

# The National Book Awards For Young People's Literature

The National Book Awards are our nation's preeminent literary prizes. Today, the Awards are given to recognize achievements in four genres: Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, and, as of 1996, Young People's Literature. The Winners, selected by five-member, independent judging panels for each genre are announced each November. For more information, please visit: [www.nationalbook.org](http://www.nationalbook.org). Here are the Young People's Literature winners:

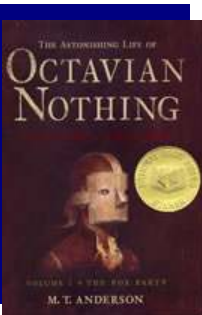
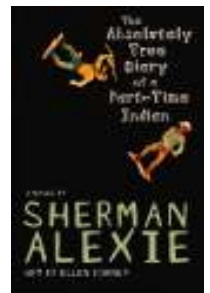


## 2008 What I Saw and How I Lied by Judy Blundell

15-year-old Evie grows up quickly when she discovers her adored parents are not the people she thought they were. Evie's parents, Joe and Bev, get involved in a shady business deal with the Graysons, another couple on holiday in Palm Springs. Meanwhile, Evie begins a flirtation with Peter, a handsome ex-GI, who served with Joe. Evie soon learns that Peter's presence is no coincidence and that he threatens to uncover a terrible secret that Joe has kept since the war. Bev, Joe, and Peter go boating, but only two of them return. Evie must sort through secrets, lies, and her own grief to find the truth. This novel has all the markings of a classic noir.

## 2007 Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

Arnold Spirit, a goofy-looking dork with a decent jumpshot, spends his time lamenting life on the "poor-ass" Spokane Indian reservation, drawing cartoons (which accompany, and often provide more insight than the narrative), and, along with his aptly named pal Rowdy, laughing those laughs over anything and nothing that affix best friends so intricately together. When a teacher pleads with Arnold to want more, to escape the hopelessness of the rez, Arnold switches to a rich white school and immediately becomes as much an outcast in his own community as he is a curiosity in his new one. Based on the author's own experiences, this heartbreaking yet funny story chronicles the adolescence of one contemporary Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he seems destined to live.

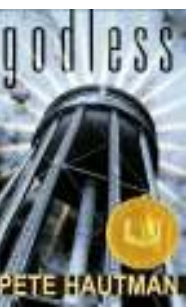
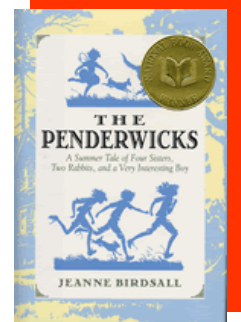


## 2006 The Pox Party : Volume 1 of The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation by M.T. Anderson

It sounds like a fairy tale. He is a boy dressed in silks and white wigs and given the finest of classical educations. Raised by a group of rational philosophers known only by numbers, the boy and his mother - a princess in exile from a faraway land - are the only persons in their household assigned names. As the boy's regal mother, Cassiopeia, entertains the house scholars with her beauty and wit, young Octavian begins to question the purpose behind his guardians' fanatical studies. Only after he dares to open a forbidden door does he learn the hideous nature of their experiments - and his own chilling role in them.

## 2005 The Penderwicks by Jeanne Birdsall

Four sisters and their widowed father spend three enchanted weeks at a summer cottage: Rosalind experiences the poignancy of first unrequited love; Skye confronts a tyrannical, aristocratic neighbor; Jane writes a new book about her favorite detective heroine; and little Batty befriends two rabbits. This enormously heartwarming and satisfying novel honors and enriches the beloved tradition of the classic children's family story. The Penderwicks are worthy companions to Alcott's March sisters—endearing and enduring characters whose company we can cherish.



