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# The American Booksellers Association Announces the Winners of the 2026 Indies Choice Book Awards

*The winners from nine categories were chosen by independent booksellers in time for Indies First, held on Small Business Saturday.*

The American Booksellers Association (ABA) is proud to share the winners of the 2026 Indies Choice Book Awards literary prize.

Reflecting the spirit of independent bookstores and the IndieBound movement, the Indies Choice Book Awards are nominated and selected by booksellers from over 3,200 independent bookstores nationwide. They celebrate the best and brightest titles by authors and illustrators in the indie channel, showcasing the remarkable range of talent indie booksellers champion and share with readers every day.

The awards showcase the 487 longlisted and 47 shortlisted titles that appeared on ABA's Indie Next List, Kids' Indie Next List, and Indies Introduce list in 2026. The Indie Next List program features bookseller-recommended favorites for adults and kids from indie bookstores across the country. Indies Introduce is a twice a year list of 20 standout debuts — 10 adult titles and 10 titles for young readers.

The winners of the 2026 Indies Choice Book Awards are:

- Adult Fiction: ***The Pirate Queen*** by **Ariel Lawhon** (Doubleday)
- Adult Nonfiction: ***Why You Should Read Children's Books, Even Though You Are So Old and Wise*** by **Katherine Rundell** (Knopf Books for Young Readers)
- Indie Press Fiction*: ***The Calamity Club*** by **Kathryn Stockett** (Spiegel & Grau)
- Indie Press Nonfiction*: ***The Rise and Fall of the Artificial State*** by **Jill Lepore** (Liveright)

- Children's Picture Book: ***The Skeleton and the Cat*** by **Brandon James Scott** (HarperCollins)
- Middle Grade: ***This Is a Door*** by **Daniel Nayeri** (Stonefruit Studio)
- Young Adult**:
    - ***Anger Is Only a Shadow*** by **Elizabeth Acevedo** (Quill Tree Books)
    - ***You're No Better: A Novel (Deluxe Limited Edition)*** by **Andrew Joseph White** (Peachtree Teen)
- Debut Adult: ***Yesteryear*** by **Caro Claire Burke** (Knopf)
- Debut Children's: ***The Last Dragon House*** by **Liv Mae Morris** (Amulet Books)

From an Irish folk heroine's saga on the high seas, to a young girl in juvenile detention's story of freedom and culture told in verse, to the power of reading children's literature across a lifetime, this year's winning titles speak to the passion independent booksellers have for bringing the best books to readers across the country.

"The 2026 Indies Choice Book Awards highlight what indie booksellers do best — championing and celebrating books they're passionate about. Congratulations to all of the authors and illustrators of these books that indie booksellers love. Thank you indie booksellers for finding incredible stories and recommending them for ABA's Indie Next List and Kids' Indie Next List this year." — Allison K Hill, ABA CEO

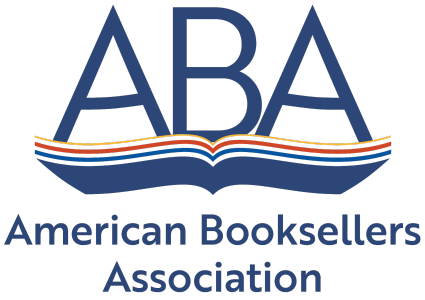
Each winning title's author, illustrator, and author/illustrator pair will receive $1,500.

Inquiries about the Indies Choice Book Awards can be directed to icba@bookweb.org.

**New for 2026, two additional award categories have been added: Indie Press Fiction and Indie Press Nonfiction.*

***Due to a tie, the Young Adult category has two winning titles whose authors will split the prize.*

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**About the American Booksellers Association** (www.BookWeb.org)

American Booksellers Association is a national trade association that supports and advocates for the success of independent bookstores. We provide members with education, networking opportunities, advocacy, resources, and technology. In turn our members support local schools through book fairs, donations and author visits; promote literacy; provide inclusive community centers; connect readers and books; add character to neighborhoods; champion and center diverse and new voices; and contribute to the local economy. We feel honored to support over 3,200 independent bookstores in their work.