

Best Bets

2021 List

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Picture Books

Boivin, Lisa. We Dream Medicine Dreams. Highwater Press.

This book is a beautiful depiction of Indigenous kinship and healing. With powerful words and pictures, Lisa Boivin tells a story about how we connect with the knowledge of our ancestors through dreams. After a dream about a bear, the little girl listens to her grandfather explain how the Bear, Hawk, Caribou and Wolf teach us how to live a good life. When her Grandpa gets sick, the little girl relies on these teachings as she learns to say goodbye. This gentle story about life and death will touch the hearts of children and adults alike.

Bouchard, David. Meet Your Family / Gikenim Giniigi'igoog. Illustrated by Kristy Cameron. Medicine Wheel Education.

Indigenous teachings are brought to life in wonderfully colourful illustrations, with dual English and Ojibway language. The natural environment is an extension of your family, and this picture book introduces children to Mother Earth, Father Sky, Grandfather Sun, and Grandmother Moon to name a few. A pronunciation guide for the Ojibway words is also included.

Fan Brothers. It Fell from the Sky. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Created by the Canadian author-illustrator team the Fan Brothers, this whimsical picture book is about community, art, greed, and different perspectives of one ordinary item. When a mysterious object falls from the sky, all of the insects agree that it is the most amazing thing that they have ever seen. Some think that it is an egg while others say it is a gumdrop. However, since it fell near spider's home, he is convinced it belongs to him. Spider builds a spectacular display so that insects from far and wide can come look at the marvel. However, when Spider starts charging a fee to see the marble, the community alienates him for his greed. In order to be accepted back into the community, Spider must redeem himself.

Fritsch, Kelly & Anne McGuire. We Move Together. Illustrated by Edwardo Trejos. AK Press.

This stunning picture book highlights the way that people of all abilities can move together with a little ingenuity, a lot of community and a focus toward disability justice. Presented with a focus on diversity the book is written simply

and powerfully in a way that even the youngest children will find relevant. We move together is a powerful message of the power we have when we all move together whether we move fast or slow.

Krossing, Karen. Sour Cakes. Illustrated by Anna Kwan. Owlkids.

This is a great story about exploring empathy and emotional acceptance in a warm and accessible way. Two sisters wake up in very different moods. The older sister wakes up cheerful, while the younger sister is grumpy. The older sibling enthusiastically suggests fun activities to cheer up her younger sister, such as offering to go outside and play with her, colour pictures, or bake a cake together. The younger sister says she only likes the colour gray and she only wants sour cakes. Then the older sibling tries a different tactic when she empathizes with her sister, offering compassion along with a gray picture and a sour cake. Together, the sisters navigate the younger one's sour feelings, until she is cheered up and finally willing to play. This picture book's colourful and conceptual illustrations fill each page spread, while expressing the mood, building tension, and emphasizing the size and importance of the younger child's emotions. This book is terrific for launching discussions about when and how to express moods and feelings.

McLellan, Stephanie Simpson. The Sorry Life of Timothy Schmoe. Illustrated by Zoe Si. OwlKids.

Timothy Schmoe is Sorry. He is not a bad kid, but sometimes he makes mistakes. Told through a series of letters, this hilarious and heartwarming story follows Timothy as he apologizes for the disasters and chaos he accidentally (and sometimes, not so accidentally) causes. When a pocketful of marbles ruins his sister's ballet recital, Timothy remorsefully apologizes and says his father wishes Timothy had never been born. Hilarious turns to heartwarming as the story teaches a powerful lesson about acceptance. This book is the perfect way to teach empathy for children who struggle with impulse control, and shows the power of unconditional love and acceptance.

O'Leary, Sara. A Kid is a Kid is a Kid. Illustrated by Qin Leng. Groundwood Books.

Adults always ask such boring questions. Why does it matter if I am a boy or a girl, or why I am small, or where I am from? Adults should ask kids REAL questions, like what is my new dog's name? Or if you can try some of my lunch? Or do you want to play? The difference between what kids think is important to ask and what adults think is important to ask is huge, and this book perfectly encapsulates what the important questions are for kids.

