The NCTE Poetry Award was established in 1977 to honor a living American poet for his or her aggregate work for children. The award was given annually until 1982 and every three years until 2009.

Past Winners

Marilyn Nelson, 2017
Marilyn Singer, 2015
Joyce Sidman, 2013
J. Patrick Lewis, 2011
Lee Bennett Hopkins, 2009
Nikki Grimes, 2006
Mary Ann Hoberman, 2003
X.J. Kennedy, 2000
Eloise Greenfield, 1997
Barbara Juster Esbensen, 1994
Valerie Worth, 1991
Arnold Adoff, 1988
Lilian Moore, 1985
John Ciardi, 1982
Eve Merriam, 1981
Myra Cohn Livingston, 1980
Karla Kuskin, 1979
Aileen Fisher, 1978
David McCord, 1977

The NCTE Poetry Committee selects the winner every two years based upon the appeal to children, literary merit (art and craft of aggregate work), contributions, and evolution of the work.