Guidelines and Criteria for the EJK Book Award for New Writer

The EJK Book Award is given to a new writer for a picture book written in the tradition of EJK that:

● Highlights the universal qualities of childhood and the strength of the family.
● Reflects the multicultural nature of our world.
● Has an original text and original story (no folktales or retelling of folktales).
● Unifies illustrations and text.
● Avoids stereotypes.
● Is respectful of the child’s intelligence, sensitivity, curiosity, and love of learning.
● Displays freshness and originality of language and literary expression.

The Award is given for distinguished writing and text, not for illustration.
The intent of the Award is to identify and encourage early talent. To be eligible the author will have no more than three children’s picture books previously published.

Guidelines and Criteria for the EJK Book Award for New Illustrator

The EJK Book Award is given to a new illustrator for a picture book illustrated in the tradition of Ezra Jack Keats that:

● Highlights the universal qualities of childhood and the strength of the family.
● Reflects the multicultural nature of our world.
● Unifies illustrations and text (if present).
● Avoids stereotypes.
● Is respectful of the child’s intelligence, sensitivity, curiosity and love of learning.
● Demonstrate excellent command of the chosen medium.
● Display freshness and originality in style and/or form of artistic expression.

The Award is given for distinguished artwork that creatively and skillfully embodies the essence of the story or text. The intent of the Award is to identify and encourage early talent. To be eligible the illustrator will have no more than three children’s picture books previously published.

Nature of the Awards and the Award Ceremony

It is essential that the author and the illustrator appear in person to accept the Award. The publishers are responsible for making arrangements for authors and illustrators to be at the Award Ceremony.

The celebration is held during the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival at the University of Southern Mississippi.
Gold medallion book seals depicting Peter in a red snowsuit from The Snowy Day, or a digital image of the seal, will be made available at cost to the publisher. It is required that the publisher purchase and affix the seal to all copies of the winning books or have the seal imprinted on the cover of the books.

**Submissions**

Entries from publishers, based on the Award criteria, are welcomed throughout the year. The deadline for submission is December 15 of each year. Publishers will identify submitted books as EJK Award entries for New Writer and/or New Illustrator, and send one copy of each book to each Committee member; to the Curator of the de Grummond; and to Dr. Deborah Pope, Executive Director of the EJK Foundation. It is critical that each Committee member, the Curator and the Director receive a copy of each book in order that it be properly considered for the Award.

**For additional information** and the complete list of committee members, please contact Ellen Ruffin, Curator of the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection, or Claire Thompson, Assistant, at The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College, #5148, Hattiesburg, MS 39406. Phone: 601-266-4349. Email: ellen.ruffin@usm.edu/ or claire.thompson@usm.edu/