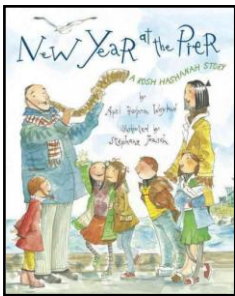


# THE 2010 SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARDS

These outstanding titles were selected from among the over one hundred twenty titles evaluated by the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee of the Association of Jewish Libraries during 2009. The Committee recommends them for library, classroom, and home use. Visit [www.SydneyTaylorBookAward.org](http://www.SydneyTaylorBookAward.org) for more information about the Sydney Taylor Book Awards, including previous winners.

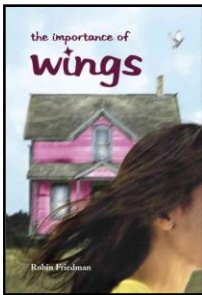
## THE SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARD FOR YOUNGER READERS:



**Wayland, April Halprin. *New Year at the Pier: A Rosh Hashanah Story.* Illustrations by Stéphane Jorisch. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-080373279-7.**

The author employs her own memories of community *tashlich* at the beach in this loving, charmingly illustrated description of Izzy and his family and friends as they gently apologize for misdeeds, grant forgiveness, and toss breadcrumbs into the sea as part of their Rosh Hashanah observance. (Grades 1-4)

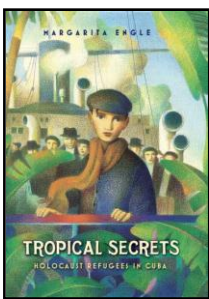
## THE SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARD FOR OLDER READERS:



**Friedman, Robin. *The Importance of Wings.* Watertown, Massachusetts: Charlesbridge Publishing, 2009. ISBN: 978-158-89330-5.**

The title of this coming-of-age novel refers to both the layered hairstyle Roxanne wants but cannot achieve with her straight locks, and what happens when an Israeli teen who wants to be more American discovers her inner beauty and self confidence with the help of a friend. (Grades 5-8)

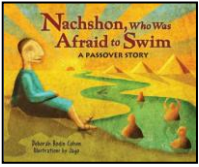
## THE SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARD FOR TEEN READERS:



**Engle, Margarita. *Tropical Secrets: Holocaust Refugees in Cuba.* New York: Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-080508936-3.**

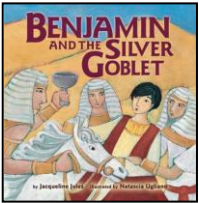
Newbery Honor Winner Engle continues to illuminate the lesser known history of Cuba: the challenge of German refugees seeking a new home there after Kristallnacht. Free verse in the voices of a German boy, a Cuban girl, and a Russian immigrant paint different perspectives of a complicated political and historical era. (Grades 7-12)

## SYDNEY TAYLOR HONOR BOOKS FOR YOUNGER READERS:



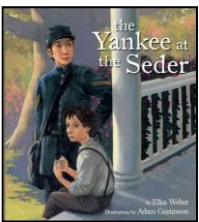
**Cohen, Deborah Bodin. *Nachshon, Who Was Afraid to Swim: A Passover Story*. Illustrated by Jago. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-082258765-1.**

Nachshon is not afraid of anything, except swimming. As the Jews leave Egypt, he realizes that in order to reach freedom he must face his fears and step into the water of the Red Sea. Imaginative artwork complements this story based on the *Midrash*. (Grades K-4)



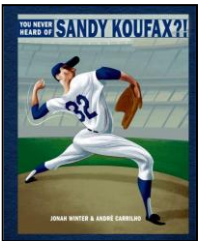
**Jules, Jacqueline. *Benjamin and the Silver Goblet*. Illustrations by Natascia Ugliano. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-082258758-3.**

Benjamin, the youngest of Jacob's sons, must accompany his brothers to Egypt and meet the governor (Joseph). This young boy's perspective of events remains true to the biblical narration while making it accessible to younger readers. (Grades K-4)



**Weber, Elka. *Yankee at the Seder*. Illustrations by Adam Gustavson. Berkeley, California: Tricycle Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-58246-256-1.**

