

ELAC

ENGLISH LANGUAGE
ARTS COUNCIL

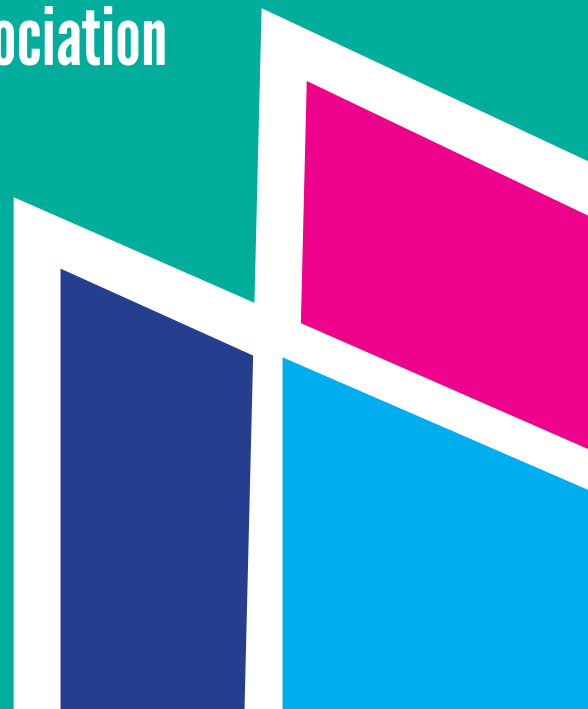


**Walking
Together**

EDUCATION FOR
RECONCILIATION

Truth & Reconciliation Books for the Classroom

**Recommended by Indigenous Education Council,
Indigenous Education PD Facilitators,
and English Language Arts Council
of the Alberta Teachers' Association**



ABOUT

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL

The Indigenous Education Council (IECATA) is a specialist council of the Alberta Teachers' Association and represents over 400 teachers across Alberta. IECATA organizes professional development opportunities related to Indigenous education and reconciliation, fosters relationships with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, offers teaching resources, and advocates for issues important to Indigenous education.

indigenousedc.ca

ATA INDIGENOUS EDUCATION PD FACILITATORS

ATA Indigenous Education PD Facilitators provide specific expertise to members related to the Indigenous-focused competencies and indicators, including the facilitation of Walking Together: Education for Reconciliation workshops. The Indigenous Education PD Facilitators assist in developing and maintaining relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors, including following local cultural protocols and sharing Indigenous education expertise for members, locals and various subgroups.

teachers.ab.ca

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS COUNCIL

The English Language Arts Council (ELAC) is a specialist council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. Representing over 1,500 English Language Arts teachers across Alberta, ELAC organizes professional development opportunities, offers teaching resources, produces a publication featuring student writing and peer-reviewed articles, advocates for issues important to English Language Arts teachers, and organizes regional social events.

elacata.ca

INTRODUCTION

The Indigenous Education Council, the English Language Arts Council, and the Indigenous Education PD Facilitators of the Alberta Teachers' Association recognize that it is incredibly important to ensure students in Alberta classrooms have opportunities to experience diverse texts from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Diverse texts not only allow our students to see themselves represented in literature; they also support students in understanding and reflecting on the experiences of people with different histories, cultures, and perspectives.

Including Indigenous texts in English Language Arts classrooms, and using them in purposeful teaching, provides students opportunities to deepen their understanding of Indigenous experiences and perspectives while fostering truth and reconciliation. The books that you will find in this resource have been recommended by members of the Indigenous Education Council, ATA Indigenous Education PD Facilitators, and the English Language Arts Council for use in Kindergarten to Grade 12 classrooms. While there are varied themes throughout, all books are written by Indigenous authors. These books have been grouped by division based on their content and complexity, but teachers are encouraged to use their professional judgement when choosing which texts will support their students' learning. Of course, this list is in no way exhaustive, as there are many great Indigenous texts for students being published every year. We hope that this list serves as one resource for teachers as they support a collective process of truth and reconciliation.



What's My Superpower?

Aviaq Johnston and
illustrated by Tim Mack | 2017

Suggested grade range: Div I

Aviaq Johnston is an Inuk writer from Igloolik, living in Iqaluit and Ottawa.

Tim Mack lives in Vancouver, BC.

This fun and joyful picture book provides a contemporary look into a child living in Nunavut. Each day, Nalvana notices one of her friend's superpowers, like speed, jumping, or swimming, and shares them with her mother at the end of the day. Nalvana wonders when it will be her turn to discover her superpower. The illustrations complement the story, as they are bright and friendly, serving to add to Nalvana's sweet character. The author includes Inuktitut words throughout, along with a glossary for the reader at the end of the story. While this story is set in Nunavut, the story is a universal one: every person has something special to offer.

Themes include: wellness, friendship, identity, and personal character



Wild Berries

Julie Flett | 2013

Suggested grade range: K and Div I

Julie Flett is Swampy Cree and Red River Métis on her father's side, and of Scottish and Irish descent on her mother's side. She currently resides with her son on the traditional territories of the x^mməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and Sell̓wítulh (Tseil-Wautuh) Nations.