Robertson, David A. On the Trapline. Illustrated by Julie Flett. Tundra Books.

A boy and his Moshom, (Swampy Cree for Grandpa), take a trip to the Northern wilderness to visit the trapline where many years ago his grandpa and family lived off the land, before he and his siblings were forced to leave to attend school. While on the trapline stories and language is shared between the boy and his Moshom as they reconnect to the land and their culture. Told in long prose and muted colour palette that places an emphasis on the two figures contrasted with the land. The depiction of the sky and water is deserving of special attention.

Stevenson, Robin. Pride Puppy. Illustrated by Julie McLaughlin. Orca.

A fun ABC picture book featuring vibrant illustrations that introduces kids to the concept of Pride Day. The story follows a child and their family as they gather with friends and grandparents and try to find their puppy that has gotten loose during the Pride parade. This is a sweet book with colorful pictures that's guaranteed to delight young readers and their family.

Yuksel, M.O. In My Mosque. Illustrated by Hatem Aly. HarperCollins.

In My Mosque introduces readers to the mosque as a place of religious worship, but also a place of community, both local and global. We follow a global, diverse cast of Muslim children as they take us through what happens at their mosques, as well as showing the traditions that are found in every mosque around the world. The book also shows that while mosques are special in the Muslim faith that everyone is welcome. Bright and bold colour work, soft lines and featuring beautiful Islamic Geometric work thought the book is a real delight for readers both religious and secular.

Honourable Mentions

Fontaine, Valérie, translated by Shelley Tanaka. The Big Bad Wolf in My House. Groundwood Books.

George, Kallie. The Secret Fawn. Illustrated by Elly MacKay. Tundra Books.

Morstad, Julie. Time is a Flower. Tundra Books.

Rahman, Bahram. A Sky-Blue Bench. Illustrated by Peggy Collins. Pajama Press.

Stinson, Kathy. The Bare Naked Book. Illustrated by Melissa Cho. Annick Press.

Junior Fiction

Ahn, Angela. Peter Lee's Notes from the Field. Illustrated by Julie Kwon. Tundra Books.

Eleven-year-old Peter Lee is determined to fulfill one goal in life: to become a paleontologist more than anything. This summer he will finally have a chance to experience a real dinosaur dig. Sadly, his summer falls apart when his real-life dinosaur expedition turns out to be a bust, and his dream appears to be crushed. Even worse, his grandmother, Hammy, is sick and no one will speak to Peter or his sister about it. Armed with his notebook and pens, Peter puts his observation and experimental skills to the test to determine how he can help his grandmother Hammy. Told in short, accessible journal entries, this sweet coming-of-age story is packed with humour, dinosaurs, science, sibling drama, and Korean culture.

Dowding, Philippa. Firefly. DCB.

Firefly is safer living in the park across from her mother's home. But after the Bad Night, her mother is taken away and Firefly is sent to live with her Aunt Gayle, owner of the fantastic costume shop the Corseted Lady. Firefly has to get used to baths, sleeping in a bed, and going to school, but she also gets to wear as many costumes as she likes. As she navigates her new reality, she has to come to terms with her past to figure out some things. What is a family? Where is home? And who exactly is Firefly? Told through the eyes of a young person and interspersed with flashbacks, this book explores real world issues such as mental health and trauma with empathy, and love.

Fung, Rosena. Living with Viola. Annick Press.

This debut graphic novel explores mental health, cultural differences, and the trials and tribulations of middle school in a honest and quietly funny way. It is hard enough for Livy, being the new girl at school. But add in Viola- the shadowy embodiment of Livy's anxiety, and things just get worse. Livy tries to push back against Viola, but nothing seems to work until she makes some new friends. But when tensions at home and school rise, Viola gets stronger and more powerful than ever. Livy must learn to ask for help and face her anxiety so that she truly can live with Viola. Drawing on the authors own experiences with anxiety and the pressures of growing up the child of Chinese immigrants, this charming novel is the perfect combination of heartfelt and humour.

Galbraith, Bree. Wednesday Wilson Gets Down to Business. Illustrated by Morgan Goble. Kids Can Press.