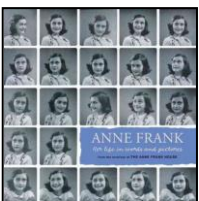
Based on a true tale, this beautifully illustrated story recounts the participation of a "Yankee Jew," Myer Levy, as a guest at a Virginia Passover Seder shortly after the end of the Civil War. Ten-year-old Jacob sees the words of the *Haggadah* ring true, as all who are hungry are welcome at the table. (Grades 1-5)



**Winter, Jonah. *You Never Heard of Sandy Koufax?* Illustrations by André Carrilho. New York: Schwartz & Wade Books, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2009. ISBN: 978-0375837388.**

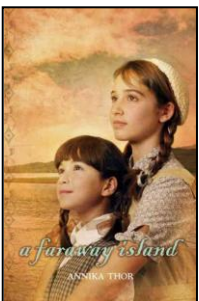
Koufax's rise from a Jewish boy in Brooklyn to one of the all-time greats of baseball as a Los Angeles Dodger is told in conversational style by an imagined teammate. A lenticular cover and magnificent artwork brings the left-hander's style to life. (Grades 2-5)

## SYDNEY TAYLOR HONOR BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS:



**Metselaar, Menno and Ruud van der Rol. *Anne Frank: Her Life in Words and Pictures from the Archives of the Anne Frank House*. Translated by Arnold J. Pomerans. New York: Roaring Brook Press/Flash Point, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-1596435469.**

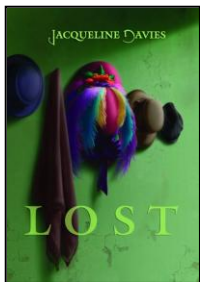
Archival photographs of Anne and her family, her actual writing and diary, and the annex are powerful and instrumental in bringing her life into context. The text details world events as well as Anne's life. (Grades 5-8)



**Thor, Annika. *A Faraway Island*. Translated by Linda Schenck. New York: Delacorte Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2009. ISBN: 978-0385736176.**

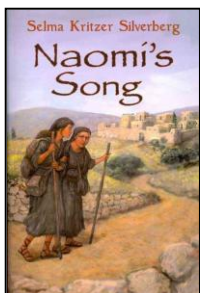
Stephie and Ellie Steiner are sent from Vienna to Sweden to escape the Nazi threat, and must adjust to life on a small island off the mainland. Stephie comes of age as she meets the challenge of a new culture, a strict foster mother, and the worries about family in Austria. (Grades 5-8)

## SYDNEY TAYLOR HONOR BOOKS FOR TEEN READERS:



**Davies, Jacqueline. *Lost*. Tarrytown, New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2009. ISBN: 978-0761455356.**

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire provides the backdrop for this historical novel about friendship and loss. (Grades 7-12)



**Silverberg, Selma Kritzer. *Naomi's Song*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2009. ISBN: 978-0827608863.**

Following the biblical Book of Ruth, *Naomi's Song* imagines the life experiences of Naomi, taking her from girlhood when she is orphaned to when Ruth marries and gives birth to Naomi's grandson. (Grades 7-10)

## SYDNEY TAYLOR NOTABLE BOOKS FOR YOUNGER READERS:

**Abraham, Michelle Shapiro. *Where Is Grandpa Dennis?* Illustrations by Janice Fried. New York: URJ Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-0807410837.**

Gentle and wise, Devorah's mother (Grandpa Dennis' daughter) allows her to come up with her own answers and also helps her daughter feel a special closeness to her lost loved one by explaining some of the Jewish modes of remembrance. (Grades 2-5)

**Berman, Seryl. *Around the Shabbos Table*. Illustrated by Ari Binus. Brooklyn, New York: Hachai Publishing, 2009. ISBN: 978-1929628445.**

"In any seat, no matter where, in any spot, in any chair, whether it is here or there, I'll be happy anywhere!" is Tova Leiba's refrain as she gladly switches seats to accommodate her siblings. (Preschool-Grade 2)

**Greene, Jacqueline Dembar. *The Secret Shofar of Barcelona*. Illustrated by Douglas Chyka. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-0822599449.**

A concert with "New World" instruments provides the opportunity for Conversos (hidden Jews) to blow the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah. (Grades 2-5)

**Heller, Esther Susan. *Menorah Under the Sea*. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-0822573869.**

A beautifully photographed story shares the adventures of marine biologist, David Ginsberg, as he creates an underwater menorah out of starfish and sea urchins. (Grades 1-4)