In the beautifully written and illustrated *Wild Berries*, a child and grandparent enjoy a special bond through their experience on the land and sharing of food. The story focuses on Clarence, who goes on an annual wild berry picking expedition with his grandmother. As Clarence observes the natural world and its inhabitants, readers are introduced to Cree words and their English translations.

Themes include: intergenerational relationships, land-based learning, food sovereignty, and language revitalization



nimiywêyihtên: "I Feel Great"

Lana Whiskeyjack and

illustrated by Serina Follette | 2019

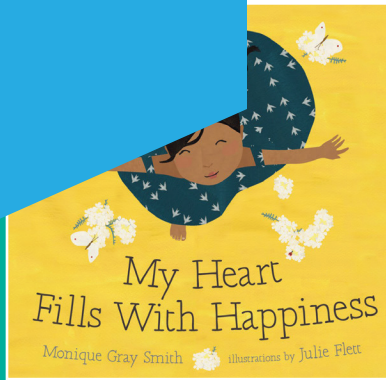
Suggested grade range: K, Div I and Div II

Lana Whiskeyjack, nîya ayisiyiniw ôma ohci asiskiy, is firstly a human being of this earth. Lana is nêhiyaw (Cree) from Saddle Lake Cree Nation, Treaty 6 Territory. She currently lives in amiskwaciy-wâskahikan (Beaver Hill House, also known as Edmonton), Alberta, Canada.

Serina Follette is an emerging artist who attended the Indigenous Health Science Program and completed her licensed practical nurse program at University nuhelot'îne thaiyots'î nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills.

nimiywêyihtên: "I Feel Great" is written in nêhiyawêwin (Cree) syllabics, nêhiyawêwin (Cree) Standard Roman Orthography, and English. Everyone from very young children to adults will enjoy reflecting on the themes of belonging and connection, while at the same time practicing nêhiyawêwin. Prayer and ceremony, a central part of Cree life, are mentioned in the book as one way the speaker feels good. Relationality and connection between all of creation is also highlighted in *nimiywêyihtên: "I Feel Great"*. Soft watercolour illustrations featuring Alberta wildlife add to the beautifully simple sentences on each page. The book provides opportunities for students to consider ideas of beauty from an Indigenous worldview and could serve as a mentor text for students to craft their own sentences about their place in the world.

Themes include: identity, belonging, gratitude, and spirituality



My Heart Fills with Happiness

Monique Gray Smith and

illustrated by Julie Flett | 2016

Suggested grade range: Div I

Monique Gray Smith is of Cree, Lakota and Scottish descent.

Julie Flett is Swampy Cree and Red River Métis on her father's side, and of Scottish and Irish descent on her mother's side. She currently resides with her son on the traditional territories of the x^mməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Sellwítlh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

My Heart Fills with Happiness explores the many small moments of joy that are often taken for granted. The book encourages positive connections to identity, culture, and family and invites readers to consider the importance of kinship, relationships with the land, and oral storytelling traditions. The book could open up conversations for students about what is important in their own life.

Themes include: connection to land, family, traditions, culture, wellness, mental health, and residential schools



Birdsong

Julie Flett | 2019

Suggested grade range: K, Div I and Div II

Julie Flett is Swampy Cree and Red River Métis on her father's side, and of Scottish and Irish descent on her mother's side. She currently resides with her son on the traditional territories of the x^mməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Sellwítlh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

In *Birdsong*, a young, Cree/Métis girl and her mother relocate from a coastal urban environment to a rural home which evokes feelings of loneliness and unfamiliarity. When the girl meets Agnes, an elderly woman who helps her connect with her creativity and the natural world, she grows more confident. As seasons change, the friendship grows stronger through sharing of stories and experiences. Ultimately, the young girl must come to terms with the looming loss of her friend. The book invites young readers to consider the possibilities of intergenerational friendships while also teaching them about Cree conceptions of the moon and seasons.

Themes include: friendship, coping with change, loneliness, grieving, and loss



SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A FOX
Danielle Daniel

Sometimes I Feel Like a Fox

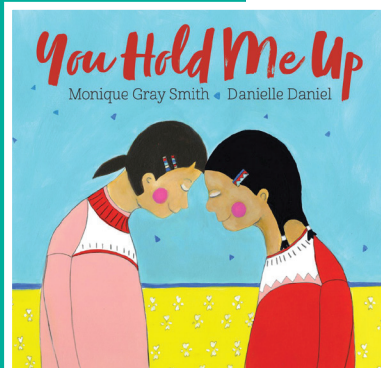
Danielle Daniel | 2017

Suggested grade range: Div I and Div II

Danielle Daniel is Métis, of Algonquin Anishinaabe, French and Scottish descent. She lives in the traditional territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnaabeg (Sudbury, Ontario).

