite Lewis poems. The second session pays tribute to all the recipients of the Poetry Award from its founding in 1982 with six of the poets planning to be on hand to read their poetry after personal anecdotes about each one is shared. The poets who are no longer living or who will not be in attendance will have their work read by committee members and audience members.

**What projects, initiatives, or studies are "in progress" at this time?**

Work is ongoing in the preparation of the sessions honoring the past recipients of the award and the 2011 recipient. The Poetry Committee has requested funds from the Elementary Committee to defray the costs of 1,000 poetry posters celebrating the award and its winner to be presented in Chicago. Committee members are rereading Lewis's books and rereading the poetry books of the previous winners to select poems to be shared at the session(s).

The committee chair continues to update a data base of publishers' contact information to request poetry books for the committee members' consideration as well as reviewing blogs devoted to poetry in order to stay informed about 2011 poetry books.

Individually, several members of the committee have led sessions devoted to poetry on the local, state, and national level at various conferences, attempting to bring even more attention to poetry. Several committee members have either blogged or written articles in state, local, and regional journals about poetry.

The sub-committee formed last year to spell out more specific guidelines for the selection of poetry books named to the Notables list is continuing to refine its guidelines.

The committee had hoped to reconnect with the curators of the Kerlan Collection to determine what poetry books are missing. As stated last year, there has been some discussion about creating a collection of tapes of the NCTE Excellence in Poetry winners reading some of their poems, to be added to that collection, but no work has been accomplished in this area. This is a project that needs to be moved to the forefront so that the committee can make it a priority.

**Strategic Governance: Over the past few years, the NCTE Executive Committee has established outcomes and priorities relating to these key topics in our field Documenting Professional Learning, Assessment, [Closing the Achievement Gap](#), [NCTE and International Involvement](#), [Reading Research](#), [21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacies](#), and [Attracting, Supporting, and Advancing Early Career Educators](#). Currently, they are working on performance assessment of teachers and student learning. Does your group have research findings or suggestions to contribute that are relevant to on-going work on these strategic governance topics?**

Make this organization seem essential to professional growth and somewhat cutting edge. Provide free books to members when they renew or join for two years or some sort of incentive.

*Barbara Ward, Chair*

## Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction in Children's Literature

**Charge:** To select the recipient of the annual [Orbis Pictus Award](#) for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children and up to five honor books; to propose a session on nonfiction books for children and plan a session featuring the award winning author at NCTE's [Annual Convention](#); and to promote the use of nonfiction children's books in the classroom.

[Read more](#) about the Orbis Pictus Award selection process and view the current list of award-winning books.

As committee chairs, we are grateful for the support provided by the NCTE staff members, Debbie Zagorski and Linda Walters, who continue to supply encouragement, information, and patience.

### What major actions or projects have been completed by your group pursuant to your charge since July 1, 2010?

Since July 2010 the committee has announced the winner, honor, and recommended books of the 2010 collection of books in the article of reviews for *Language Arts* and at the national conference in 2010, during which the committee acknowledged a number of authors and illustrators at the children's literature luncheon. Hester Bass, E.B. Lewis, Alice B. McGinty, Pamela S. Turner, and Pegi Deitz Shea were honored. Later the authors participated in a round table author discussion about writing and illustrating books for young readers. The committee's selection of the 2010 collection was intensive and challenging because of the number of excellent and varied books published for young readers. Features and content are diverse and sometimes controversial; new forms such as the memoir and first-person biography, as well as superb photographs and design continue to renew, expand and invigorate the genre. The concerns about sources and documentation in books for the youngest readers continues to be part of committee discussions

The books presented at the 2010 conference, whose authors were honored, are as follows:

Winner of the 2010 Orbis Pictus Award

*\*The Secret World of Walter Anderson* by Hester Bass, illustrated by E.B. Lewis (Candlewick Press)

Honor Books for 2010

*\*Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream* by Tanya Lee Stone (Candlewick Press)

*\*Darwin: With Glimpses into His Private Journal and Letters* by Alice B. McGinty (Houghton Mifflin Books for Children)

*\*The Frog Scientist* by Pamela S. Turner (Houghton Mifflin Books for Children)

*\*How Many Baby Pandas?* by Sandra Markle (Walker Books for Young Readers)