**Heller, Linda. *Today Is the Birthday of the World*. Illustrations by Allison Jay. New York: Dutton Children's Books, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-0525479055.**

Drawn from the liturgy of Rosh Hashanah, God is happy when his helpers are the best that they can be because "then the world is the best place that it can be, and there is no better birthday present." (Preschool-Grade 2)

**Levy, Leah Braunstein. *The Waiting Wall*. Illustrations by Avi Katz. Brooklyn, New York: Hachai Publishing, 2009. ISBN: 978-1929628490.**

As two children visit the Western Wall in Jerusalem, they notice the details of their surroundings: the many steps to get there, the whiteness of the stone and its golden reflection of the sun, the shapes of the stones, and the special feeling of holiness that permeates this most holy site to Judaism. Amazing illustrations chronicle their path, providing both perspective and depth. (Grades K-3)

**Ofanansky, Allison. *Sukkot Treasure Hunt*. Photographs by Eliyahu Alpern. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-0822587637.**

A family collects the four species needed to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in the area surrounding their home in Tsfat, Israel. (Preschool-Grade 3)

**Reid, Barbara. *Fox Walked Alone*. Park Ridge, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company, 2009. ISBN: 978-0807525487.**

Fox follows the pairs of animals he sees, and eventually comes to Noah's Ark. Plasticine is the medium used to create vibrant, three-dimensional art for this story in rhyme. (Preschool-Grade 2)

### **SYDNEY TAYLOR NOTABLE BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS:**

**Bogacki, Tomek. *The Champion of Children: The Story of Janusz Korczak*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers/Frances Foster Books, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-0374341367.**

A warm, moral, true story, with beautiful illustrations, about a Holocaust hero, Dr. Janusz Korczak, who loved children and cared for Jewish orphans until they, and he, perished in the gas chambers. (Grades 6-8)

**Clark, Kathy. *Guardian Angel House (A Holocaust Remembrance Book for Young Readers)*. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-1897187586.**

Based on the experiences of the author's mother and aunt, this fictionalized story of more than 100 girls hidden in a Budapest convent from 1944 until the liberation of Hungary emphasizes the relationships between the nuns and the Jewish children they sheltered. (Grades 5-8)

**Greene, Jacqueline Dembar. *Rebecca Series (American Girl Collection)*. Illustrated by Robert Hunt. Middleton, Wisconsin: American Girl, 2009. ISBN: Various.**

The latest historical character in the American Girl Collection lives on the Lower East Side in 1914, hopes to be an actress, and tries to balance an American way of life with traditional Jewish values. (Grades 3-6)

**Hoberman, Mary Ann. *Strawberry Hill*. Illustrated by Wendy Anderson Halperin. New York: Little Brown Books for Young Readers, 2009. ISBN: 978-0316041362.**

When her family moves from New Haven to Stamford, Allie Sherman has to adjust to making new friends, juggle alliances, and handle the disappointment that her new street, Strawberry Hill, is not the bucolic, strawberry-laden lane she had envisioned. (Grades 3-5)

**Martin, Russell and Lydia Nibley. *The Mysteries of Beethoven's Hair*. Watertown, Massachusetts: Charlesbridge Publishing, 2009. ISBN: 978-1570917141.**

There is considerable Jewish content in this excellent and highly readable account of Beethoven's life, the posthumous travels of a lock of his hair, and the search for clues to his illnesses via sophisticated scientific testing in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Grades 5-8)

**Vogel, Carol Garbuny and Yossi Leshem. *The Man Who Flies with Birds*. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-0822576433.**

Readers will learn about different kinds of birds, how they fly, and how the weather and wind affect their migration. Israeli ornithologist Leshem's work has encouraged cooperation between Israel and its Arab neighbors, and is helping with environmental concerns, which are recounted in a narrative accompanied by spectacular pictures of birds and clear maps and illustrations. (Grades 4-8)

**Watts, Irene N. *Clay Man: The Golem of Prague*. Illustrated by Kathryn E. Shoemaker. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2009. ISBN: 978-0887768804.**

There are many legends of the man of mud created by Rabbi Yehudah Loew to help the Jews of Prague during the precarious times of the late 1500's. This retelling by the *Maharal's* imagined young son works well to illustrate the wonder at this strange and mighty creature. (Grades 5-8)

