



MASSBOOKS OF THE YEAR/ CHILDREN'S/YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

*Recommended Reading from the 10th Annual Massachusetts Book Awards
(Books Published in 2009)*

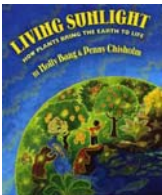
Picture books



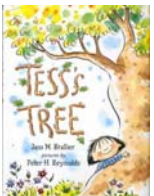
A Book by Mordicai Gerstein (Roaring Brook). This highly original take on literary genres and self-determination, among other things, uses a unique visual perspective, charming humor and characters who involve the reader as a participant in the story.



Pennies for Elephants by Lita Judge (Disney-Hyperion). Based on actual events that occurred in 1914, this delightful book tells the story of how the children of Boston bought elephants for the zoo by raising the funds pennies at a time.



Living Sunlight by Molly Bang & Penny Chisholm (Scholastic). The authors introduce photosynthesis and the interconnectedness of all life on earth through accessible text and elaborate artwork that bursts with energy.



Tess's Tree by Jess M. Brallier (HarperCollins). Tess is forced to deal with the loss of her much-loved tree in this beautifully written text, with illustrations by Peter Reynolds. An easy way to introduce young readers to the concept of grief and the healing process.

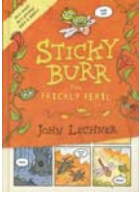


Under the Snow by Melissa Stewart (Peachtree). A fascinating and insightful look at the lives of creatures during the cold winter month. Vivid & beautiful illustrations by Constance R. Bergum draw in readers of all ages.

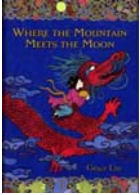
Middle Grade



Newsgirl by Liza Ketchum (Viking Children's Books). Twelve-year-old Amelia Forrester, a Bostonian transplanted to San Francisco in 1851, chops off her hair, dons a cap and trousers, and takes to the streets to sell newspapers in a story told with strong characters, rich history and lots of adventure, that touches, as well, on non-traditional families.



Sticky Burr and the Prickly Peril by John Lechner (Candlewick). Mean-spirited Scurvy Burr tells the story of how, with the help of Burweena, an evil banished member of the Burr clan, he tries to get rid of Sticky Burr and take over Burrwood Forest. This comic-illustrated book presents themes of tolerance, forgiveness, and caring.

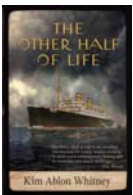


Where the Mountain Meets the Moon by Grace Lin (Little, Brown). A young girl named Minli takes an epic journey seeking fortune and wisdom in this beautifully designed and illustrated novel blending Chinese folktales with the Wizard of Oz. A Newbery Honor Book.

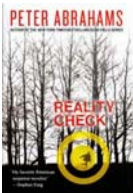
Young Adult



Marcelo in the Real World by Francisco X. Stork (Scholastic). The coming-of-age story of a young man with Asperger's forced to take a summer job in the "real world" (his father's Boston law firm) explores issues of spirituality, sexuality and the human condition.



The Other Half of Life by Kim Ablon Whitney (Knopf). Based on the ill-fated 1939 voyage of the *St. Louis*, this novel sensitively explores politics, hope, betrayal, and resourcefulness through teen protagonists who are refugees from Hitler's Germany.



Reality Check by Peter Abrahams (HarperCollins). High-school drop-out Cody, 16, travels across the country to solve a mystery -- Who has kidnapped his girlfriend from her Vermont boarding school? – in a fast-paced thriller with a compelling fish-out-of-water main character.



The Secret Keeper by Mitali Perkins (Delacorte). In 1970s India, 17-year-old Asha and her older sister use strength and wits to face life-changing decisions in the context of societal and familial traditions that limit women's ability to shape their futures.

Judges for the 10th MassBooks in Children's/Young Adult Literature: Jen Cusack, Foundation for Children's Books; Faith Kaufman, Forbes Library, Northampton; Ted Schelvan, Norwell High School Library
The Massachusetts Book Awards are a program of the Massachusetts Center for the Book, on the web at www.massbook.org.