Sometimes I Feel Like a Fox provides an introduction to Anishinaabe totem animals. Danielle Daniel's beautiful and inventive illustrations of children donning animal disguises pair well with the simple, poetic text on each page. Throughout the book, the speaker considers how they feel connected to various animals through their personality traits and emotions. The author's note shares information about the tradition of animal totems, giving the reader insight into the importance of totem animals in the Anishinaabe culture. The book invites young readers to consider lessons from the animal world as they consider their own personality, feelings, and interests.

Themes include: identity, personality, and connections to the animal world



You Hold Me Up

Monique Gray Smith and

illustrated by Danielle Daniel | 2017

Suggested grade range: Div I and Div II

Monique Gray Smith is of Cree, Lakota and Scottish descent.

Danielle Daniel is Métis, of Algonquin Anishinaabe, French and Scottish descent. She lives in the traditional territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnaabeg (Sudbury, Ontario).

You Hold Me Up explores the importance of having connections to self and family and suggests that love is a powerful medicine. The book shows children the importance of respect, empathy, and compassion in all relationships while encouraging connections to the land, oral traditions, community, and culture. *You Hold Me Up* is especially positive for children that have been impacted by intergenerational trauma as a result of Residential Schools.

Themes include: wellness, mental health, culture, family, self-care, and reconciliation



We Are Water Protectors

Carole Lindstrom and
illustrated by Michaela Goade | 2020

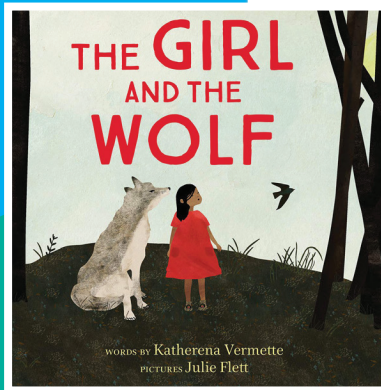
Suggested grade range: K–Div IV

Carole Lindstrom is Metis, of Anishinaabe descent. She is an enrolled citizen of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe. She lives in the traditional territory of the Piscataway Tribal Nation, (Maryland, US).

Michaela Goade was raised in the rainforest and on the beaches of Southeast Alaska, traditional Lingít Aaní (Tlingit land). Today she lives in Sheet'ká (Sitka), Alaska, a magical island on the edge of a wide, wild sea.

We Are Water Protectors is a visually captivating and expressive journey inspired by water protection movements across North America. Told from the perspective of an Anishinaabe girl, the story recounts the lessons learned from the speaker's grandmother, namely, the importance of water as being fundamental to life. She understands that water is something that needs to be protected from evil, which takes the form of a black snake. *We Are Water Protectors* is a call to action for students and could be used to open discussions about steps young people can take to protect our waters.

Themes include: environmental stewardship and social justice



The Girl and the Wolf

Katherena Vermette and Julie Flett | 2019

Suggested grade range: K–Div IV

Katherena Vermette is Métis from Treaty 1 Territory (Winnipeg).

Julie Flett is Swampy Cree and Red River Métis on her father's side, and of Scottish and Irish descent on her mother's side. She currently resides with her son on the traditional territories of the x̣ṃəθḳ'əyem (Musqueam), Sḳwx̣wú7mesh (Squamish), and Selḷwítulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

The Girl and the Wolf is an inventive retelling of the classic fairytale *Little Red Riding Hood*. When the title girl finds herself separated from her mother and lost in the forest she must take a deep breath, reconsider her situation, and solve her own problems. Drawing on her deep foundation of traditional knowledge of the land, and with the help of a wolf, the girl is ultimately able to find her own way to safety rather than relying on a woodsman to save her. The picture book could open conversations about independence and gratitude for younger students and could be used with older students to examine postcolonial or feminist approaches to reading.

Themes include: connection to the land, traditional knowledge, and independence



When We Are Kind

Monique Gray Smith and

illustrated by Nicole Neidhardt | 2020

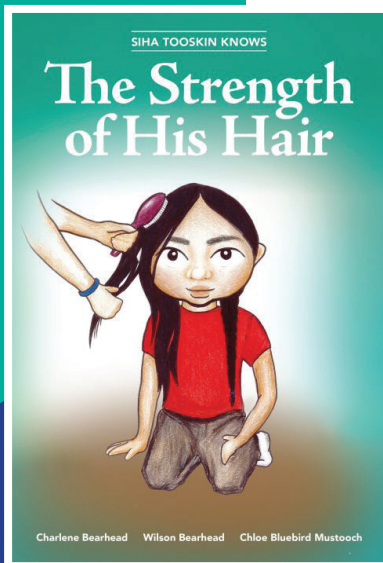
Suggested grade range: Div I and Div II

Monique Gray Smith is of Cree, Lakota and Scottish descent.

Nicole Neidhardt is Diné (Navajo) of Kiiyaa'áanii clan on her mother's side and a blend of European ancestry on her father's side. Her family is from Round Rock, Arizona and she grew up in Santa Fe, NM on Tewa territory.

