

Library Salon #43:

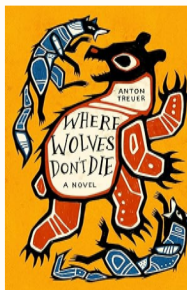
Why Indigenous Children's and Young Adult Literature Matter: A Celebration of Occasional Paper Series #54

List of Recommended Titles



Bank Street
Library

APRIL 2026



Where Wolves Don't Die

Anton Treuer

Levine Querido, 2024

9781646143818

Tightly woven Indigenous YA thriller that explores masculinity and love between generations of family.



Real Ones

Katherena Vermette

Hamish Hamilton, 2024

9780735247505

Heartrending story of two Michif sisters who must face their past trauma when their mother is called out for false claims to Indigenous identity.



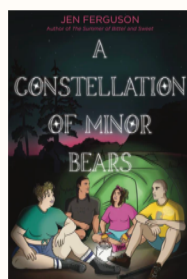
Weird Rules to Follow

Kim Spencer

Orca Book Publishers, 2022

9781459835580

A coming-of-age novel about a young Indigenous girl named Mia in 1980s Prince Rupert, British Columbia, who navigates friendship, family, and racism as she realizes the world treats her differently than her white best friend, Lara, due to her Indigenous identity.



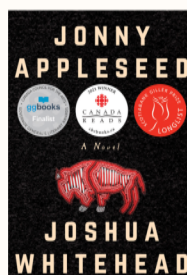
A Constellation of Minor Bears

Jen Ferguson

Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2024

9780063334229

A story about teens grappling with balancing resentment with enduring friendship—and how to move forward with a life that's not what they'd imagined.



Jonny Appleseed : A Novel

Joshua Whitehead

Arsenal Pulp Press, 2018

9781551527253

A tour-de-force debut novel about a Two-Spirit Indigiqueer young man and proud NDN glitter princess who must reckon with his past when he returns home to his reserve.



Here for a Good Time

Kim Spencer

Swift Water Books, 2026

9781774887806

A poignant coming-of-age YA novel featuring an Indigenous teen girl grappling with the effects of intergenerational trauma while navigating school, family and young love.



Warrior Girl Unearthed

Angeline Bouley
Henry Holt and Co., 2023
9781250766588

With the rising number of missing Indigenous women, her family's involvement in a murder investigation, and grave robbers profiting off her Anishinaabe tribe, Perry takes matters into her own hands to solve the mystery and reclaim her people's inheritance.



Sisters of the Wind

Angeline Bouley
Henry Holt and Co., 2025
9781250328533

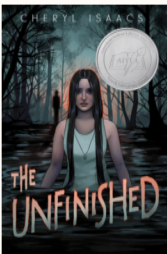
A YA mystery about a foster teen, Lucy Smith, who discovers her Ojibwe heritage and navigates the foster care system, exploring themes of identity, found family, and the importance of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).



The Summer of Bitter and Sweet

Jen Ferguson
Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2022
9780063086166

In this complex and emotionally resonant novel about a Métis girl living on the Canadian prairies, debut author Jen Ferguson serves up a powerful story about rage, secrets, and all the spectrums that make up a person—and the sweetness that can still live alongside the bitterest truth.



The Unfinished

Cheryl Isaacs
Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2024
9780063287389

An American Indian Youth Literature Award Honoree in her stunning debut, Cheryl Isaacs (Mohawk) pulls the reader into an unsettling tale of monsters, mystery, and secrets that refuse to stay submerged.



Moon of the Crusted Snow : A Novel

Waubgeshig Rice
ECW Press, 2018
9781770414006

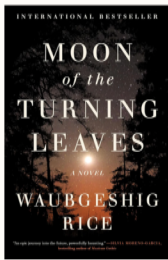
Blending action and allegory, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, is a post-apocalyptic novel where out of catastrophe comes resilience. As one society collapses, another is reborn.



Indiginerds : tales from modern Indigenous life

Alina Pete
Iron Circus Comics, 2024
9781638991335

Featuring an all-Indigenous creative team, *Indiginerds* is an anthology collecting 11 stories about Indigenous people balancing traditional ways of knowing with modern pop culture.