## 2004 Godless by Pete Hautman

Fed up with his parents' boring old religion, agnostic-going-on-atheist Jason Bock invents a new god — the town's water tower. He recruits an unlikely group of worshippers: his snail-farming best friend, Shin, cute-as-a-button (whatever that means) Magda Price, and the violent and unpredictable Henry Stagg. As their religion grows, it takes on a life of its own. While Jason struggles to keep the faith pure, Shin obsesses over writing their bible, and the explosive Henry schemes to make the new faith even more exciting — and dangerous.

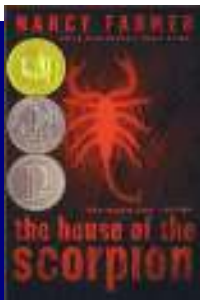
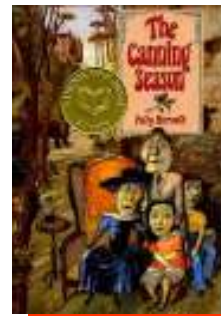
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Annotations are from Novelist, Barnes & Noble and the National Book Award judges.



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## 2003 The Canning Season by Polly Horvath

One night out of the blue, Ratchet Clark's ill-natured mother tells her that Ratchet will be leaving their Pensacola apartment momentarily to take the train up north. There she will spend the summer with her aged relatives Penpen and Tilly, inseparable twins who couldn't look more different from each other. Staying at their secluded house, Ratchet is treated to a passel of strange family history and local lore, along with heaps of generosity and care that she has never experienced before. Also, Penpen has recently espoused a new philosophy-whatever shows up on your doorstep you have to let in.



## 2002 The House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer

Matt's last name is Alacrán, which means that he belongs to a powerful family that controls the drug Farms between the U.S. and the former Mexico. But Matt's different; he's a clone in a world filled with dangers for his kind. His only protection from the brutal surroundings are El Patron, the elderly patriarch/drug lord kingpin from which he was made, his caretaker Celia, and a bodyguard who has been assigned to him. Things fall apart when Matt learns the real reason for his creation and he makes a harrowing escape to a promising -- yet frighteningly insecure -- world.

## 2001 True Believer by Virginia E. Wolff

We have a multitude of obstacles to overcome here. We'll begin. When LaVaughn was little, the obstacles in her life didn't seem so bad. If she had a fight with Myrtle or Annie, it would never last long. If she was mad at her mother, they made up by bedtime. School was simple. Boys were buddies. Everything made sense. But LaVaughn is fifteen and the obstacles aren't going away anymore. Big questions separate her from her friends. Her mother is distracted by a new man. School could slip away from her so easily. And the boy who's a miracle in her life acts just as if he's in love with her. Only he's not in love with her.

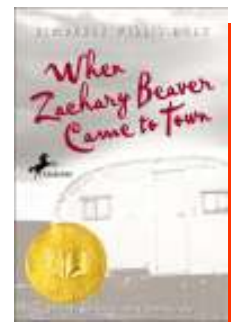


## 2000 Homeless Bird by Gloria Whelan

Like many girls her age in India, thirteen-year-old Koly is getting married. When she discovers that the husband her parents have chosen for her is a sickly boy with wicked parents, Koly wishes that she could flee. But on her wedding day, her fate is sealed. Then Koly's life takes an unexpected turn. Finding herself in a city of widows begging for food, this rare you woman sets out to forge her own future.

## 1999 When Zachary Beaver Came to Town by Kimberly W. Holt

Nothing ever happens in Toby's small Texas town. Nothing much until this summer that's full of big changes. It's tough for Toby when his mother leaves home to become a country singer. And Toby takes it hard when his best friend Cal's older brother goes off to fight in Vietnam. But now their sleepy town is about to get an even bigger jolt with the arrival of Zachary Beaver, billed as the fattest boy in the world. Toby is in for a summer unlike any other, a summer sure to change his life.



## 1998 Holes by Louis Sachar

Stanley Yelnats is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnats. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the warden makes the boys "build character" by spending all day, every day, digging holes: five feet wide and five feet deep. It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake. The boys are digging holes because the warden is looking for something. Stanley tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment—and redemption.