When We Are Kind encourages young readers to consider the impact that acts of kindness can have on others and the positive feelings that are generated with each kind word or deed. Rooted in one of the Seven Sacred Teachings, the book explores the importance of self and others, oral storytelling, community and culture and shows children the importance of relationships and collaboration. The book could be used to open up conversations with students about how they might consider kindness in their own lives and interactions.

Themes include: wisdom, knowledge, hope, resilience, wellness, mental health, and culture



The Strength of His Hair

Charlene Bearhead, Wilson Bearhead,

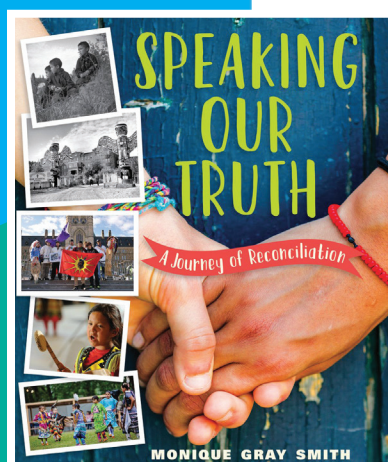
illustrated by Chloe Bluebird Mustooch | 2020

Suggested grade range: Div II

Charlene Bearhead is an educator and Indigenous education advocate. Wilson Bearhead is from Wabumun Lake First Nation. Chloe Bluebird Mustooch is Alexis Nakota Sioux.

The Strength of His Hair is part of the eight-book series, *Siha Tooskin Knows*, and is a beautifully written and brilliantly illustrated book about an 11-year-old Nakota boy, Paul Wahasappa. As Paul learns a series of Nakota teachings from his grandfather, Mitoshin, young readers come to understand the significance and importance of Paul's braids and the traditional teachings that strengthen his relationships and help keep him grounded. All of the books within the *Siha Tooskin Knows* series would be a valuable addition to a classroom.

Themes include: resilience, relationships, gratitude, humility, and strength



Speaking Our Truth: A Journey of Reconciliation

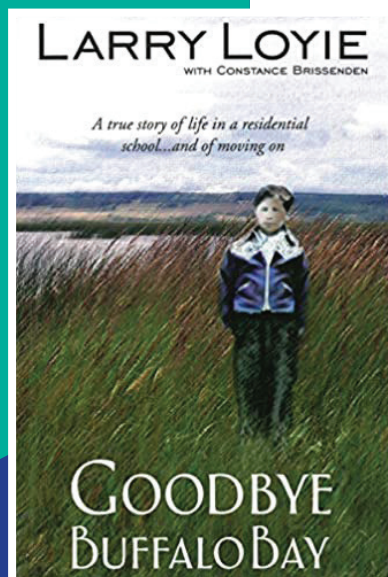
Monique Gray Smith | 2017

Suggested grade range: Div II

Monique Gray Smith is of Cree, Lakota and Scottish descent.

Speaking our Truth is a deeply personal story of residential schools and their intergenerational effects. Capturing voices from elders, residential school survivors, Indigenous and settler youth, the book explores Canada's journey with truth and reconciliation and provides valuable information about sacred teachings and medicines. The book invites young people to consider their role in responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. Highly visual and extremely engaging the book offers a hopeful path forward as it encourages students to take action.

Themes include: wellness, mental health, culture, family, self-care, and reconciliation



Goodbye Buffalo Bay

Larry Loyie with Constance Brissenden | 2008

Suggested grade range: Div II and Div III

Larry Loyie is an award-winning Cree author and residential school survivor from Treaty 8. He wrote nine books with his longtime partner, Constance Brissenden, fulfilling his childhood dream of becoming a writer. Although Larry Loyie passed away in 2016, we are honoured to share his work.

Constance Brissenden lives in Vancouver, BC.

Goodbye Buffalo Bay, this sequel to Larry Loyie's *As Long as the Rivers Flow* tells the true story of Loyie's time at St. Bernard Residential School on Buffalo Bay and his re-entry, at the age of 14, to his Cree community. The story chronicles the harsh, abusive environment at the school and how friendship, his love of reading and the kindness and support of one encouraging teacher built the resilience Loyie needed to survive.

Themes include: friendship, self-esteem, humour, the joy of reading, overcoming anger, endurance, hope, and self-discovery



The Barren Grounds

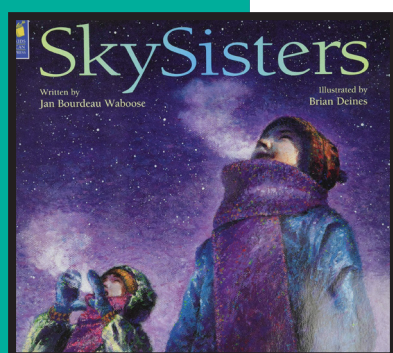
David A. Robertson | 2020

Suggested grade range: Div II and Div III

David A. Robertson is Cree, and of Scottish, Irish and English descent. He is a Norway House Cree Nation band member, and lives in Treaty 1 Territory, the homeland of the Métis Nation, and original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Ojibwa-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples (Winnipeg, Manitoba).

