

BEST BETS

2010

Fiction Reading for Young Adults

**The OLA's Canadian Materials
Committee prepares this annual list.**

**Books are selected on the basis of their
literary merit as well as their appeal for
young adults. Illustrations are also
considered in the case of graphic novels.**

Armstrong, Kelley. *Reckoning.*

Doubleday Canada

In book three of the *Darkest Powers* series, Chloe Saunders and her friends have finally found a safe haven with Andrew, a renegade supernatural, as opposed to the Edison Group as they are. However, things are not necessarily all as they seem with Andrew, and Chloe, Tori, Simon, and Derek may be in the greatest danger they've faced yet.

Brooks, Martha. *Queen of Hearts.*

Groundwood

When 15 year old Marie-Claire is diagnosed with tuberculosis, she and her two siblings are sent away to a sanatorium where they are kept away from each other and forced to room with strangers. Marie-Claire's roommate is a rich and relentlessly cheerful girl named Signy and the story is as much about their friendship as it is about their struggles to beat this terrible disease in the days before a vaccine was developed.

Cummings, Gillian. *Somewhere in Blue.*

Lobster Press.

Sandy's father is dead. She is desolated and barely functioning. Her mother, always somehow outside the charmed circle of Sandy's close relationship with her father, appears not to be grieving. Best friend Lennie is trying to provide comfort but has her own problems with a mother who keeps casting her net for a man but catching only creeps and losers. There is a boy who would like to help if he can just find a way to break through the ice wall of Sandy's grief. A beautifully written story about the healing power of love and friendship.

Ellis, Deborah. *No Safe Place.*

Groundwood

Three teenagers smuggle themselves into England, each of them with a reason to leave their native land. Abdul is from war-torn Baghdad. Rosalia had been sold into sexual slavery by an uncle and escaped just in time and Cheslav had been a young Russian soldier. Distrusting everyone, they are forced to rely on each other in order to survive. Ellis fashions another look at young people with lives very different than our own but with similar hopes and dreams.

Harvey, Alyxandra. *Hearts at Stake.*

Walker & Company

Solange Drake is a natural born vampire, about to go through the change that will turn her from basically human, to thoroughly vampire. Since Solange is the only born vampire who is female, and there is a prophecy about her becoming the ruler of the vampires, her change is creating huge tension in the vampire world. With the Queen trying to kill her, and power hungry males trying to capture her heart, there is a lot going on in Solange's world. Luckily, Solange's human friend Lucy, her seven brothers, and a vampire hunter named Kieran, are all on Solange's side, and all fighting for her survival.

Jocelyn, Marthe. *Folly.*

Tundra

Mary, a poor farm girl in 19th century England is sent from her home by a mean spirited stepmother and pressed into the life of a domestic servant. Independent by nature, Mary

soon finds a better offer in another household but burns her bridges with her family by doing so.

Harvey, Sarah N. *Death Benefits*

Orca Book Publishers

As far as Royce ever knew his grandfather, Arthur, had just been this miserable old grouch, but when he's offered a lucrative summer job caring for the old guy, Royce discovers that Arthur's also very rich and famous. The old man's health is slowly deteriorating and he wants to die. Arthur confides this secret to Royce in the hope of getting some help.

Oppel, Kenneth. *Half Brother.* **Harper Collins**

Ben Tomlin's dad has one of the more interesting jobs on the planet. He's trying to teach sign language to a baby chimpanzee. Having a chimp in the family certainly has its perks. Ben finds he's suddenly a chick magnet. But he also sees some of the darker side of animal research.

Prinz, Yvonne. *The Vinyl Princess.*

Harper Trophy

Allie is a music geek. Music is her passion. She works full-time at Bob and Bob Records, selling vinyl. Not CDs. Not MP3s. Vinyl. The trouble is, Bob and Bob's isn't doing too well. It seems that most people just don't understand the greatness of music on vinyl. Enter Allie's secret identity as The Vinyl Princess, blogger and Zine creator. Can Bob and Bob's be saved, even with a crime wave sweeping the neighbourhood? Will Allie be stuck playing third wheel to her mother's romantic life? Can Allie change people's minds about music?

Slade, Arthur. *The Dark Deeps.*

Harper Collins

In book two of *The Hunchback Assignments*, Modo and Octavia are sent on a mission to discover a ship that has the power to wreak havoc on the world. When their own boat is rammed, and Modo is thrown into the sea, Octavia fears he is dead. Modo, however, finds himself somewhere completely unexpected, beneath the sea.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Bow, Erin. *Plain Kate.* Scholastic.

Buffie, Margaret. *Winter Shadows.* Tundra.

Livingston, Lesley. *Darklight.* Harper Trophy.

McClintock, Norah. *Homicide Related.* Red Deer Press.

Muller, Rachel Dunstan. *Squeeze.* Orca Book Publishers.

Russell, Craig. *Black Bottle Man.* Great Plains.

Stratton, Allan. *Borderline.* Harper Trophy.

Van Tol, Alex. *Knifepoint.* Orca Book Publishers.

NOTABLE NON FICTION (We do not review non fiction but came across this book which we felt deserved a mention).

OLA'S CANADIAN MATERIALS COMMITTEE

We are a long standing committee with a strong voice in promoting Canadian literature for children and young adults. Our goal is to highlight excellence in literature for children and young adults for the OLA membership and others with an interest.

The OLA's annual Best Bets evolved from a list put out by the Canadian Material's Committee of the Children's Services Guild. This Canadian Materials Committee is now under the wing of the OPLA Children and Youth Committee.

The OLA's Canadian Materials Committee selects books on the basis of their literary/artistic merit as well as their appeal for children and young adults. Text and illustrations are of equal importance in picture books and information books.

The Committee thanks S & B Books, www.sbbooks.com, for their ongoing support with providing a place to meet and copies of books to review.

Meetings are held a minimum of four times a year at S & B Books Ltd (3086 Universal Dr., Mississauga). Members discuss and evaluate recent publications by Canadian authors and illustrators. The books evaluated are suitable for children and young adults from birth to nineteen years old. From these discussions, the Committee produces "Best Bets" lists, annual annotated lists of recommended titles. These lists are released each year at the OLA Super Conference.

OLA's Canadian Materials Committee Members:

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Patrick Gracey, Toronto Public Library
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