**Weil, Sylvia. *Elvina's Mirror*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2009. ISBN: 978-0827608856. .**

In this sequel to *Guardian Angel* (Scholastic, 2004), Elvina still talks to Mazal, her Guardian Angel, for help with two challenges: a family from Germany shunned by the community, and a handsome, charming knight who befriends her. Rashi's granddaughter uses her thirst for knowledge and her compassion for others to handle both situations. (Grades 5-8)

#### **SYDNEY TAYLOR NOTABLE BOOKS FOR TEEN READERS:**

**Astaire, Libi. *The Disappearing Dowry: An Ezra Melamed Mystery*. Brooklyn, New York: Zahav Press, an imprint of Targum, 2009. ISBN: 978-156871501-9.**

A mystery with Jewish practices and values imbedded: the narrator, a Jewish girl in 1810 London, tells the "megillah" of her wealthy, observant family's plans for her sister Hannah's wedding, which are suddenly interrupted by the loss of the family fortune through bank failures and theft. (Grades 7-12)

**Heuvel, Eric. *A Family Secret/The Search*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-374-32271-7/978-0-374-36517-2.**

The situation in the Netherlands during World War II is explored in these graphic novels. In *A Family Secret*, Helena tells her grandson Jeroen about her experiences during the German occupation and how she lost both her father and her best friend Esther at the hands of the Nazis. In *The Search*, Esther remembers her own experience during the Holocaust as a Jewish girl living in Amsterdam, and recounts to her grandson Daniel and his friend Jeroen how she survived by going into hiding in the countryside. (Grades 7-12)

**Ostow, Micol. *So Punk Rock (and Other Ways to Disappoint Your Mother)*. Art by David Ostow. Woodbury, Minnesota: Flux, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-7387-1471-4.**

The Ostows combine graphic novel vignettes filled with sarcastic commentary with a coming-of-age novel in which Ari Abramson is struggling to find his true calling and identity while also trying to fit in, hoping that playing a band will win him popularity and the girl of his dreams. (Grades 9-12)

**Tal, Eve Goldberg. *Cursing Columbus*. El Paso: Cinco Puntos Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-933693-59-0.**

Told in the dual voices of Raizel and Lemmel in alternating chapters and scenarios, Tal crafts a realistic and poignant picture of an immigrant family's struggles in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in this sequel to *Double Crossing* (2005). (Grades 10-12)

**Wiseman, Eva. *Puppet*. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-88776-828-6.**

A servant girl disappears from her Hungarian village in the spring of 1882 and the Jews of the community are blamed in this fictionalized account of "the last blood libel trial in Europe." Narrated by Julie, another servant girl with her own challenges, the ills of religious superstition, prejudice, and false accusations come to bear in this emotionally charged novel. (Grades 7-12)

**Whitney, Kim Ablon. *The Other Half of Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-375-85219-0.**

Thomas, a fifteen-year-old boy forced to leave his parents in Nazi Germany, experiences many emotions aboard a ship destined for Cuba. This historical fiction is based on the story of the MS St. Louis. (Grades 6-10)

**SYDNEY TAYLOR NOTABLE BOOK FOR ALL AGES:**

**Frankel, Ellen. *JPS Illustrated Children's Bible*. Illustrated by Avi Katz. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2009. ISBN: 978-0827608917.**

Fifty-three uniquely chosen Bible legends capture the language and cadence of the Hebrew Bible. Frankel succeeds in creating an age-appropriate interpretation of the most intriguing and familiar stories that allow families to glean the essence of Jewish teachings, ethics, and history.

**The members of the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee are:**

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**Susan Berson**, Reach Out and Read at Denver Health, Denver, CO

**Barbara Bietz**, Children's Author and Editor, Oak Park, CA

**Kathy Bloomfield**, [www.Forwordsbooks.com](http://www.Forwordsbooks.com), Wellesley, MA

**Debbie Colodny**, Sefer So Good and Cook Memorial Public Library, Libertyville, IL

**Rita Soltan**, Oakland Community College, Bloomfield Hills, MI

**Rachel Kamin**, Past Chair, North Suburban Synagogue Beth El, Highland Park, IL

**Heidi Estrin**, Compiler, Congregation B'nai Israel, Boca Raton, FL

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