



## **Thumbs Up! Award Workgroup**

Approved September 2021

### **General Workgroup Description**

The MLA Thumbs Up! Award Workgroup considers hundreds of teen books published in the calendar year, each year, to determine the very best books for youth. The Thumbs Up! Award recognizes and promotes an outstanding contribution to teen literature that has both literary quality and teen appeal for those 13 to 18 years of age. The Thumbs Up! Award was established in 1986 by the Teen Services Division of the Michigan Library Association. From 2001 to 2020 the selection process for the winner included a teen vote. Beginning in 2021, the book from the Top Ten Titles with the most teen votes is named the Teen's Choice. Workgroup members will utilize their critical skills to choose the award and will improve their reader's advisory skills.

### **Workgroup Membership and Meetings**

The workgroup will be made up to 14 MLA members. The MLA Membership and Communications Director will serve as staff liaison.

All workgroup members are required to attend a virtual MLA volunteer development training. The first workgroup meeting will be in July, either in-person or virtually. Workgroup meetings are typically scheduled every other month from July through June and range from 1 – 3 hours long each. Meetings may take place in person or virtually as determined by the group members. Reading, reviewing and other assigned duties beyond the workgroup meetings vary and will require extra time.

### **Authority and Responsibilities**

The Thumbs Up! Award Workgroup is responsible for reading, reviewing and evaluating eligible titles and voting to determine the group's Top Ten Titles, honor books and winner.

### **Workgroup Member Responsibilities:**

Active participation in reading and reviewing books on the reading list assembled by the chair; participate in meetings as scheduled; provide top title choices to workgroup chair as requested; participate in final vote to determine the winning and honor books; actively promote the award within your own library and related networks.

- The workgroup will read all suggested titles throughout the volunteer year and communicate with each other through means established and agreed upon by MLA and the workgroup Chair
- Beginning in January the vice Chairperson will compile titles receiving at least two starred reviews in library journals.
- The workgroup will hold its first meeting by July 31

- A second mandatory meeting must take place by October 31. This may be done in person, by conference call or by videoconferencing.
- Outside of the mandatory October meeting, the workgroup will meet as needed July through February after each Top 10 list.
- The final meeting to select the Top Ten Titles, winner and honor books must be held by February 15.

### **Workgroup Chair Responsibilities:**

Assemble and maintain a reading list based on ratings from selected sources; identify promotional opportunities with MLA staff to raise awareness of the award; distribute nominations to workgroup members; schedule meetings; develop meeting agendas; encourage productive communication and opportunities to participate; coordinate workgroup vote; notify MLA staff of the winning and honor books; present the award at Spring Institute

The Chair of the Thumbs Up! Award Workgroup is responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining the workgroup reading list and distributing nominations to workgroup members
- Planning, coordinating and presiding over meetings
- Developing an agenda for each meeting
- Taking meeting notes or appointing a workgroup member to take notes
- Keeping track of the number of books read and approximate number of hours read
- Coordinating voting for the winner and honor books and ensuring guidelines are followed
- Notifying MLA office of the winner and honor books
- Work with the MLA office to publicize the winner on the MLA website, in the MLA Update and on MLA's Facebook and Twitter and other press releases. No separate Facebook page should be used to promote the award.

### **Committee Terms**

One year.

### **Chair and Vice Chair Selection**

The committee will have a Chair and Vice-Chair as selected and approved by MLA, who serve a one-year leadership term. A Vice-Chair may be appointed for a two-year term and will serve the first year as Vice-Chair and the second year as Chair.

### **Qualifications**

This is an opportunity for an individual who is passionate about teen literature with an interest in or desire to read books for teens, critical literature evaluation skills, ability to plan and meet deadlines, decision-making ability and clear communication.

### **Service Without Remuneration**

Service on Michigan Library Association's Workgroups are without remuneration or additional discounts for event attendance.

# Thumbs Up! Award Qualifications

## Qualifications:

- The Thumbs Up! Award will be given annually to the author of an original work for teens, fiction or nonfiction, published in the U.S. from January 1 – December 31.
- A teen, for the award’s purpose, is someone between 13 and 18 years of age. The book must appeal to this age group, both in respect to its characters and setting, as well as in terms of subject and theme.
- Selections will be made based on the suggested guidelines for the Young Adult Library Services Association’s Michael L Printz award. The guidelines include story, setting, theme, voice, accuracy, illustrations (if any), style, characters, and design.
- An author may include co-authors or editor(s).

## Eligibility:

- Any book that is published from January 1 – December 31 for teens, ages 13-18, may be nominated for the award.
- Books originally published outside the U.S. are eligible, provided that their first U.S. printing occurred during the eligibility period.

## Book Selection Process:

- The initial identification of titles for consideration will come from starred reviews in library journals (ex. Horn Book, Kirkus, School Library Journal, VOYA) and require a minimum of two starred reviews.
- Michigan librarians, regardless of MLA membership status, may freely submit nominations. Publishers may submit nominations of books that meet the criteria, but they will be required to provide copies of the book for the workgroup to review.
- Nominations may be submitted from January 1 to December 31.

**Presentation of Award:** The author of the award-winning title will be invited to accept the award at the Spring Institute Conference. If the author is able to attend the conference to accept the award, the award shall be presented by the Chair of the workgroup. If the Chair is unable to fulfill this duty, a member of the workgroup will present the award in his or her place.

## Thumbs Up! Award Timeline

January 1	If a Vice Chair was appointed, the Workgroup Vice Chair will start collecting titles from starred reviews Call for nominations goes out
April/May	Select workgroup members through MLA Call for Volunteers
By June 30	Chair receives list of workgroup members
By July 31	Chair distributes initial reading list and workgroup guidelines
By July 31	Mandatory meeting of Thumbs Up! Award Workgroup
July - February	Meet as needed (virtually or in-person).

February 15	Final meeting held by this date Notify the MLA office of the Top Ten Titles, Winner and Honor Books
February 28	Announce Top Ten Titles and Open Teen Vote
March 15	Teen Vote closes
March/April	Announce Thumbs Up! Award winner and honor books and Teen choice at Spring Institute
Spring Institute	Thumbs Up! Award presented by workgroup Chair