

*A Chicago GEAR UP Alliance Event
directed by
The Chicago Teachers' Center*

Young Adult Literature Conference



Funded by grants from the U.S. Department of Education and the Illinois State Board of Education.

Free to teachers, grades 6-12, in GEARUP and ARDDP schools.
Preference given to teachers who did not attend YAL in October '06

Where

Q Conference Center
1405 North Fifth Avenue, St. Charles, IL

When

March 2nd and 3rd, 2007

Friday 5:30pm - 9:15pm & Saturday 8:45am - 3:30pm

Earn 8 CPDUs

Participants stay in private rooms. Meals included.

Professional Development Follow Up Opportunity: Units-for-Books Program

Earn a class set of books by writing and implementing your own unit based on conference strategies.

Register at www.neiu.edu/~yal or use the attached interest form.

On behalf of the Chicago GEAR UP Alliance, the Chicago Teachers' Center of Northeastern Illinois University invites you to the 7th annual Young Adult Literature (YAL) Conference. YAL gives high school and middle school teachers an opportunity to read, discuss, and participate in workshops structured around quality fiction and nonfiction texts.

The talented presenters know Chicago Public Schools and share a love of learning and teaching. Conference presenters use the featured books as the focus of their workshop presentations. Through these workshops, teachers experience the richness and depth that young adult literature offers as they explore interactive and innovative teaching techniques. You need not plan to teach these specific books in order to benefit from the techniques you will learn; however, you will choose your workshops based on the books that you have read.

Some of this year's presentations will pair books—either a fiction and nonfiction book on the same topic, or two books by the same author. If you intend to participate in a paired book workshop, your experience will be more rewarding if you read both books. Also note that *Yo Naomi Leon* and *Burro Genio* are in Spanish.

Please read at least two books so that your conference experience is all that it can be. Look over Conference Book Descriptions and rank order six titles of interest, then fill out the Interest Form and fax it to us. Register at www.neiu.edu/~yal or use the attached interest form. **Once your registration is processed, you will receive a confirmation form, plus 4 books. Registration deadline is February 9th.**

Conference Book Descriptions

(Grade guidelines are advisory only)

We Rode the Orphan Trains*

by Andrea Warren

Between 1854 and 1929, over 200,000 orphaned and abandoned children were sent from New York City to the burgeoning West. *We Rode the Orphan Trains* is a compelling tribute to the many "throwaway" children who were living on the streets or in orphanages and foster homes in New York City during this era of American history. Charles Loring Brace started the Children's Aid Society and developed a plan to give these homeless children a chance to find families they could call their own. This nonfiction book tells the stories of nine men and women who rode the trains and helped make history. (6th grade & up)

Worth*

by A. LaFaye

Scott O'Dell Award Book

This 2005 Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction winner tells the story of two boys who were affected by circumstance and the Orphan Trains. Nathaniel is unable to continue the life of a farmer when his leg is crushed in an accident. His father subsequently ignores him

***Paired books**

and brings in an Orphan Train boy to do the work on the farm. John Worth had a dream of an education before it was tragically denied after the death of his parents. The work he must do on the farm does not allow him to continue his education, much to his displeasure. The two boys must forge a connection to make life bearable for them both. (6th grade & up)

The City of Ember

by Jeanne DuPrau

It is always night in the city of Ember. The only light during the regular twelve hours of 'day' comes from floodlamps. Beyond are the pitch-black Unknown Regions, which no one has ever explored. For 250 years, the people of Ember have lived pleasantly, because there has been plenty of everything in the vast storerooms. But now there are more and more empty shelves—and more and more times when the lights flicker and go out, leaving them in terrifying blackness for long minutes. What will happen when the generator finally fails? When twelve-year-old Lina Mayfleet and Doon Harrow find a very old paper with enigmatic "Instructions for Egress," they begin to puzzle out the frightening and dangerous way to the city of light of which Lina has dreamed. (6th grade & up)

A Wreath for Emmett Till†

by Marilyn Nelson

Coretta Scott King Honor Book; Michael L. Printz Honor Book

In 1955, people all over the United States knew that Emmett Till was a fourteen-year-old African American boy lynched for supposedly whistling at a white woman in Mississippi. The brutality of his murder, the open-casket funeral held by his mother, Mamie Till Mobley, and the acquittal of the men tried for the crime drew wide media attention. In a profound and chilling poem, award-winning poet Marilyn Nelson reminds us of the boy whose fate helped spark the civil rights movement. This martyr's wreath, woven from a little-known but sophisticated form of poetry, challenges us to speak out against modern-day injustices, to "speak what we see." (8th grade & up)

Getting Away with Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case †

by Chris Crowe

With lively narrative and illustrated with fascinating contemporaneous photographs, this impressive, eye-opening work brings fresh insight to the famous case that highlighted—and eventually provoked changes in—race relations in America. (8th grade & up)

†Paired books

Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow

by Susan Campbell Bartoletti

Newberry Honor Book; Robert F. Sibert Honor Book

The riveting and often chilling tale of a generation of young people who devoted their energy and passion to the Hitler Youth organization and left an indelible mark on world history. Award-winning author Susan Campbell Bartoletti infuses the work with the voices of both former Hitler Youth members and young people who resisted the powerful Nazi movement. These voices stand alongside those of Jewish youths and others who were senselessly and brutally targeted by the Third Reich. What emerges is the story of average children and teenagers faced with extraordinary and unenviable choices. The paths taken by the Hitler Youth and their struggle to come to terms with their actions at the end of World War II are sure to spark debate among young readers faced with the question of whether the horrors of Hitler's Germany could ever cast dark shadows again. (8th grade & up)