Moon of the Turning Leaves

Waubgeshig Rice

William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2024

9780358673255

In this stand-alone literary thriller set in the world of the award-winning post-apocalyptic novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, a scouting party led by Evan Whitesky ventures into unknown and dangerous territory to find a new home for their close-knit Northern Ontario Indigenous community more than a decade after a world-ending blackout.



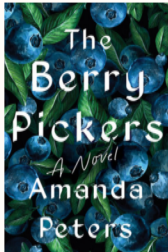
Waiting for the Long Night Moon: Stories

Amanda Peters

Catapult, 2025

9781646222599

In her debut collection of short fiction, Amanda Peters describes the Indigenous experience from an astonishingly wide spectrum in time and place—from contact with the first European settlers, to the forced removal of Indigenous children, to the present-day fight for the right to clean water.



The Berry Pickers : A Novel

Amanda Peters

Catapult, 2025

9781646221950

A four-year-old Mi'kmaq girl goes missing from the blueberry fields of Maine, sparking a mystery that will haunt the survivors, unravel a family, and remain unsolved for nearly fifty years.



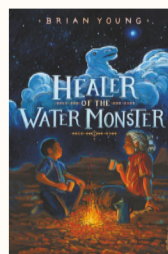
A Snake Falls to Earth

Darcie Little Badger

Levine Querido, 2021

9781646140923

Fifteen-year-olds Nina and Oli come from different worlds--she is a Lipan Apache living in Texas and he is a cottonmouth from the Reflecting World--but their lives intersect when Oli journeys to Earth to find a cure for his ailing friend and they end up helping each other save their families.



The Healer of the Water Monster

Brian Young

Heartdrum, an Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2021

9780062990402

Brian Young's powerful debut novel tells of a seemingly ordinary Navajo boy who must save the life of a Water Monster—and comes to realize he's a hero at heart.



Beast

Richard Van Camp

Douglas & McIntyre, 2025

9781771624145

Returning to his favorite setting of Fort Simmer, Northwest Territories, Richard Van Camp brings his exuberant style to a captivating teen novel that blends the supernatural with 1980s-era nostalgia to reflect on friendship, tradition and forgiveness.

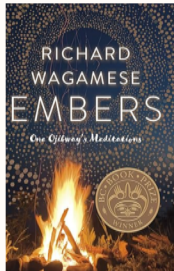


The Fragments that Remain

Mackenzie Angeconeb

DCB Young Readers, 2025 | 9781770867796

A year after her brother Ally's death was ruled suicide by overdose, Andy starts university without her "honorary twin," writing him letters as she strives to embrace her bisexuality and her Indigenous identity. When Andy discovers Ally's hidden poems, she tries to piece together remaining fragments of her brother.



Embers : One Ojibway's Meditations

Richard Wagamese

Douglas & McIntyre, 2017

9781771621335

In this carefully curated selection of everyday reflections, Richard Wagamese finds lessons in both the mundane and sublime as he muses on the universe, drawing inspiration from working in the bush--sawing and cutting and stacking wood for winter as well as the smudge ceremony to bring him closer to the Creator.



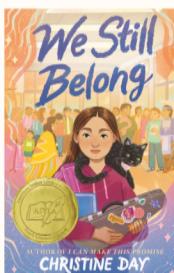
The Moth Dreamer

Amy Lynn Farrell

HighWater Press, 2026

9781774921616

The Moth Dreamer is a gripping tale that blends Anishinaabe traditions with a haunting journey through the physical and spiritual realms. Grief, guilt, and dark visions won't let Aubrey go in this coming-of-age novel for young adults.



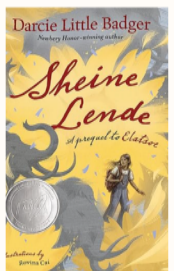
We Still Belong

Christine Day

Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2023

9780063064560

A story about a girl whose hopeful plans for Indigenous Peoples' Day go all wrong—until she finds herself surrounded by the love of her Indigenous family and community at an intertribal powwow.



Sheine Lende: A Prequel to Elatsoe

Darcie Little Badger, Rovina Cai

Levine Querido, 2024

9781646143795

This prequel to *Elatsoe*, centered on Ellie's grandmother, deepens and expands Darcie's one-of-a-kind world and introduces us to another cast of characters that will wend their way around readers' hearts.



