

awarding this prize is that the writer's work is having a positive impact on the quality of children's literature.

The festival will honor the 2015 NSK Neustadt Prize for Children's Literature laureate, Meshack Asare of Ghana and Germany. Asare is considered to be one of the most important children's authors and illustrators in the African region. His works have been widely honored internationally, with the NSK Neustadt Prize being his first major recognition in the United States.

Last month at CA, ninth- and fourth-grade students collaborated on a project that used the writings of Asare. Ninth-grade students were tasked with teaching the elements of folk tales in Asare's work to the fourth graders. After reading aloud *The Magic Goat* and *Sosu's Call*, students compared these stories with other award-winning African folk tales.

Upper School English teacher Tom Thorpe says, "The exposure to these different versions is unique and broadens a student's cultural understanding." Then, the freshmen took the lesson one step farther and were asked to write their own folk tales.

Says Head of School Dr. Mike Davis, "I was lucky enough to sit in on a class as the ninth- and fourth-grade students worked together to explore Asare's work. The thoughtfulness and beauty of this award is that it honors writers who may not yet be well known, and at the same time elevates the work of contemporary writers and their voices. We're lucky at CA to have this connection within our community."

The English Department will judge those pieces, and the authors of the winning selections will attend this year's Neustadt Awards Ceremony in Oklahoma. There, the students will get a chance to meet Asare. Several students attend the Neustadt awards ceremony each year, thanks to a generous gift by CA parent Kathy Neustadt, mother of Tess Hankin, class of 2016, and Josh Hankin, class of 2019.

In alternate years, the prize is an International Prize for Literature and is the first international literary award of its scope to originate in the United States. It's one of the very few international prizes for which poets, novelists and playwrights are equally eligible. The charter of the award stipulates that the Neustadt Prize be conferred solely on the basis of literary merit, and each laureate is chosen by a jury of writers that *World Literature Today* convenes on the University of Oklahoma campus. □