*\*Noah Webster: Weaver of Words* by Pegi Deitz Shea (Calkins Creek Books)

Recommended Books for 2010

*\*The Boy Who Invented TV: The Story of Philo Farnsworth* by Kathleen Krull (Knopf Books for Young Readers)

*\*Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* by Phillip Hoose (Farrar Straus and Giroux);

*\*Eleanor, Quiet No More* by Doreen Rappaport (Hyperion Books for Children)

*\*The Grand Mosque of Paris: A Story of How Muslims Rescued Jews during the Holocaust* by Karen Gray Ruelle and Deborah Durland DeSaix (Holiday House)

*\*Life in the Boreal Forest* by Brenda Z. Guiberson (Henry Holt and Company)

*\*One Giant Leap* by Robert Burleigh (Philomel Books)

*\*Truce* by Jim Murphy (Scholastic)

*\*Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland* by Sally M. Walker (Carolrhoda Books)

At the November, 2010, conference, during the committee meeting, members discussed the nonfiction book titles that had been reviewed to this point.

The 2011 committee selected the winning, honor, and recommended books and submitted a review article to *Language Arts*. The completion of voting for the 2011 award occurred at the end of 2010 and the beginning of 2011. The 2011 collection will be presented at the November conference in Chicago. The following books have been selected for the 2011 collection:

Winner of the 2011 Orbis Pictus Award

*\*Ballet for Martha: Making Appalachian Spring* by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan, illustrated by Brian Floca (Roaring Brook Press)

Honor Books for 2011

*\*Birmingham Sunday* by Larry Dane Brimner (Calkins Creek)

*\*Candy Bomber: The Story of Berlin Airlift's Chocolate Pilot* by Michael O. Tunnell (Charlesbridge)

*\*If Stones Could Speak: Unlocking the Secrets of Stonehenge* by Mark Aronson (National Geographic)

*\*Journey into the Deep: Discovering New Ocean Creatures* by Rebecca L. Johnson (Millbrook Press)

*\*Mammoths and Mastodons: Titans of the Ice Age* by Cheryl Bardoe (Abrams Books for Young Readers)

Recommended Books for 2011

*\*Black Elk's Vision: A Lakota Story* by S. D. Nelson (Abrams Books for Young Readers)

*\*Dave the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave* by Laban Carrick Hill, illustrated by Bryan Collier (Little, Brown & Company)

*\*The Extraordinary Mark Twain (According to Suzy)* by Barbara Kerley, illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham (Scholastic Press)

*\*For Good Measure* by Ken Robbins (Roaring Brook Press)

*\*Henry Aaron's Dream* by Matt Tavares (Candlewick Press)

*\*Kakapo Rescue: Saving the World's Strangest Parrot* by Sy Montgomery, photographs by Nic Bishop (Houghton Mifflin)

*\*Polar Bears* by Mark Newman (Henry Holt and Company)

*\*They Called Themselves the KKK: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti (Houghton Mifflin)

### **What projects, initiatives, or studies are "in progress" at this time?**

The period since June 2011 saw the annual change in the committee. Two members, Diana Porter and Jeffrey Kaplan rotated off of the committee; they are no longer involved in book selection, but they will be part of the presentation of the 2011 books at the annual convention. Two new members joined the committee, Dr. Sue Parsons and Dr. Cyndi Giorgis. Continuing members of the committee are Barbara Chatton, Jan Kristo, Lisa Morris-Wilkey, and Deborah Thompson along with Fran Wilson, committee chair. The members are reviewing books published in 2011 in consideration for the 2012 award selection. The members of the committee reflect a range of professional experience, regional representation, diversity, and expertise with children's nonfiction literature. The committee will host several authors and an illustrator during the author presentation at the fall convention in Chicago. Following the NCTE convention, Kim Ford will officially complete her term as chair of the Orbis Pictus committee. The existing Orbis Pictus committee will select the 2012 winning, honor, and recommended books in January, submit a review article to *Language Arts*, and present the 2012 collection at the NCTE convention in Las Vegas. In January, the committee will also begin to read and evaluate submissions for the 2013 award.