Buffalo Dreamer

Violet Duncan

Nancy Paulsen Books, 2024 | 9780593624814

When twelve-year-old Summer visits her family on a reservation in Alberta, Canada, she begins experiencing vivid dreams of running away from a residential school like the one her grandfather attended as a child and learns about unmarked children's graves, prompting her to seek answers about her community's painful past.



The Firekeeper's Daughter

Angeline Boulley

MacMillan Publishers, 2021

9781250766564

A groundbreaking YA thriller about a Native teen who must root out the corruption in her community.



Expanse of Blue

Kauakanilehua Mahoe Adams

Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2026

9780063417953

A novel-in-verse about a Native Hawaiian girl's fight to find belonging in a fracturing family, sharing a message of love with resounding emotional truth.



Raven, Rising

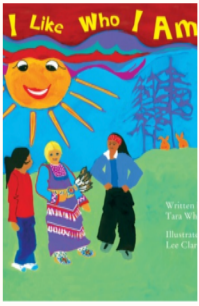
Christine Hartman Derr

Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2026

9780063432833

This debut novel follows a Cherokee girl who, after the tragic loss of her parents, tries to acclimate to difficult social dynamics in her new school and a curious magic that her mother may have passed down to her.

Children's Books



I Like Who I Am

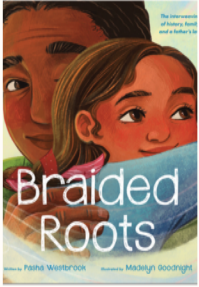
Tara White, illustrated by Lee Claremont

Theytus Books, 2008

9781894778633

Explores issues of bullying and belonging as Celina, a young Mohawk girl, looks for acceptance in her new community.

6-8



Braided Roots

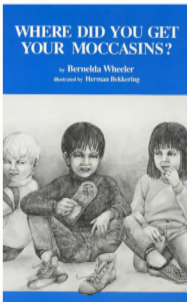
Pasha Westbrook, illustrated by Madelyn Goodnight

Orchard Books, 2025

9781339015385

As a young girl's father lovingly yet painstakingly braids her hair, he weaves a story about the strength and resilience of their ancestors, Freedmen who walked the Trail of Tears from Mississippi to Oklahoma.

4-8



Where Did You Get Your Moccasins?

Bernelda Wheeler, illustrated by Herman Bekkering

Peguis Publishers, 1992.

9781553796619

Children in an urban school are curious about a classmate's new pair of moccasins. In answer to their questions, the boy describes in detail how his grandmother, or Kookum, made his moccasins.

6-8



I Sang You Down from the Stars

Tasha Spillett, illustrated by Michaela Goade

Little Brown Books, 2021

9780316493161

A Native American woman describes how she loved her child before it was born and, throughout her pregnancy, gathered a bundle of gifts to welcome the newborn.

0-4



Find Her

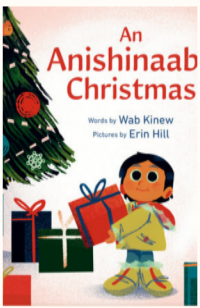
Ginger Reno

Holiday House, 2024

9780823454808

Explores the crisis of missing Indigenous women from the perspective of a sensitive young Cherokee girl who yearns to find her mother, while also navigating a chilling town mystery, a new friendship, and a family in need of healing.

10+



An Anishinaabe Christmas

Wab Kinew, illustrated by Erin Hill

Tundra Books, 2024

9781774883570

A festive, joyful Indigenous picture book that explores both Christmas traditions and Anishinaabe culture.

3-7



Two Tribes

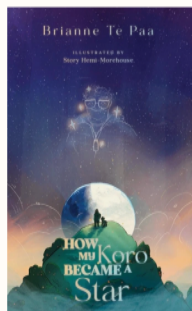
Emily Bowen Cohen

Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2023

9780062983596

In her poignant debut graphic novel inspired by her own life, Emily Bowen Cohen embraces the complexity, meaning, and deep love that comes from being part of two vibrant tribes.