Wednesday Wilson has the entrepreneurial spirit. While she may not have a business, she is determined to get one started. With the help of her best friend Charlie, and her little brother Mister, the go-getter brainstorms ideas. Will an unfortunate Kale Incident stand between her and her dreams? Fans of Shark Tank will love this illustrated early chapter book.

Gay, Marie-Louise & David Homel. Travels in Cuba. Groundwood Books.

Charlie and his family are off on another adventure. This time they will be traveling to Cuba, where his mother will be sitting in on classes with Cuban students and doing artwork with them. While their stay in Havana provides lots of time for sightseeing, the family also travels farther into Cuba seeing the disparity between city and rural life and tourist versus Cuban citizen. Delightful illustrations bring a finishing touch to this wonderful story that can also serve as an introduction to Cuban history.

Gentile, Leslie. Elvis, Me, and the Lemonade Stand Summer. Cormorant.

It's the summer of 1978, and lo and behold, who pulls up to the Eagle Shores Trailer Park but Elvis Presley. Declared dead just a year ago, fellow resident Truly Bateman is convinced that this is the King. Over the course of the summer Truly tries to convince people that Elvis lives in her trailer park, all the while setting up a lemonade stand each day to make enough money to find her biological father. There isn't much support from her alcoholic mother, but as Truly realizes over the course of these few months, family is more than just blood relatives.

Korman, Gordon. Linked. Scholastic Canada.

When a middle school in a quiet town is vandalized with a swastika the students are quick to look for someone to blame, is it Michael the student who discovered it? Link the popular prankster? Dana, the only Jewish kid in school is spared scrutiny, though she hates that she suddenly stands out. As more swastikas are found, as the cast of middle school characters are brought closer together in an effort to make a six million link long paper chain to combat the hate crimes and show their unity. Told from alternating perspectives this book delves into how hiding from history allows hate to continue.

Lucas, Chad. Thanks A Lot, Universe. Amulet Books.

Brian wakes up on his 13th birthday expecting to suck at his presentation and deal with bullying from his classmates. He didn't expect to find his dad gone and his mom zoned out after taking too many pills. Brian is sent to live with a foster family, the bullying at school escalates until Brian punches his classmate and he is suspended. With his anxiety spiraling out of control, Brian realizes that a friend like Ezra might be exactly what he needs! Ezra has always been friendly with Brian but when Brian runs away from his foster home, Ezra knows he needs to take a leap and help! As they grow closer, Ezra and Brian will need to decide if they can share their vulnerabilities with each other by sharing the things they would rather hide from the world.

Sands, Kevin. Children of the Fox (A Thieves of Shadow Novel). Penguin Random House Canada.

In this edge-of-your seat series opener, set in an intriguing world with Spellweavers, enchantments and a talking fox, fourteen-year-old Callan is an expert con artist who knows how to play the odds and is highly skilled in the fine art of reading body language. After receiving a mysteriously cryptic job offer that seems to promise a dream-come-true payout, Callan joins forces with four other exceptionally talented kids to pull off a high-stakes heist. This outstanding fantasy adventure novel offers surprising twists, traps and trickery on every page.

Sherrard, Valerie. Birdspell. DCB.

Twelve-year-old Corbin has developed excellent coping skills after dealing with his mother's bipolar diagnosis on his own. Every time his mom quits work, stops taking her meds or lashes out, Corbin finds a way to make things work. Unexpectedly, Corbin adopts a parakeet from a classmate, and he slowly begins to let down his defenses and learns that he can ask for help. Told from the perspective of a young boy who has learned not to trust anyone, this novel shares Corbin's fears, insecurities, and dreams.

Honourable Mentions

Boulay, Stéphanie, translated by Charles Simard. Riley Can't Stop Crying. Illustrated by Agathe Bray-Bourret. Orca.

Maggs, Sam. Tell No Tales: Pirates of the Southern Seas. Illustrated by Kendra Wells. Abrams Books for Young Readers.

Staunton, Ted. The Good Fight. Illustrated by Josh Rosen. Scholastic Canada.

Sylvester, Basil. The Fabulous Zed Watson! Illustrated by Kevin Sylvester. HarperCollins Canada.

