



## Junior Readers Winner Citation

The Neev Book Award for distinguished children's literature recognises outstanding writing that leads to a fuller understanding of Indian lives and stories -- books that build empathy and resilience, explore conflict, negotiate identity, and inspire change. This annual award encourages and promotes Indian children's literature globally.

Publishers across India submit titles for consideration. An independent jury uses a rigorous process to establish a shortlist in four categories: Early Years, Emerging Readers, Junior Readers, and Young Adult. The criteria include the quality of writing, interpretation of theme, development of plot, portrayal of characters, crafting of setting, and the overall presentation of the book. After months of deliberation, the four books chosen for this award are those which best voice the evolution of Indian lives and stories.

**The 2021 Neev Book Award, in the category of Junior Readers, is presented to *The Adventures of the Kohinoor*, written by William Dalrymple, Anita Anand, and Devika Cariapa, and published by Juggernaut Books.**

The Kohinoor diamond as a literary device has enabled the authors to offer a wonderfully approachable account of the history of the Indian subcontinent to Junior Readers. It narrates, re-enacts and contextualizes how the diamond is imbued with the symbolic value of power, status, and the right to rule. Struggles for power are brought to life, but always footnoted with a brief, yet informative account of historical facts. The final questions as to whether the gemstone should be returned to India or not will hopefully encourage young readers to reflect on reparation in other contexts as well.