The Barren Grounds is a magical tale of two Cree teens reconnecting with their culture and stories through a mystical portal they discover in their foster home. Transported to the Barren Grounds, a land that is in a perpetual winter, they quickly discover the animals of this land are running out of food. Having learned lessons of survival from a lone hunter, they set out on a dangerous mission to help save the land. The book pays tribute to Cree storytelling and legends and is the first in a series.

Themes include: foster care, Indigenous identity, connecting to culture, family, community, climate, land resources, and working together



Sky Sisters

Jan Bourdeau Waboose and
illustrated by Brian Deines | 2002

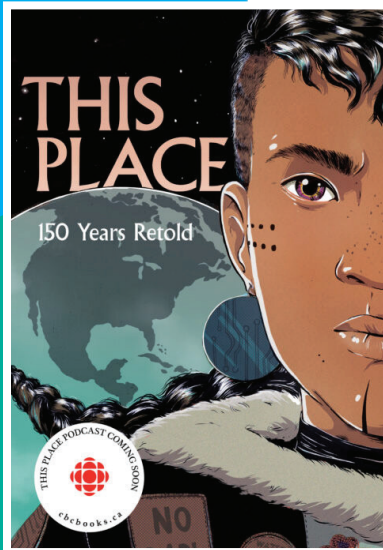
Suggested grade range: Div I and Div II

Jan Bourdeau Waboose is Nishnawbe Ojibwe from Northern Ontario.

Brian Deines is from Red Deer, Alberta and lives in Toronto, Ontario.

Sky Sisters is a beautiful story of two sisters who venture into the night in search of sky spirits (Northern Lights). As she prepares for the trek and makes her way through the snow, the narrator reflects on family traditions, sisterhood, and the beauty of the land and its inhabitants. The vivid vocabulary, including many Ojibwe words, combined with the illustrations provide insight into the symbolism and cultural importance of the Northern Lights.

Themes include: traditions, sisterhood, and family



This Place: 150 Years Retold

Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm, Sonny Assu,
Brandon Mitchell | 2019

Suggested grade range: Div III and Div IV

This is an anthology with authors from many Indigenous communities.

This Place: 150 Years Retold is a collection of ten graphic short stories focusing on connections to the land that makes up Canada. The stories invite readers to consider the ongoing effects of colonialism, the resilience of Indigenous people, and the continuing work of reconciliation. The diversity of voices within the anthology mean that this is a text that could be studied in whole or in part. Any one of these pieces would be an excellent addition to a study of short stories.

Themes include: resilience, reconciliation, and connection to land



Lightfinder

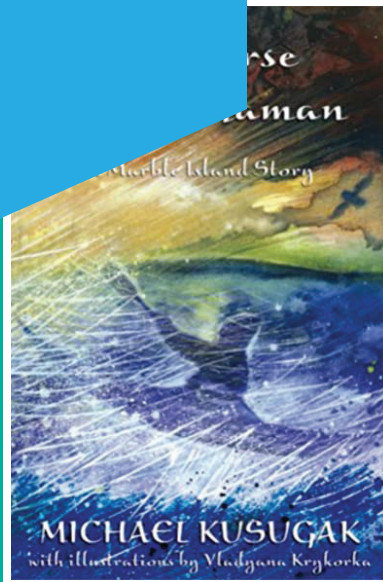
Aaron Paquette | 2014

Suggested grade range: Div III and Div IV

Aaron Paquette is of Métis, Cree and Norwegian descent.

Lightfinder is a fantasy/adventure story that takes place in Alberta and British Columbia. Aisling, a young Cree girl, sets out in the wilderness with her Kokum, Aunty, and two young male friends to find her runaway younger brother, Eric. Alternating between the perspectives of Aisling and Eric and incorporating traditional Cree stories, *Lightfinder* pits good against evil as the protagonists draw on newly-discovered powers to save the world.

Themes include: traditional cultural practices, intergenerational trauma, and spirituality



The Curse of the Shaman

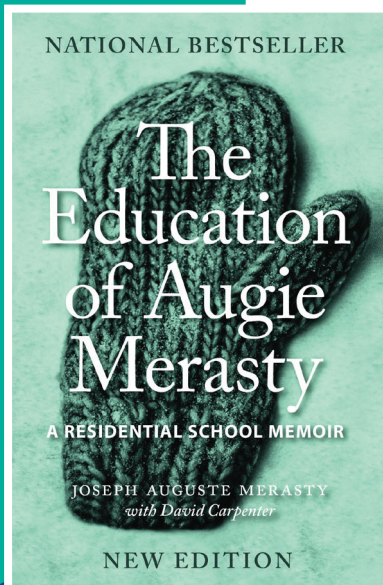
Michael Kusugak | 2006

Suggested grade range: Div III and Div IV

Michael Kusugak grew up in Repulse Bay, Northwest Territories (now Nunavut).

The Curse of the Shaman is set in a precontact Inuit setting and follows the life of the main character, Wolverine, as he grows into manhood. Having been cursed by a bad-tempered Shaman as a baby, Wolverine eventually finds himself stranded on a barren island and struggles to return home to his family and his childhood sweetheart. The book invites readers to consider the challenges of living in the north and the knowledge and skills required to survive.