Junior Non-Fiction

Becker, Helaine. That's No Dino! Or Is It? What Makes a Dinosaur a Dinosaur. Illustrated by Marie-Ève Tremblay. Kids Can Press.

What is not a dino? This easy-to read non-fiction book for kids features simple illustrations of ten prehistoric animals that look very much like dinosaurs but aren't. For each animal, there is a short description and a checklist that ultimately reveal to readers why the animal was not a dinosaur. By the end of the book, readers will know exactly what makes a dinosaur a dinosaur. Short and easy to understand, this book will delight dinosaur fans as well as those who are not too interested in them, since there aren't that many in this book anyway!

Craft, Aimee. Treaty Words: For As Long As the Rivers Flow. Illustrated by Luke Swinson. Annick Press.

On the banks of a river, a little girl learns from her Mishomis the importance of listening to nature, and how treaties are an ongoing obligation and responsibility for everyone. This exemplary narrative nonfiction book provides an understanding of Indigenous perspectives on treaty relationships, affording vital - and not often heard - historical and cultural context to these living agreements.

Cross, Alan & Emme Cross & Nicole Mortillaro. The Science of Song: How and Why We Make Music. Illustrated by Carl Wiens. Kids Can Press.

This illustrated book offers a wonderful and thorough exploration about the science, history, and evolution of music. It demonstrates how music has been consumed throughout history, and the progression of recorded music, from the phonograph to streaming. Each of the chapters discusses an aspect of music production, from how our hearing works, to making music, and how we have shared music. Each chapter also includes a playlist from that era being discussed, featuring three important pieces of music which characterize it. With fun digital art, a timeline, glossary, resources, and an index, this book provides a simple and intriguing way for children to understand more about the evolution of music over time.

Delaronde, Deborah L. *Louis Riel Day: The Fur Trade Project*. Illustrated by Sheldon Dawson. Theytus Books.

A young Métis boy works with his grandfather to research and write a report on Louis Riel and the fur trade. While digging deeper into the past, the contributions of the Métis to the growth of the fur trade, and the development of Canada, come to life in the pages of this book. The significance of Louis Riel and the Red River Resistance become clear as he learns why they celebrate a holiday named after Louis Riel.

De Laurentiis Johnston, Julia. *Her Epic Adventure: 25 Daring Women Who Inspire a Life Less Ordinary*. Illustrated by Salini Perera. Kids Can Press.

Succinct and spirited biographies celebrate a refreshingly diverse group of accomplished trailblazers from around the world and throughout history. Organized into Sky, Peaks, Ice, Land, and Water sections, extraordinary adventurers are profiled, and intriguing sidebars position readers in the middle of the action. Empowering and encouraging, this well-researched book shows what all people are capable of.

Herriot, Dr. Lindsay & Kate Fry. *Growing up Trans: In Our Own Words*. Orca Book Publishers.

What does it mean to be young and transgender today? A beautiful collection of poetry, short stories and art collected through a series of workshops run by Dr. Lindsay Herriot and Kate Fry. In addition to the heartfelt words written by Trans youth, you will find an eclectic mix of book recommendations and advice for all ages.

Kay, Edward. *Germ Science: the Sick Truth About Getting Sick (and Staying Healthy)*. Illustrated by Mike Shiell. Kids Can Press.

This is a fun and informative introduction to the world of germs filled with a great combination of scientific information exploring the science and history of microbes. This book covers what germs are, how we get sick, how the human immune system works and the best ways to remain healthy. There are intriguing stories about early attempts to fight disease and also the plagues that changed the course of history. This is a kid-friendly overview that blends lots of solid information with humour, cool facts, and gross details to make learning fun. Funny comic-style art presents facts in an accessible way, and includes a glossary, index, and a further reading list.

Lee, Jen Sookfong. Finding Home: The Journey of Immigrants and Refugees. Illustrated by Drew Shannon. Orca Book Publishers.