Burro Genius/Burro Genio

by Victor Villaseñor

Victor Villaseñor finds himself the keynote speaker at a conference for the California Association of Teachers of English. Standing at the podium, his mind fills with childhood memories of humiliation and abuse at the hands of his teachers. As he speaks, he becomes more and more enraged. When he is through, to his great disbelief he receives a standing ovation. So begins the memoir of Victor Villaseñor. Highly gifted and imaginative as a child, Villaseñor coped with an untreated learning disability and the challenge of growing up Latino in an English-only American school system in the 1940s. The book conveys a young man in the midst of living in and between two worlds: home (Spanish) and school (English). Despite teachers who beat him because he could not speak English, Villaseñor clung to his dream of one day becoming a writer. (9th grade & up) *English or Spanish*.

Becoming Naomi Leon/Yo Naomi Leon

by Pamela Muñoz Ryan

Gram, Naomi, and Owen are happy at Avocado Acres Trailer Rancho until the day the children's mother arrives. After being gone so long that they don't recognize her, Skyla enters their lives, lavishing attention and presents on fifth-grade Naomi; however, she never seems to include Owen. After several weeks, the truth about her reappearance becomes apparent: Clive, her new boyfriend, wants Naomi to live with them and become the permanent baby-sitter for his daughter. The ensuing custody battle forces Gram, Naomi, and Owen to make a hasty trip to Mexico to look for Santiago, the children's biological father and a well-known woodcarver. Ryan has written a moving book about family dynamics. While she explores the youngsters' Mexican heritage and gives a vivid picture of life in and

the art of Oaxaca, her story is universal, showing the strong bonds and love that make up an extended family. (6th grade & up) *English or Spanish.*

Love Medicine‡

by Louise Erdrich

National Book Critics Circle Award Winner

The stunning first novel in Louise Erdrich's Native American series, *Love Medicine* tells the story of two families—the Kashpaws and the Lamartines. Written in Erdrich's uniquely poetic, powerful style, it is a multigenerational portrait of strong men and women caught in an unforgettable drama of anger, desire, and the healing power that is love medicine. (9th grade & up)

The Birchbark House‡

by Louise Erdrich

Nineteenth-century American pioneer life was introduced to thousands of young readers by Laura Ingalls Wilder's beloved [*Little House*](#) books. With *The Birchbark House*, award-winning author Louise Erdrich's first novel for young readers, this same slice of history is seen through the eyes of the spirited, 7-year-old Ojibwa girl, Omakayas. The sole survivor of a smallpox epidemic on Spirit Island, Omakayas, then only a baby girl, was rescued by a fearless woman named Tallow and welcomed into an Ojibwa family on Lake Superior's Madeline Island. We follow Omakayas and her adopted family through a cycle of four seasons in 1847, including the winter when a historically documented outbreak of smallpox overtook the island. (6th grade & up)

Handbook for Boys

by Walter Dean Myers

After a fight gets out of hand, sixteen-year-old Jimmy is about to be assigned to six months in a youth facility. Duke, owner of the local barbershop, offers to take him into his "community mentoring program." Initially Jimmy calls the shop the "Torture Chamber," but as he shows up to the shop to sweep, hang old photographs on the wall and polish spittoons, his anger and resistance erode and he begins to absorb Duke's advice. By the award-winning author of *Monster* and *Bad Boy*. (9th grade & up)

‡Paired books

**Register at www.neiu.edu/~yal or fax this form:
Young Adult Literature Conference Interest Form**

I am interested in attending the Young Adult Literature Conference on March 2nd and 3rd, 2007. **I understand that preference will be given to teachers who did not attend the October 2006 YAL Conference.** I have indicated my top six choices of books below. I agree to read at least two conference books by March 3rd.

Name _____

School _____ Grade: _____ Subject _____

Best phone _____ Email _____

I attended YAL Conference in Oct. 2006 _____ Yes _____ No

Teachers will receive four of the following books. Please number your top six choices and return to your GEAR UP representative, or FAX to the number below. We will do our best to accommodate your choices. Some of this year's presentations will pair books—either a fiction and nonfiction book on the same topic, or two books by the same author. **If you intend to participate in a paired book workshop, your experience will be more rewarding if you read both books.** Also note that *Yo Naomi Leon* and *Burro Genio* are in Spanish.

Rank in numbers: (1 = top choice, 6 = last of 6) in box in front of the title.

	We Rode the Orphan Trains*		Worth*
	Getting Away With Murder†		A Wreath for Emmett Till†
	The Birchbark House‡		Love Medicine‡
	Becoming Naomi Leon		Yo Naomi Leon (Spanish version)
	Burro Genius		Burro Genio (Spanish version)
	Hitler Youth		The City of Ember
	Handbook for Boys		

*Paired books

†Paired books

‡Paired books

Filling out an interest form does not guarantee registration. Once we have completed your registration, we will send you a confirmation form along with four books. If you need to cancel your registration, please call (312) 563-7245 as soon as possible.

FAX completed Interest Forms to Hector at (312) 563-7210.
Interest Forms are due no later than February 9th. Space is limited. Questions? Call Hector at (312) 563-7245.