Themes include: Identity, relationships, and culture



The Education of Augie Merasty: A Residential School Memoir

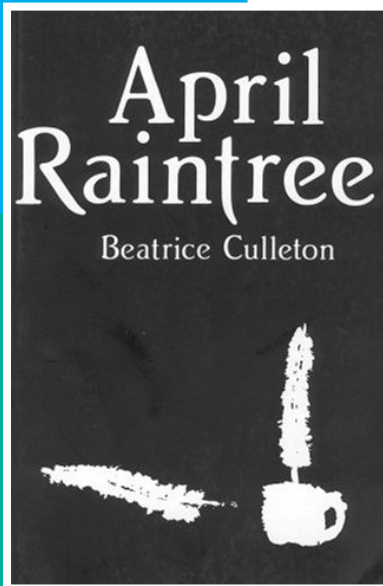
Joseph Auguste Merasty
with David Carpenter | 2014

Suggested grade range: Div IV

Joseph Auguste Merasty is Cree.

In *The Education of Augie Merasty*, the title character recounts the nine years he spent at St. Therese Residential School in Northern Saskatchewan. After surviving the traumas of daily life at the school, Merasty struggles with alcoholism, dementia, homelessness, and prostate cancer. The book, written with the help of David Carpenter who recounts the challenges of finishing the work, was written while Merasty was living on the streets. *The Education of Augie Merasty* serves as a powerful testament to the horrors of residential schools and could be helpful in illuminating for students this dark chapter of Canadian history.

Themes include: trauma, racism, sexual abuse, and alcoholism



April Raintree (High School Edition)

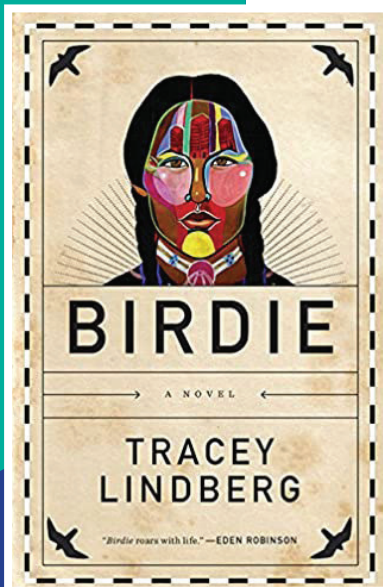
Beatrice Mosionier | 1984

Suggested grade range: Div IV

Beatrice Mosionier is Métis.

April Raintree provides a first-person account of the title character, a Métis girl growing up in Manitoba during the 1960s and 1970s. Removed from her parents, April and her sister enter the foster care system where they move between homes and are often separated from each other. The story follows the girls into womanhood as they face the challenges of racism, violence against women, alcoholism, and suicide. The novel ultimately offers a sense of hope, rooted in resilience, healing, and forgiveness. *April Raintree* is adapted from the original novel *In Search of April Raintree* and censors the language and some of the graphic content of that version.

Themes include: racism, suicide, violence against woman, foster care, hope, resilience, healing, and forgiveness



Birdie

Tracey Lindberg | 2015

Suggested grade range: Div IV

Tracey Lindberg is a Nehiyw (Cree person) whose Cree family are from the As'in'i'wa'chi Ni'yaw Nation (Kelly Lake Cree Nation). Dr. Lindberg teaches at Universities and is a best selling author. She currently lives on the territory of the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. Professor Lindberg was born in Grande Prairie and is third generation of her family to live in urban landscapes (which are also Indigenous lands).

Lindberg's debut novel *Birdie* is an important addition to the literary canon, opening the possibility of truth and reconciliation in the classroom. *Birdie* follows Bernice Meetoos as she moves through time and space (Loon Lake, Edmonton and Calgary AB, to Gibsons BC) and grapples with significant personal and community trauma. While she rests, recovers, and remembers, Bernice's cousins, aunties, and friends rally together around her physical presence, preparing to welcome her back when she awakes. Teachers should be aware that this book contains sexual violence.

Themes include: trauma, resilience, and strength



Moccasin Square Gardens

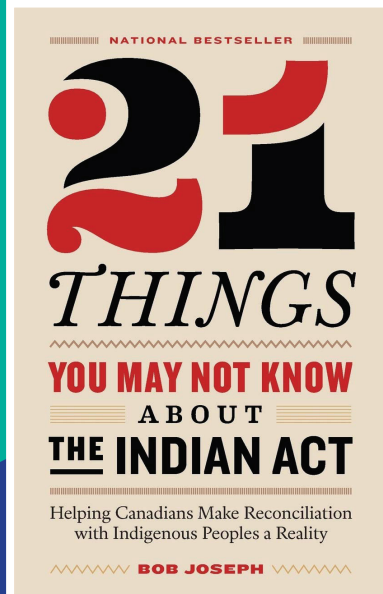
Richard Van Camp | 2019

Suggested grade range: Div IV

Richard Van Camp is a Tlicho Dene from Fort Smith, NWT. He lives in Edmonton: Treaty 6 Territory.