What is an immigrant? What is a refugee? Why do some people choose to leave their homes and others are forced to leave? Jen Sookfong Lee takes an in-depth look at the history of human migration, migration policies that affected marginalized groups, the history of colonialization and its effect on human migration, and the many, many reasons why today so many people move around the world. Highlighting immigration stories from individual Canadians set within a global context, the book will give readers an important and up to date look into this issue.

Ouellet, Maire-Claude, trans. Phyllis Aronoff & Howard Scott. Amazing Athletes: An All-Star Look at Canada's Paralympians. Owlkids.

Amazing athletes is a fact-filled book for any kid interested in sports. Interviews provide readers with firsthand accounts of the Canadian Paralympians' experience, from the sports they play, to their journey to become an athlete. Kids will be inspired by their words, and learn to persevere, no matter the setback.

Silver, Erin. Proud to Play: Canadian LGBTQ+ Athletes Who Made History. Lorimer.

Athletes needing to hide their LGBTQ+ identities if they want to play professionally still happens but is becoming less and less of an issue. Erin Silver looks at Canadian athletes who identify as LGBTQ+ and their achievements. From recent athletes, such as Eric Radford and Cindy Ouellet, to athletes who have retired, such as Angela James and Betty Baxter, readers will get a look into the issues still facing these athletes as they attempt to compete and represent Canada on the podium.

Honourable Mentions

Eamer, Claire. Extremely Gross Animals: Stinky, Slimy, and Strange Animal Adaptations. Kids Can Press.

Kerbal, Deborah. Fred & Marjorie: A Doctor, A Dog, and the Discovery of Insulin. Illustrated by Angela Poon. Owlkids.

MacLeod, Elizabeth. Meet Thérèse Casgrain (Scholastic Canada Biography). Illustrated by Mike Deas. Scholastic Canada.

MacLeod, Elizabeth. Meet David Suzuki (Scholastic Canada Biography). Illustrated by Mike Deas. Scholastic Canada.

Sandstrom, Donna. Orca Rescue: The True Story of an Orphaned Orca Named Springer. Illustrated by Sarah Burwash. Kids Can Press.

Young Adult Fiction

Ali, S.K. Misfit in love. Salaam Reads / Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Misfit in love picks up some time after Saints and misfits, and follows Janna over the course of a summer filled with new love and wedding planning. Janna thinks she knows who she likes (Noah), but she's caught unawares by two new people in her life: the dreamy Haytham and the more complicated Layth. Janna needs to find out soon, who is her perfect match? Misfit in love is perfect for those who love a fun, fresh read filled with those first summer romances. It is a wonderful book of self-discovery and gaining confidence. Misfit in love can be read as a standalone.

Baker, Chandler & Wesley King. Hello (From Here). Dial Books.

Set during the first Covid-19 lockdown in March of 2020, this modern love story is a long distance quarantine project of two award winning authors. Maxine and Jonah meet in the canned goods aisle of a Whole Foods right as the world is getting ready to lockdown. What a perfect time for a meet-cute, eh? Max, Jonah, and their friends learn to live together (but apart), figure out how to navigate being teenagers while dealing with the larger issues surrounding the pandemic, and adding in the "new normal" of love in a time of Coronavirus. Class struggles, privilege, financial insecurity, mental health and so much more are explored alongside the day to day experience of living during the first two months of the pandemic. This book is equal parts heartwarming, heart breaking, humorous and thoughtful. Baker and King manage to beautifully balance the stark realities of living during a global pandemic with the joy and humor of two teens falling in love.

Boteju, Tanya. Bruised. Simon Pulse.

In the aftermath of her parent's deaths, Daya Wijensinghe deals with her emotional pain by hurting herself. A superficial pain from a bruise helps her suppress the emotional pain that she feels. When Daya's friend introduces her to roller derby her whole world shifts. Roller Derby offers the opportunity for bruises that Daya wants as well as the human interaction and personal connections she needs. Unwittingly, Daya begins to connect with her

teammates and trainers in ways she never imagined. This is the story of how community coming together can support someone through their grief and pain. Tanya Boteju creates characters with diverse backgrounds and gender identities.

Dimaline, Cherie. Hunting by Stars. Penguin Random House Canada.

