

MOCK CALDECOTT

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Randolph Caldecott Medal, named after the groundbreaking 19th-century children’s illustrator, is awarded by the American Library Association each year. (To learn more about Randolph Caldecott, read [Tomfoolery! Randolph Caldecott and the Rambunctious Coming-of-Age of Children’s Books](#) by Michelle Markle and Barbara McClintock.) More information, including a list of Award Criteria, is available on the [ALA website](#).

ABOUT THE AWARD

Who chooses the winner? A small group of librarians from throughout the United States are chosen to serve on the Caldecott Award committee. They read hundreds of picture books before meeting in person to select the winner. No one knows exactly what happens in the discussions because committee members are sworn to secrecy.

How many books can win each year? The book with the best illustrations is awarded the Caldecott Medal. The committee can also make a short list of Caldecott Honor books, which are tied for second place. They usually choose 1-4 books to be Honor books.

What kind of book can win? A book for children age 0-14 written by an American author or published in the United States in the previous year. Since it’s an illustration award, the Caldecott Medal usually goes to a picture book but graphic novels and illustrated chapter books have won, too!

When are the awards announced? The winner will be selected at LibLearnX in Baltimore, Maryland and announced on January 22, 2024. You can watch the [live webcast or a replay](#) on the ALA website.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Read the story without sharing the pictures the first time, then read it a second time with the pictures. How do the illustrations show, extend, or enhance the words of the story?
- Cover up the words and “read” the story using just the pictures. Then, read the story with the words. Were you able to understand the plot, characters, and meaning through the illustrations alone?
- Discuss the interactions between the words and the pictures in the book. How do the illustrations show, extend, or enhance the story, theme, plot, characters, setting, or mood?
- Use the verso (back side of the title page), end notes, or author’s website to learn more about how the illustrations were made. Does the choice of medium tie in to the story in some way?

MORE RESOURCES

For more ideas about how to discuss Caldecott books with your students, Travis Jonker at 100 Scope Notes has a guide to his [Mock Caldecott 2024](#) school library program and The Horn Book has a [Calling Caldecott](#) blog devoted to discussing eligible books, including winners from the last decade. You can also send your questions to Oregon City Public Library staff at childrens@orc.org.

This activity supports ELA standard RL.7

