



Thumbs Up! Award Guidelines

Purpose: The purpose of the award is to recognize and promote an outstanding contribution to teen literature that has both literary quality and teen appeal for those 13 to 18 years of age. Librarians will gain reader's advisory and critical thinking skills, while promoting quality literature at their home libraries.

Background: The Thumbs Up! Award was established in 1986 by the Teen Services Division of the Michigan Library Association. Since 2001, the selection process has also included a teen vote.

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 work group to review.
- Nominations may be submitted from January 1 to December 31.

Criteria and Selection:

- Distribution of the initial list of books gathered from review sources and nominations must be distributed to the group by the Chair on or before July 31.
- The list will be updated monthly and distributed to the members of the work group by the Chair, or a work group member appointed by the Chair. Members will be reading from this list throughout the year. Discussion amongst the members of possible contenders is encouraged.
- By February 28, the work group will determine a list of Top Ten titles through a majority vote.
- The Top Ten list will be distributed to librarians through MLA endorsed measures. Teen votes will be solicited by digital and online means approved and developed by MLA through May and must be submitted by May 31st to be counted.
- Teen votes will be tabulated by the Chair and count as one vote equal to one committee member.
- The committee will meet a final time by mid-June. Scores are tabulated and the one with the most points is the Thumbs Up winner. In the event of a tie, a second vote will be conducted between the titles involved in the tie, and the book that receives the highest points or (in the case of a second tie) the most top votes is the winner. All remaining titles from the Top Ten list are eligible to be named an Honor book, with no more than four honor books total.
- The Award will be announced at the MLA Annual Conference. The year of the award will match the year that it is selected and announced. Presentation will take place the following spring at Spring Institute.

Thumbs Up! Work Group:

- The work group will consist of a Chair, a Vice Chair, and up to sixteen members drawn from current MLA members. A Vice Chair may be appointed and will serve the first year as Vice Chair and the second year as Chair.

- The Vice Chair is the only position that is required to serve two years, the first year as Vice Chair and the second year as Chair. The Vice Chair will assist the Chair in compiling the initial list of titles, as well as receive orientation and guidance from the Chair.
- The Thumbs Up! Work Group will be assigned by the MLA office from the Call for Volunteers.
- The work group will communicate on a regular basis through means established and agreed upon by MLA and the work group Chair.

Work Group Chair:

The work group Chair shall be responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining the work group reading list and distributing nominations to work group committee members
- Scheduling and coordinating meetings with MLA office
- Developing an agenda for each meeting
- Taking meeting notes or appointing a work group member to take notes
- Keeping track of the number of books read and approximate number of hours read
- Coordinating voting for the winner
- Tabulating results of the work group final vote and the teen vote.
- Notifying MLA office of the winner and honor books.
- Work with MLA to notify the Spring Institute work group Chair of the winner. The Spring Institute work group will then coordinate travel and hotel for the author.
- 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.

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 can attend the conference to accept the award, the award shall be presented by the Chair of the work group. If the Chair is unable to fulfill this duty, a member of the work group will present the award in his or her place.

Thumbs Up! Award Timeline

January 1	Start collecting titles from starred reviews (Work Group Vice Chair)
April-May	MLA Call for Volunteers
By June 30	Chair receives list of work group members from MLA
By July 31	Mandatory work group orientation and first meeting and of work group members
By July 31	Distribute first reading list and award guidelines to work group members
July-February	Meet as needed (virtual or in-person), following each Top 10 list
By February 28	Top 10 votes due to Work Group Chair
March-May	Final Top 10 list goes online statewide for teen voting-MLA office
By mid-June	Final meeting Notify the MLA office of the winner and honor books
July-August	MLA staff notifies Spring Institute work group Chair of winner and notifies and invites winner to accept award at Spring Institute
October	Announce Thumbs Up! Award winner and honor books at MLA Annual Conference
Spring Institute	If the Award winner is available to attend Spring Institute, the award is presented by the Thumbs Up! Work Group Chair.