The sequel to The Marrow Thieves is set in the not-so-distant future when a plague and natural disasters have decimated the world and erased the ability to dream for most of the population. Without dreams, people become haunted, sick, mad, and unable to rebuild. The government quickly learned that the Indigenous people have retained their dreams, an ability rumored to be kept in the very marrow of their bones. Despite the historical reputation of residential schools, the government reinstates them across the land to bring in the dreamers and harvest their dreams. Seventeen-year-old French and his family have been on the run for years, hiding in the forests while determined to build their community, keep their language - and stay out of the hands of the Recruiters. However, a single slip finds French in a cement walled unlit room, and he immediately knows where he is - and what it will take to escape.

Everett, Sarah. Some Other Now. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Jessi has found in the Cohens the family she always wanted: Mel, is the mother Jessi wishes she had, Ro is the brother and best friend she could ever ask for but Luke Cohen, is the strongest crush she's ever had. After she confesses her feelings to Luke, the two start dating and everything seems great at first, especially to Mel who's battling cancer and has always wanted to see her children happy. As things get more serious between the two and Mel's cancer gets worse, the friendship between Ro and Jessi suffers a devastating blow. The story goes back and forth between the past and the present, letting the reader piece together what happened to Jessi and the Cohens. A heart wrenching read, this might be one of the most emotionally charged novels of the year.

Kaur, Jasmin. If I Tell You the Truth. HarperCollins.

Trigger Warning: This summary contains references to sexualized violence and sexualized assault.

If I Tell You the Truth is a beautifully written work of poetic prose detailing two stories: one of a mother leaving hardship looking for a better life, and a daughter who will grow up with safety and opportunity. This book is split into two perspectives- the story of Kiran, a survivor of rape and a young student traveling to Canada to get an education. She hopes to put the past behind her but things spiral out of control when she discovers she is pregnant. And

Sahaara, who is eighteen and looking forward to finishing high school. She has a great life in Vancouver with supportive friends and a bright future. ... that is until her mother's undocumented status comes to light and the violent history accompanying that information. This situation sets into motion a series of events that this mother and daughter must face together. From the truth of the rape and the reality that the rapist is a very influential man, this book is both powerful and devastating while also remaining very true to life.

King, Thomas. Borders. Illustrated by Natasha Donovan. HarperCollins.

A young boy and his mother are traveling from Canada to the US, when they get stopped at the border and asked their citizenship as part of the routine set of questions the border patrol asks travelers. When the mother answers that their citizenship is "Blackfoot" the officer requests that the mother and her child step out of the car to answer further questions, after which the two are released and denied entry. As the mother persists in her quest of being recognized as Blackfoot, the scenario repeats for several days until it gains attention from the media. This is a story that does end well, but not before the mother and son go through hunger, nights of sleeping in their car and undeniable frustration with the system. This is a striking graphic novel that features beautiful illustrations that relate the story perfectly.

Nielsen, Susan. Tremendous Things. Penguin Teen.

Wilbur is excited to start his first day of middle school after being homeschooled for many years. Unfortunately, Wilbur accidentally reveals his most embarrassing moments to his entire class. Fast forward to the ninth grade where Wil's class is hosting exchange students from Paris and Wil is partnered with Charlie, a tall stylish young woman who Wil falls instantly in love. When Charlie breaks his heart, Wil's friends and elderly neighbour stage a Queer-Eye style intervention to help Wil build his confidence and win back Charlie.

Sambury, Liselle. Blood Like Magic (Blood Like Magic #1). Margaret K. McElderry.

Set in the Greater Toronto Area in the 2040s, Voya, a young witch must conquer a seemingly impossible task to satiate her ancestors. This is the tradition for young witches in order to keep their powers and uphold their family's status in the magical community. However, unbeknownst to Voya there are other forces at play. She is given a task that if completed could destroy everything she is working to uphold. Is she willing to throw away her future to settle the past? Readers of YA and Fantasy will really enjoy this incredible debut. And stay tuned as the second and final part of this duology is coming out summer of 2022!

Zhao, Xiran Jay. Iron Widow (Iron Widow #1). Penguin Teen.

Trigger Warning: This title contains references to sexualized violence and sexualized assault.

