

Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School
By-laws, Policy and Procedures
last updated 2/2014

Charge: To promote the books created by Texas authors and illustrators for youths in grades 6-8.

Purpose of the List: The Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School is a recommended reading list developed by public and school librarians from the Young Adult Round Table (YART). The purpose of the list is to encourage youths in grades 6-8 to explore a variety of current, quality books from Texas authors and illustrators, develop critical reading skills, and to encourage greater interaction between Texas authors and illustrators, Texas librarians, and Texas youth. The Spirit of Texas Reading Program-Middle School is intended for recreational reading, not to support a specific curriculum. Due to the diversity of this age range, Texas librarians should purchase titles on this list according to their individual collection policies. Each author featured on the list has had at least one book favorably reviewed for grades 6-8 in a professional review source. Six authors will be featured bi-monthly with all programming available year round.

Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Author/Book Inclusion Criteria

- A. **Eligibility Criteria:** The Committee will select Texas authors and illustrators who have published books within the 5 years prior to the year the list is published. Nominations may be accepted from the Committee up to October 1 of that calendar year. Featured author/illustrators will be determined at a meeting in the fall.
- B. **Content Criteria:** Authors shall be nominated that reflect a variety of difficulty levels for readers in grades 6-8, i.e. a book for unsophisticated readers beginning the sixth grade and one for mature eighth graders. The committee strives for a fairly equal distribution of books targeting each of the three grade levels and within each set further seeks balance in areas such as genre, gender appeal, interest, subject, cultural diversity, and difficulty. Reviews from publications will be used to help determine appropriate grade levels. An author/illustrator cannot be featured more than one time within three cycle years of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School.
- C. **Community Suggestion Criteria:** Field/community suggestions will be accepted. They must be submitted on the official form, which is available on the YART web site. Community suggestions are not considered official Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School nominations until a Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee member nominates them to the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee.
- D. **Nomination Criteria:** Only Texas authors and illustrators can be featured in the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School. A Texas author/illustrator is defined as follows: A Texas author/illustrator is an author or illustrator who currently lives or lived in Texas and/or writes about Texas.
- E. **Featured Author/Illustrator Criteria:** The author/illustrator must have submitted their information and agreed to the conditions set forth in the "Texas Author/Illustrator" form on the TLA website. Additionally, at least one of the author's books to be featured must be favorably reviewed in a scholarly journal for grades 6-8. The committee member making the nomination must have read at least one book by the author.
- F. **Additional Criteria:** The Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee will adhere to the following policy guidelines:
- Statement on Intellectual Freedom: <http://www.txla.org/pubs/ifhbk.html>
 - Library Bill of Rights: <http://www.txla.org/pubs/ifhbk.html>

- “Free Access to Libraries for Minors”: <http://www.txla.org/pubs/ifhbk.html>
- ALA American Values Statement: http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/lib_val.html

Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee Member Criteria

- A. Committee Make-Up:** The Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee shall be comprised of the Chair, advisor (past-chair), eleven members, and a non-voting administrative assistant who are members of the Young Adult Round Table. Ex-officio, non-voting members shall be the Texas Library Association (TLA) Executive Director and a liaison from the TLA Executive Board, who shall be appointed by the TLA President.
- B. Committee Members Qualifications:**
1. Members shall be appointed by the YART Chair-Elect from a list of YART volunteers.
 2. Committee members and the administrative assistant shall serve a three-year term to commence at the end of Annual Conference.
 3. A Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee member must live in Texas, must be a current member of YART throughout their term of appointment, must work directly with youths in grades 6-8 throughout their term of appointment, and must not currently be affiliated with an author, illustrator, or publisher in any capacity that might interfere with the integrity of this committee.
 4. Members may not serve two consecutive terms as committee members but may be appointed Chair or Administrative Assistant.
 5. If a committee member cannot serve out the full term, the YART Chair will appoint a replacement from a list of YART volunteers to serve the remainder of the term of office.
 6. Committee member terms are outlined in the YART Operating Procedures. Please see Operating Procedures for details.
- C. Committee Member Responsibilities:**
1. Guide and direct the educational focus of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program
 2. Participate in selecting six Texas authors and illustrators annually to highlight on the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School website and oversee programming for at least one of the authors selected.
 3. Attend all meetings, including the TLA Annual Conference. Members who are not able to attend all meetings may be asked to resign their position.
 4. Create programming for the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School featured authors and illustrators and promote the program throughout the year and at TLA’s annual conference.
 5. Monitor the production and distribution of all publicity and promotional materials associated with the program.
 6. Assist in monitoring the use of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School trademark/logo and apprise the TLA Executive Board of any infringements associated with its use
 7. One member will be elected secretary to take minutes and provide copies of minutes for each meeting.
 8. One member will be asked to volunteer to organize the volunteers at the Annual Conference booth.
- D. Administrative Assistant:** An administrative assistant will be chosen by the YART Chair-Elect for a three-year term. The administrative assistant maintains contact with the publishing companies, submits special book requests to the publishers, disseminates the final list to the publishers and to the YART electronic distribution list, sends field nominations from the website to the chair, and other such duties assigned by the Chair. The administrative assistant is a non-voting member of the

Committee. The administrative assistant will also be responsible for ensuring the accuracy and integrity of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School web pages by working closely with the YART webmaster to post monthly updates and to maintain complete archives of the current year's authors and previous years.

- E. **Committee Chair:** The Chair is appointed by the YART Chair-Elect for a two-year term and, as such, has the right to vote and to enter into discussion of titles. It should be understood, however, that the primary responsibility of the Chair is facilitator of the Committee's charge, including all business matters. The Chair should only discuss a title after other committee members have had an opportunity to speak so as not to unduly influence the decision.