8-12



How my Koro became a Star

Brianne Te Paa, illustrated by Story Hemi-Morehouse

Huia Publishers, 2022

9781775506942

A young boy learns about the customs around celebrating Matariki from his grandfather. They watch the stars from the top of a mountain, prepare their offering of food for the gods, and the boy learns about Te Waka o Rangi.

5-8



A Guide to Rocks

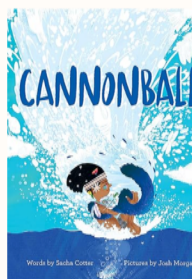
Sacha Cotter, illustrated by Josh Morgan

Huia Publishers, 2025

9781775507192

Explores themes of masculinity, communication, and mental health, using a "Gentleman's Rule Book for Rocks" to show how ignoring feelings makes them grow, and that sharing them is key.

6-10



Cannonball

Sacha Cotter, illustrated by Josh Morgan

Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2020

9781728217567

Everyone has advice on how to make the perfect cannonball—be bigger, louder, tougher. But one determined boy, cheered on by his bold Nan, learns the real secret: trust yourself.

4-8



My Powerful Hair

Carole Lindstrom, illustrated by Steph Littlebird

Harry N. Abrams, 2023 | 9781419759437

Mom never had long hair-- she was told it was too wild. Grandma couldn't have long hair-- hers was taken from her. But one young girl can't wait to grow her hair long: for herself, for her family, for her connection to her culture and the Earth, and to honor the strength and resilience of those who came before her. | 4-8



Rez Kid

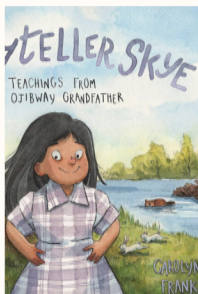
Andrea Landry, illustrated by Isabella Fassler

Kids Can Press, 2025

9781525311253

A beautiful story that celebrates Indigenous ways of life and encourages readers to be proud of who they are. The traditions practiced on the girl's reservation are showcased as she beads, harvests medicine, gardens and rides horseback with her elders.

3-7



Storyteller Skye: Teachings from My Ojibway Grandfather

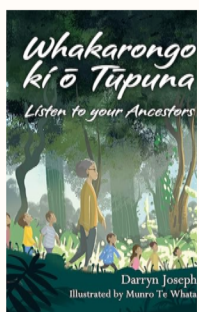
Lindsay Christina King, illustrated by Carolyn Frank

Medicine Wheel Publishing, 2023

9781778540073

In this collection of funny and unique short stories, young Skye enlightens us in a number of Indigenous teachings, passed down to her from her Ojibway Grandfather.

5-9



Whakarongo ki ō Tūpuna: Listen to your Ancestors

Darryn Joseph, illustrated by Munro Te Whata

Oratia Books, 2019

9780947506629

As a wise teacher grows older, she encourages her students to learn from the example of famous ancestors.

8-12



When We Are Kind

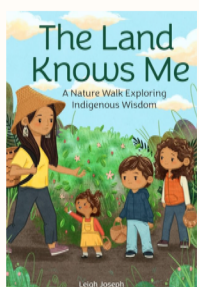
Monique Gray Smith, illustrated by Nicole Neidhardt

Orca Book Publishers, 2020

9781459825222

Celebrates simple acts of everyday kindness and encourages children to explore how they feel when they initiate and receive acts of kindness in their lives.

3-5



The land Knows Me : A Nature Walk Exploring Indigenous Wisdom

Leigh Joseph, illustrated Natalie Schnitter

Becker & Mayer, 2025

9780760392911

Through the Squamish language and cultural traditions, learn about Indigenous plant relationships and how we are all connected to nature through plant-based foods, medicines, and materials.

6-11



Majagalee: The Language of Seasons

Shawna Davis, photography by Toonasa Jordana Luggi

McKellar & Martin, 2022 | 9781990458002

Shawna Davis invites the reader to explore each of the four seasons through her beautiful words and lush, unforgettable, beaded illustrations.

All Ages

The Eel Man of Kawīwi



The Eel Man of Kawīwi

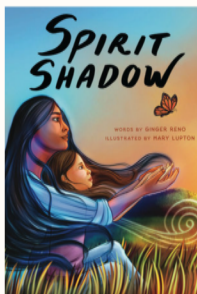
Ka'ena Aloha Series

Hī'ohia Publishing, 2012

9780988293847

One of eight traditional stories from the Wai'anae region of Oahu that comprise the Ka'ena aloha series.