Moccasin Square Gardens is a collection of short stories that are humorous, philosophical, and grounded in community. Written in a distinctly oral tone, it brings to mind the cozy feeling of hearing the local gossip around a kitchen table. Told with humour and a lot of witty asides, the stories capture the experience of life in the Modern North. This is an excellent resource for contemporary, fun, short stories told through Indigenous perspectives and voices. The range of issues and themes explored in the text would make these stories well suited for English -1 and -2 programs.

Themes include: coming of age, identity, loyalty, relationships with parents, guilt, and friendships



21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality

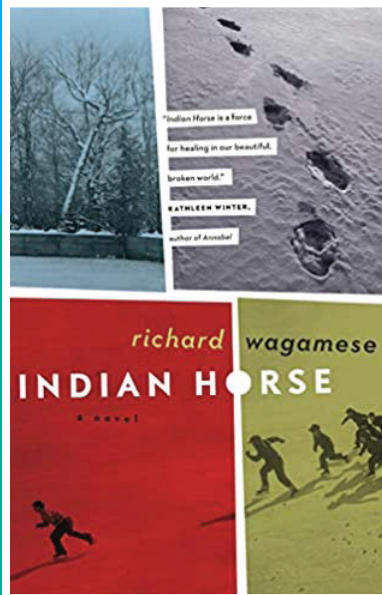
Bob Joseph | 2018

Suggested grade range: Div IV

Bob Joseph is from the Gwawaenuk Nation.

21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act provides a useful reference and additional reading material to help further understand The Indian Act. It is broken into smaller sections that explain the history leading up to the creation of The Indian Act as well as the terms and conditions of the act. Excerpts of the text might be useful as non-fiction reading for students and could be used by teachers as professional development to further the TQS component of applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

Themes include: Indigenous history, intergenerational trauma, canadian history, and Truth and Reconciliation



Indian Horse

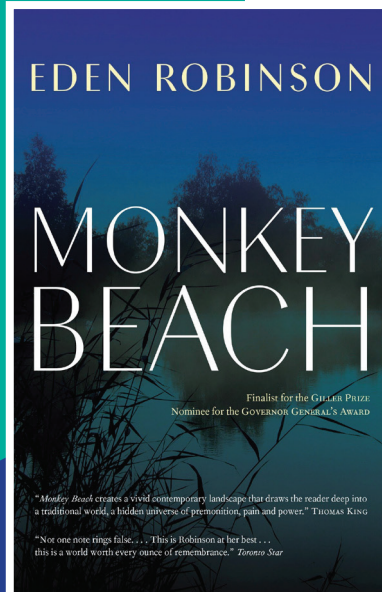
Richard Wagamese | 2012

Suggested grade range: Div IV

Richard Wagamese is Anishinaabe (Minaki, Ontario). Although he passed away in 2017, we are honoured to share his work.

Indian Horse tells the story of Saul Indian Horse, who is pulled from the arms of his beloved grandmother and sent to Residential School where he is forced to witness unspeakable trauma. Under the guidance of a priest, Saul discovers a gift for hockey, which takes him to the semi-professional leagues of Ontario. Struggling with racism and addiction, Saul must ultimately acknowledge the horrors of his past and reconnect with his culture in order to move forward. With a film adaptation, this novel is ideally suited for study in English -1 and -2 programs across Div IV.

Themes include: racism, trauma, love, resilience, and hope



Monkey Beach

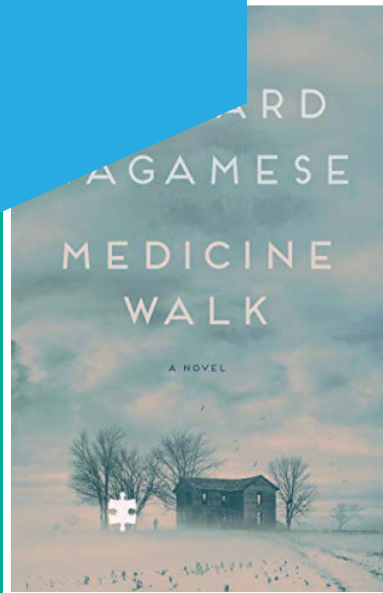
Eden Robinson | 2000

Suggested grade range: Div IV

Eden Robinson is Haisla and Heiltsuk from Kitamaat Village and Waglisla. She lives in her father's traditional territory in northern British Columbia.

Monkey Beach, the debut novel of Eden Robinson, follows a young Haisla woman looking for her younger brother who has gone missing at sea. With smooth integration of flashbacks to childhood, the story weaves between Lisamarie's present life and her childhood on the Haisla reserve. This novel is infused with Haisla symbolism and mythology, rendering it a beautifully vibrant and, at times, darkly comedic narrative that older students will appreciate. The complex narrative structure and ambiguity make this well-suited for -1 novel studies.

