

# **BEST BETS**

## **2011**

### **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.**

**Aker, Don.** *The Fifth Rule.* **Harper Collins.**

Following up with the characters from “The First Stone”, Reef is back in Halifax for the funeral of his mentor Frank Colville, and he keeps thinking about Leeza. Leeza is still living at home, has started university and continuing with her recovery. Even though Reef knows he cannot see Leeza because of a restraining order, events draw them together. Both Reef and Leeza are challenged to make choices about themselves, and their relationship.

**Coakley, Lena** *Witchlanders.* **Atheneum.**

Two young men live vastly different lives in countries that have always been enemies. One believes in magic but thinks he has none. The other scorns what he believes are witches with no power. This is an adventure story set in an immediately believable fantasy world.

**Cohen, Trish.** *The Switch.* **HarperTrophyCanada.**

Ever wish you could trade places with someone else? That’s exactly what happens in this novel, when both Andrea, an honours student and all around “good girl”, and Joules, the wild and rebellious daughter of a rock star, wish they had different lives! Find out what happens when each girl wakes up in the other’s life and learns what it’s really like to walk in someone else’s shoes - literally.

**Grant, Vicki.** *B Negative.* **Orca.**

Have you ever known someone who rubs you the wrong way? That is how Paddy feels about his stepfather Anthony. After a heated argument Paddy decides to join the army and follow in the footsteps of his father, even though he is uncertain about the decision. However, a routine blood test at the physical reveals that Paddy may not know everything about himself.

**McClintock, Norah.** *She Said/She Saw.* **Orca.**

She is the only survivor of a double murder, but Tegan says she did not see anything. However, no one believes that she is telling the truth--not students at school, the police, or her family. Kelly, her sister, is also trying to unravel the events leading up to the murders and what happened that night. Pressured by family and friends to confess what she saw, Tegan makes a decision regarding what she will say about that evening that will change everything.

**Mills, Rob.** *Charlie’s Key.* **Orca.**

Charlie will never give up the key his dying father gave him and runs away from the authorities and his uncle, an ex-con. While they are pursuing him, Charlie discovers the shocking truth about his family and the mysterious key. A gripping read.

**Prinz, Yvonne,** *All You Get is Me.* **HarperCollins.**

A city girl with a vintage Nikon FM SLR camera and Dad’s old Mercedes sedan, is living ‘green’ values on her activist family’s organic farm in California. After witnessing an accidental driving death, she is caught in turmoil of the urban rural divide as she evaluates her personal relationships amid the local issue of migrant workers rights. Will she lead the life her father has chosen for her or follow her dreams to New York?

**Ravel, Edeet. *Held*. Annick Press.**

Accomplished writer Ravel's depiction of a girl in a hostage situation is both thought-provoking and moving. 17-year old Chloe's state of mind, changing emotions, bouts of terror and deepening feelings for her humane captor are captured with fine nuance and understanding. Media coverage of the kidnapping and negotiations are interspersed, providing a different perspective. The book ends with another, aching, violation of her rights. Not to be missed.

**Shaw, Liane. *Fostergirls*. Second Story Press.**

Solitary Sadie identifies as "Fostergirl a.k.a. Grouphomegirl". She learns that it is impossible to stay invisible. Chatty Rhainnon, who befriends her and the do-gooder school counsellor who engages her potential, gradually force her to explore her options. A startling revelation about her past threatens to derail her. Will her new found confidence and academic curiosity be enough?

**HONOURABLE MENTIONS**

Austen, Catherine. *All Good Children*. Orca.  
Bass, Karen. *Drummer Girl*. Coteau.  
Collins, P.J.. *What Happened to Serenity*. Red Deer Press.  
Ellis, Deborah. *True Blue*. Pajama Press.  
Harvey, Alyxandra. *Haunting Violet*. Walker & Company.  
Krossing, Karen. *The Yo-Yo Prophet*. Orca.  
Ostlere, Cathy. *Karma*. Razorbill.  
Skuy, David. *Undergrounders*. Scholastic.  
Slade, Arthur. *Empire of Ruins*. Harper Collins.  
Weber, Lori. *Yellow Mini*. Red Deer Press.  
Withers, Pam. *First Descent*. Tundra.  
Wynne-Jones, Tim. *Blink and Caution*. Candlewick.  
Yee, Paul. *Money Boy*. Groundwood.  
Young, Moira. *Blood Red Road*. Doubleday.

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

Jocelyn, Marthe. *Scribbling Women*. Tundra.

## 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 lists 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. We publish two lists each year, one listing top material for children and the other listing top material for young adults (teens).

The Committee thanks S & B Books, [www.sbbooks.com](http://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:

Carrie Dawber, Richmond Hill Public Library  
Sarah Hart, Chatham-Kent Public Library  
Sandy Laird, Mississauga Library System  
Laura Luopa, Caledon Public Library  
Terry Milligan, Mississauga Library System  
Sheilah O'Connor, Toronto Public Library  
Cecily Reid, Richmond Hill Public Library  
Jane Salmon, Barrie Public Library

For further information, please contact  
Jane Salmon at the Barrie Public Library  
[jsalmon@barrie.ca](mailto:jsalmon@barrie.ca)

Ontario Library Association  
50 Wellington St. East, Suite 201,  
Toronto, ON M5E 1C8  
Tel 416-941-9581 or 866-873-9867  
FAX 416-941-9581 or 800-387-1181  
[www.accessola.com](http://www.accessola.com)  
[info@accessola.com](mailto:info@accessola.com)