

## Japanese Children's Books 2025

# About the 2025 Selection

### • About JBBY and This Catalog

The Japanese Board on Books for Young People (JBBY) was founded in 1974 as the Japanese section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY). In keeping with IBBY's ideals, JBBY undertakes a range of activities in Japan. Since 2015, we have also curated a yearly catalog, Japanese Children's Books, to introduce superb Japanese children's titles abroad.

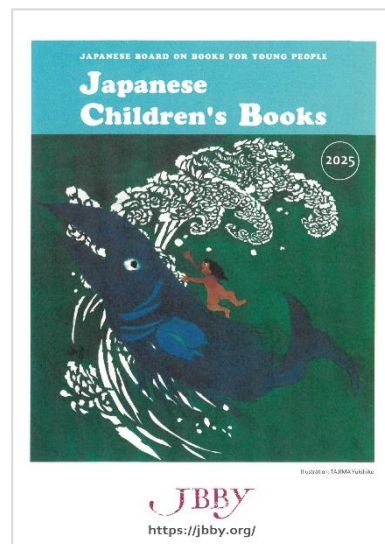
In Japanese Children's Books, we provide descriptions of recent Japanese books recommended by a JBBY selection and review team in several categories: picture books, chapter books and novels, and nonfiction. In addition, we introduce Japanese winners of and nominees for the Hans Christian Andersen Award; books selected for the IBBY Honour List from Japan; and recent translations into Japanese recommended by JBBY.

The titles in Japanese Children's Books were selected after rigorous consultation and consideration by experts who have been involved in children's literature for many years. This year's books had to:

- have been published in Japan between September 2023 and June 2024
- contain fine content representative of Japan
- enable children to explore Japanese cultures and the real lives of children in Japan
- be worthy of translation overseas
- be worthy of further introduction to children, caregivers, libraries, and publishing professionals in Japan as well

We offer detailed synopses along with bibliographic information. We hope that our catalog will help you discover recent children's titles from Japan.

For further information, please contact us: [info@jbby.org](mailto:info@jbby.org)



UNO Kazumi, JBBY President

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### Cover Illustration of small leaflet: **TAJIMA Yukihiko**

Born in the city of Sakai near Osaka, this illustrator graduated from the dyeing and weaving program at Kyoto City University of Arts. In 1976, he began publishing picture books that incorporate stencil dying, and his early work *Jigoku no Sobe* (Sobe in Hades; Doshinsha) won an inaugural Picture Book Nippon Award. The many works of the creator have won two Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava Plaques, as well as many other awards, including the Shogakukan Illustration Award and Leipzig International Book Design Silver Medal. Recently, his *Fushigi na Tomodachi* (My Mysterious Friend; Kumon Shuppan) won the Japan Picture Book Award Grand Prize, and *Nakimushi Seitoku* (Crybaby Seitoku; Doshinsha) won the Kodansha Picture Book Award. His numerous other publications include *Sobe Gokuraku e Yuku* and *Sobe Makkuroke no ke* (Sobe Goes to Heaven, and Sobe in the Pitch-Darkness; Doshinsha). He was selected for the 2024 IBBY Honour List.

## • JBBY Book Selection and Review Team



### **DOI Yasuko**

Director and senior researcher at the International Institute for Children's Literature, Osaka (IICLO). Besides researching reading activities and the history of Japanese children's literature, she plans projects such as training courses for teachers and librarians, as well as lectures and symposiums for children's book authors from Japan and overseas. Coeditor of *I Could Read by Myself!: Book Guide of 200 Books for Young Children* (Hyoronsha) among others. Jury for the 2018 and 2020 Hans Christian Andersen Awards. JBBY managing director.



### **HIROMATSU Yukiko**

After serving as Chief Curator at the Chihiro Art Museum, she became a freelance picture book author, critic, and independent curator. Her writings include *Japanese Picturebooks: 100 Years, 100 Illustrators, 100 Books*, the series *Picture Books of Old Tales for Now* (vols. 1–11), and *Welcome to Hell*. She has served as an international juror for the Bologna Illustrators Exhibition (2010), BIB (2013, 2015, and as jury president in 2017), the Nami Concours (2017, 2019, 2021, 2023), and the Golden Pinwheel (2024). She is currently Vice President of JBBY.



### **NOGAMI Akira**

At Shogakukan, served as editor of First Grader monthly magazine, head of children's books, company director, and finally president and CEO of Shogakukan Creative. His writings in Japanese include *To the Modern Children's Literature of Japan* (Parorusha), *Children's Literature Crossing Borders* (Nagasaki Shuppan), and *Contemporary History of Children's Culture* (Otsuki Shoten). Coeditor of *When I Was a Child, There Was a War* (Rironsha) among others. Managing director of Japan PEN Club. JBBY vice president.



### **OKUYAMA Megumi**

Children's literature critic. A former high school teacher in Tokyo, she owns the children's specialty bookshop Huckleberry Books and serves as an adjunct lecturer at Shirayuri and Nishogakusha Universities. She has authored 'Story' *Wavering: Children's Books in an Unclear Age* (Kurosio Shuppan) and *Lessons in Layeredness* (Ryoyu Shuppan) as well as co-authored *A Guide to World Children's Literature Based on Time* (Hara Shobo). JBBY member.



### **SAKAGUCHI Mikako**

Member of the Japanese Society of Science Books for Children. With the motto "science books and experiences play catch," she teaches some 270 sessions annually from play-with-science times, to elementary/middle school and university classes, to workshops targeted to library and children's center staff. She has authored the books *Science Mysteries* (Froebel-kan) and *The Price of Life and Welfare* (Otsuki Shoten), and translated *Michael Faraday* and *Electricity* by Brian Bowers. JBBY member.



**SAKUMA Yumiko**

Translator, editor, reviewer of children's books, representative of the Japan-Africa Children's Books Project (JACBOP), and former professor at Aoyama Gakuin Women's College. Her writings in Japanese include *The Cooking Stoves of Enzaro Village* (Fukuinkan Shoten). Her more than 250 translations of books from English to Japanese range from *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White and the picture books of Maurice Sendak to *Refugee* by Alan Gatz. Her translation of *Last Summer with Maizon* by Jacqueline Woodson made the IBBY Honour List. JBBY board member.