Qualifications:

1. The Chair is selected from past or present members of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee.
2. The Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee Chair must be a current member of YART, must work directly with youths from grades 6-8, and must not be currently under contract or employed by a publishing company in any capacity that might interfere with the integrity of this committee.
3. The Chair shall serve a two-year term
4. If the Chair cannot serve out the full term, the YART Chair shall appoint an interim Chair to serve the remainder of the term of office.

Responsibilities:

1. Guide and direct the educational focus of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program.
2. Review the goals, objectives, guidelines, policies and procedures of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee and recommend improvements in the general operation of the program total and YART Executive Board.
3. Attend the TLA Annual Conference, the TLA Annual Assembly, YART Executive Board meetings, and the voting Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee meetings.
4. Maintain/update the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School "Manual of Policy and Procedures" and make it available upon request/
5. Schedule meetings, plan agendas, oversee the preparation and dissemination of meeting minutes, set and ensure that programming deadlines are met, etc.
6. Monitor the use of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School trademark/logo and keep the TLA Executive Board apprised of any known infringements associated with its use.
7. Publish and maintain nominations, and submit the updated nomination list to the committee members and the YART webmaster for posting on the TLA website.

F. YART Executive Board Responsibilities:

1. Guide and direct the educational focus of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School.
2. Review the goals, objectives, guidelines, policies and procedures of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School and make recommendations for program improvements.
3. Establish guidelines for the selection of Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee members.
4. Assist in monitoring the use of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School trademark/logo and apprise the TLA Executive Board of any known infringements associated with its use.

G. TLA Responsibilities:

1. The TLA Executive Board will monitor the use of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School trademark/logo and take legal action against infringements associated with its use. This board will also set the fee and guidelines for use of the trademark.
2. The TLA Office will assist in the distribution of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School each year.

Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Author/Illustrator/Book Selection Meeting Procedures:

- A. **Discussing the List:** The Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School committee meets during the TLA Annual Conference, TLA Annual Assembly and in the fall to discuss and select Texas authors and illustrators and books for the upcoming year. After observer comments, the Chair will present the committee with a list of nominated Texas authors and illustrators. The other members of the committee may be recognized by the chair to contribute to the discussion. Every nominated author and book is available for discussion. Committee members are asked to focus on the literary/artistic merit of the book, including audience, voice, point of view, genre, readability and TBD artistic criteria. The committee must select six authors to feature each year for the upcoming Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School cycle year.
- B. **Comments from Observers:** All Committee meetings will be open to TLA members. Before the committee discusses each nominated author/title, an opportunity will be given to observers to make short comments, no longer than one minute about the authors/ books, but the Chair reserves the right to cut short the discussion if necessary. Observers will not be allowed during the final voting process.
- C. **Authors, Illustrators, and Publishers' Representatives:** Publishers' representatives are requested to refrain from participating in discussion or asking for comments about their own books.
- D. **Voting Procedures:** Final selections are made at a meeting in the fall. After comments from observers and discussion by the committee members, a vote is taken to determine if an author/illustrator/title should be included in the featured author/illustrators for the upcoming year. Observers will not be allowed during the final selection. A title must receive affirmative votes from two-thirds of the voting members in order to be considered for the final list of six featured author/illustrators. If more than six author/illustrators are selected, committee members will rank their preferences according to the number of author/illustrators on the list. All committee rankings will then be totaled and averaged. The six author/illustrators with the most points after the averaging will be the six author/illustrators featured for that calendar year. Committee will select and rank three alternate author/illustrators in case a featured author/illustrator is unable to meet the requirements. After author/illustrators are selected, the committee will decide which book(s) from the author to feature based on the above book inclusion criteria.
- E. Two committee members will collaborate to create programming for 1 author/illustrator. The senior member will be the primary liaison for the author/illustrator.
- F. After the authors are selected, the committee chair will contact the author/illustrators to inform them of their selection and verify that the author/illustrator can meet the requirements for inclusion. Each author/illustrator will be assigned a committee liaison who will oversee the programming and be the contact point for the author/illustrator. The liaison will send the author/illustrator contract to the author/illustrator (see Appendix A).

Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Author/Illustrator Programming:

Committee member pairs will oversee one author/illustrator's programming. The programming should include a welcome video from the author, a short biography of the author, bibliography of books published by the author (including publisher, publication date and ISBN), and other books related to the author's works. Other items that could be included (but not limited to) are: written booktalks, videotaped booktalks, book trailers, featured books discussion questions, links to online resources for author/illustrator's works and other relevant library programming created by the committee.

Publication of Bi-Monthly Featured Author/Illustrator: The featured Texas author/illustrator will be highlighted on the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School portion of the TLA website. The website will be updated bi-monthly. The cumulative list of featured author/illustrators, for cycle year, will be available on the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School portion of the TLA website and will be updated on bi-monthly basis. Previous cycle years will also be archived on the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School portion of the TLA website. The featured author/illustrator information will be sent to the YART membership bi-monthly via the current distribution methods. Following its nomination meeting in the fall, the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee will provide YART with a final list of featured author/illustrators and their works.

Appendix A



Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School

Dear:	
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Congratulations, you have been selected by the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School Committee to be a featured author/illustrator. The Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School is a reading program developed by public and school librarians from the Young Adult Round Table (YART) of the Texas Library Association. The purpose of the list is to encourage youths in grades 6-8 to explore a variety of current, quality books from Texas authors and illustrators, develop critical reading skills, and to encourage greater interaction between Texas authors and illustrators, Texas Librarians, and Texas youth.

We hope the information below helps you to get a better understanding of the Spirit of Texas Reading Program- Middle School.

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