

The NSK Neustadt Prize for

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE



"I do not know how old I was when the daydreams became more than that, and I decided to write them down but by the time I entered high school, I was confident that I would one day be a writer."

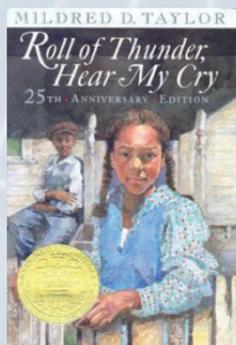
– Mildred D. Taylor

Trees, was published in 1973 and by 1975 was awarded Outstanding Book of the Year by the *New York Times* as well as the Council on Interracial Books Award, African American category. Since then, she has written and published more than ten award-winning books. She wrote *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* in 1976 and received numerous awards for it, some of which include the Newberry Medal in 1977, the *New York Times Book Review* Best Children's Book 1970-1980, and distinction on *The Horn Book Fanfare* Honor List.

In 2003, Mildred D. Taylor was named the inaugural winner of the NSK Neustadt Prize for Children's Literature from the University of Oklahoma and *World Literature Today*.

Mildred Taylor was born in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1943 but moved to Toledo, Ohio, shortly after. Although Taylor did not live in the South, she always felt a deep connection to the region through the stories her father and extended family told on yearly trips to Mississippi. She attended the University of Toledo, then joined the Peace Corps and spent two years teaching English and History in Ethiopia, Africa. After returning to the U.S., she earned a Master of Arts degree in Journalism from the University of Colorado. While there, she helped the school start a Black Studies program.

Many of Taylor's characters are loosely based on her family and stories she was told about her family history. Her first book, *Song of the*



Reflection:

Research other authors who center their stories on the South and Southern traditions. In what way are these stories similar? In what ways are they different? Are there similarities in these author's backgrounds or life experiences? Which of their stories are most well-known, and what are they about?



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