Themes include: oppression, loss of innocence, and spirituality



Medicine Walk

Richard Wagamese | 2012

Suggested grade range: Div IV

Richard Wagamese is Anishinaabe (Minaki, Ontario). Although he passed away in 2017, we are honoured to share his work.

Medicine Walk tells the story of Franklin Starlight and his father, Eldon, with whom he has had a minimal relationship. Eldon makes one last dying request of his son — to take him into the backcountry, and when he dies, bury him in the “warrior way.” Though Franklin insists that his father “ain’t no warrior,” he eventually relents, because of the prospect of finally learning the truth of his past. Over the course of their journey, Eldon’s story unfolds as he opens up about the pain and trauma he experienced throughout his life, and he seeks to make some sort of amends for his failures towards his son. The novel’s complex narrative structure and craft make it an excellent choice for senior high English Language Arts, and students will be easily immersed in the story and its compelling characters.

Themes include: redemption, forgiveness, resilience, and the healing nature of the land

LITERATURE EVALUATION TOOL FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

The list of books provided here cannot be complete. There are a lot of excellent Indigenous authors and Indigenous literature available for teachers to choose to use in their classrooms. For this reason, it is important for teachers to have the ability to understand what to look for when choosing authentic Indigenous resources for use in the classroom. The following are guidelines to consider when choosing authentic Indigenous literature.

The guidelines and questions are adapted from the “Guiding Voices Evaluation Tool: A Tool for Including First Nation, Métis and Inuit Perspectives”, <https://www.learnalberta.ca/content/fnmigv/index.html>.

Guidelines: The following guidelines will help you identify if a resource authentically and genuinely portrays Indigenous peoples, perspectives, worldviews, culture and history.

1. **Relationships are dynamic and interconnected.** The resource includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit understandings of the balance among all things (animate and inanimate) in the world within appropriate contexts.
 - a. Relationships and all things, including humanity, in the universe are interconnected, dynamic and influence each other.
 - b. Women and men are seen as in balance with one another and not represented with stereotypical roles.
 - c. Children are presented as a gift from the creator with specific roles and purpose for being. They have their own special gifts and talents.

2. **Language, cultural identity and voice are elements of identity;** a sense of belonging; and the roles of women, men and children. The resource includes the beliefs, traditions, contributions and practices of First Nations, Métis and Inuit with contextually appropriate language, cultural identity and voice.
 - a. Descriptive language is used to support identity
 - i. Language and terminology reflects respect for the diversity of people in appropriate contexts and specific language structures.

- ii. Names of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Aboriginal and Indigenous peoples are used with respect and not labelled in an inauthentic manner; does not use language that is generic (Aboriginal, Native) or denigrating (Indian, Eskimo, half-breed, mixed blood, squaw, buck).
 - iii. Respect for the significance of naming and earning a name is evident (e.g., traditional names, role names, ceremonial names, nicknames).
- b. There is an acknowledgement of voice through contributions
- i. First-person voice is acknowledged when individuals who share their personal experiences, beliefs, values and traditions are credited by name and affiliation.
 - ii. Credit is given to First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Aboriginal and Indigenous individuals and groups who share teachings of personal experiences, beliefs, values and traditions and not referred to anonymously or in an inauthentic manner (e.g., including a person's or community's story and name without consultation).
 - iii. Traditional and contemporary Indigenous knowledge, technologies and ways of living are appropriately identified, respected and historically accurate.

3. Experiences and worldviews of Indigenous peoples demonstrate a holistic perspective of the world. The resource includes the experiences and worldviews of First Nations, Métis and Inuit in appropriate contexts.

- a. Cultural authenticity is reflected by presenting values and belief systems of individuals and groups in contemporary or historical contexts.

- b. Experiences and worldviews are shared in appropriate context such as, views on important issues, such as treaties and the settlement of North America. Avoid assumptions such as Columbus or other Europeans “discovered” North America.
- c. Traditional and contemporary Indigenous knowledge, technologies and pedagogies are respected.
- d. The significance of Indigenous knowledge and its connections to a particular region and people is acknowledged.

4. The resource includes accurate and contextually appropriate origins and histories and the historical and contemporary contributions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

- a. The knowledge and wisdom of Elders, Knowledge Keepers and ceremonialists is honoured.
- b. Sense of place is reflected through traditional knowledge, protocols, scientific and traditional perspectives regarding the use of land.
- c. Diverse perspectives of the impacts of historical events are presented.
- d. Information about treaties is reflective of spirit, intent and sacred nature.
- e. The involvement of appropriate Elders, Knowledge Keepers, storytellers, ceremonialists, cultural experts and recognized members of Indigenous communities in the development and validation of the curriculum is evident through accreditation and documentation.

These guidelines have been adapted from the “Guiding Voices Evaluation Tool: A Tool for Including First Nation, Métis and Inuit Perspectives”, <https://www.learnalberta.ca/content/fnmigv/index.html>. Please visit the website and download the complete evaluation tool if you would like a complete list of guidelines for reviewing and evaluating educational resources.