As part of our charge to promote the use of nonfiction children's books in the classroom, committee members have taken it upon themselves to publicize the Orbis Pictus Award through presentations at local, state, and national conferences throughout the year. Presentations have been made at regional IRA conferences, meetings of NCTE state affiliates, librarians' conferences, and local district meetings. These presentations have been well received, and plans are underway to continue this effort during 2011-2012.

While presenting at conferences, members of the committee have discovered that teachers and librarians are eager for professional development that recommends quality nonfiction titles as well as instructional ideas for

their use in the classroom. The integration of nonfiction into literacy programs at any grade level continues to be a challenge and an issue, especially with the adoption of the Common Core language arts standards by the majority of the states. The Orbis Pictus Award Committee can support teachers by providing guidelines for the selection of quality nonfiction books as well as by suggesting ideas for the use of these books in the classroom.

*Kim Ford, Outgoing Chair*

*Fran Wilson, Chair*

## Promising Young Writers Advisory Committee

**Charge:** The NCTE [Promising Young Writers](#) program makes use of an advisory committee and state coordinators. Their charges are as follows:

**Promising Young Writers Committee:** To advise staff on the nature, policies, and procedures regarding the NCTE Promising Young Writer Awards, including the following issues: to develop a specific plan for involving more public schools in the awards, especially those with large non-white populations.

To prepare a written set of recommendations for the Executive Committee regarding the following: revision of the structure of the award to mitigate the negative effects of competition on student identity and learning; consideration and development of diversified awards: that recognize development of English Language Learners in writing in their first language as well as English composition; that recognize remarkable improvement or growth in writing; that recognize multi-modal composition (digital or non-digital); and that recognize remarkable risk-taking with the process of writing, instead of the exclusive focus on the final draft.

To consider and make recommendations for ways that the work might interface with NCTE's [National Day on Writing](#).

**State Coordinators:** To advise the NCTE staff liaison on any changes that should be made in the Promising Young Writers program; to review judging procedures; to recommend judges; to recommend ways to publicize the program; to coordinate judging of papers within the state; to help disseminate information about the winners; and to suggest topics for the impromptu theme.

For information on the Promising Young Writers Program, [click here](#).

### What major actions or projects have been completed by your group pursuant to your charge since July 1, 2009?

1. In light of NCTE's decision to move the submissions and judging processes online, the committee engaged in a comprehensive review of all aspects of the Promising Young Writers (PYW) program. We recommended 12 major changes related to nominations, entries, judging and recommendation. These changes include special attention to how the program might encourage participation from English Language Learners.

### What projects, initiatives, or studies are "in progress" at this time?

1. We are enthusiastic about NCTE's decision to move the PYW program online and await news about the ways in which the Council will act on the recommendations we submitted in May 2011.
2. When we receive news about the implementation of the online program, we will be able to develop the prompt for the thematic writing for the 2012 program.

**Strategic Governance:** Over the past few years, the NCTE Executive Committee has established outcomes and priorities relating to these key topics in our field [Closing the Achievement Gap](#), [NCTE and International Involvement](#), [Reading Research](#), [21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacies](#), and [Attracting, Supporting, and Advancing Early Career Educators](#). Currently, they are working on performance assessment of teachers and student learning. Does your group have research findings or suggestions to contribute that are relevant to on-going work on these strategic governance topics?

- We urge the Council to adopt our recommendations for piloting PYW entries in new-media composing. It is the committee's view that this step would enact NCTE views on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacies.

*Leah Zuidema, Chair*

## Public Language Awards Committee

**Charge:** To select the recipients of the annual [George Orwell Award for Distinguished Contribution to Honesty and Clarity in Public Language](#) and [The Doublespeak Award](#). The NCTE Orwell Award, established in 1975, recognizes writers who have made outstanding contributions to the critical analysis of public discourse. The NCTE Doublespeak Award, established in 1974, is an ironic tribute to public speakers who have perpetuated language that is grossly deceptive, evasive, euphemistic, confusing, or self-centered.

### **What major actions or projects have been completed by your group pursuant to your charge since July 1, 2010?**

We chose both the Orwell and the Doublespeak “winners.”

We also sent out invitations to a number of people to join us on the committee. Three have responded and will join our ranks in November, 2011, in Chicago.

### **What projects, initiatives, or studies are “in progress” at this time?**

We are just gearing up to start our consideration of this year’s Doublespeak and Orwell winners.

*Jean Boreen, Chair*