9-12



Spirit Shadow

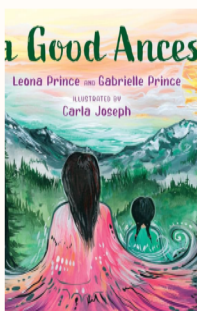
Ginger Reno, illustrated by Mary Lupton

Holiday House, 2026

9780823453108

An Indigenous child discovers her heritage in this story about the power of our ancestors and the way they guide and shapes us, even when we don't know it yet.

4-8



Be a Good Ancestor

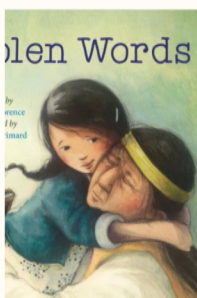
Leona Prince & Gabriella Prince, illustrated by Carla Joseph

Orca Book Publishers, 2022

9781459831407

Rooted in Indigenous teachings, this stunning picture book encourages readers of all ages to consider the ways in which they live in connection to the world around them and to think deeply about their behaviors.

3-5



Stolen Words

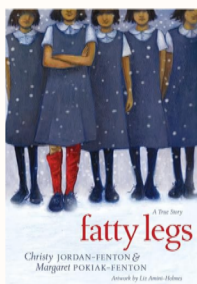
Melanie Florence, illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard

Toronto: Second Story Press, 2017

9781772600377

The story of the beautiful relationship between a little girl and her grandfather. When she asks her grandfather how to say something in his language, Cree, he admits that his language was stolen from him when he was a boy.

6-9



Fatty Legs : A True Story

Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, illustrated by Liz Amini-Holmes

Annick Press, 2010

9781554512461

Chronicles the unbreakable spirit of an Inuit girl bullied by a teacher while attending an Arctic residential school.

9-11



Wild Berries

Julie Flett

Simply Read Books, 2013

9781897476895

Clarence and his grandmother pick wild blueberries and meet ant, spider, and fox in a beautiful woodland landscape.

2-8



We All Play

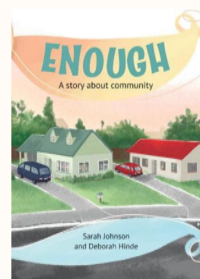
Julie Flett

Greystone Kids, 2021

9781771646079

Celebrates diversity and the interconnectedness of nature through an Indigenous perspective, complete with a glossary of Cree words for wild animals at the back of the book, and children repeating a Cree phrase throughout the book.

2-7



Enough: A Story About Community

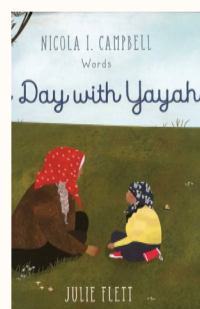
Sarah Johnson, illustrated by Deborah Hinde

PictureBook Publishing, 2021

9780473557089

Enough is a story about community, kindness and the power of helping hands. It follows the efforts of Hana as she struggles to provide enough food, clothing, warmth and company for her neighbours after hard times come to her community.

3-7



A Day with Yayah

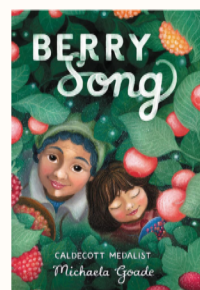
Nicola I. Campbell, illustrated by Julie Flett

Crocodile Books, 2017

9781566560412

On an outing in Nicola Valley, British Columbia, a Native American family forages for herbs and mushrooms while the grandmother passes down her language and knowledge to her young grandchildren. Includes glossary.

3-8



Berry Song

Michaela Goade

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2022

9780316494175

On an island at the edge of a wide, wild sea, a girl and her grandmother gather gifts from the earth.

4-8



All the Stars in the Sky

Art Coulson, illustrated by Winona Nelson

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2025

9781665931373

A young boy learns the Cherokee lesson of gadugi from his grandmother and how working together and helping each other makes the whole community stronger

4-8