Everyone wants a son so they can grow up and make their families proud. However, in this YA science fiction, boys make their families proud by training to be pilots who battle Chrysalids as big as skyscrapers. Girls on the other hand are expendable concubine pilots made readily available for the male pilots to use, mentally overpower, and then throw away. This is the harsh reality 18 year old Zetian is born into. Following the brutal death of her older sister, Zetian takes matters into her own hands by offering herself as a concubine pilot with the sole purpose of avenging her sister's brutal death. What Zetian does not know is that not everything is as simple as it seems and avenging her sister's death might be the least of her worries. Blending Chinese traditions/history and lore with her love for science fiction, Xiran Jay Zhao has created a true work of art. This book has such a neat premise- combined with a captivating butt kicking heroine, engrossing battle scenes and polyamory representation; the Iron Widow is a literary force to be reckoned with.

Honourable Mentions

Azad, Nafiza. The Wild Ones. Margaret K. McElderry.

Grant, Vicki. Tell Me When You Feel Something. Penguin Teen.

Nanua, Sarena & Sasha Nanua. Sisters of the Snake (Ria & Rani #1). HarperTeen.

Summers, Courtney. The Project. Wednesday Books.

Young Adult Nonfiction

Allaire, Christian. The Power of Style: How Fashion and Beauty Are Being Used to Reclaim Cultures. Annick Press.

The Power of Style: How Fashion and Beauty Are Being Used to Reclaim Cultures delivers on its promise to reclaim culture through fashion. With a youth / young adult centered focus, Christian's work highlights amazing folk of various ethnicities and backgrounds, making much needed change in the world of fashion. The images are gorgeous, capturing models, creators, and artists of all shapes and sizes. The easily readable font and colourful imagery makes this work extremely accessible. I thoroughly enjoyed reading through this book; I think it will be a beneficial teaching aid for elementary and high

school students.

Arato, Rona. Righting Canada's Wrongs: Anti-Semitism and the MS St. Louis. Lorimer.

The newest addition to the "Righting Canada's Wrongs" series looks at the history of anti-Semitism in Canada, with particular focus on the incident of the MS St. Louis. Historical photographs accompany short snippets of text that make the book very readable. Readers will be introduced to several of the people who made the voyage on the MS St. Louis as they follow the ship's journey from Europe to Cuba and ultimately back to Europe. Rona Arato traces several of the survivors' stories post World War II while also bringing the story into the present with the Canadian government's official apology in 2018. Additional reading and a timeline are also included.

Hébert, Marie-Noëlle; trans. Shelley Tanaka. My Body in Pieces. Groundwood Books.

Marie-Noëlle wishes to be thinner, prettier, she wishes the boy she has a crush on would ask her out and above all she wishes her parents would understand her and stop criticizing her body and her eating habits. *My Body in Pieces* is an autobiographical graphic novel that follows the author as she struggles with her body image from childhood through her twenties. The illustrations are sketched, realistic and dark allowing them to perfectly relate the way the author feels throughout the memoir. This is a relatable and compassionate read that depicts a highly personal experience that inspires and encourages readers to be unapologetically themselves.

Klein, Naomi with Rebecca Stefof. How to Change Everything. Puffin Canada.

Politicians might not be willing to act on it, but young people know that the dangers of climate change will affect their futures. Naomi Klein, highly regarded climate activist, pens a book specifically speaking to young adults on climate change - how it will affect their lives, the disproportionate toll marginalized communities will feel, what young climate activists are doing around the world right now, and what actions young people can do to create change in their communities and be a part of the solution.

Leavitt, Hannalore. The Disability Experience: Working Toward Belonging. Illustrated by Belle Wuthrich. Orca Book Publishers.

The Disability Experience is an insightful examination of the way that people with disabilities (PWDs) have been marginalized over the years. Without the same access to education, employment, transportation and healthcare, it is difficult for PWDs to thrive. The firsthand accounts of people with different

disabilities provides invaluable insights into their struggles and achievements.

Ratchford, Sarah. *Fired Up About Consent. Between the Lines.*

Trigger Warning: This entire book is about sexualized violence and sexualized assault.

Fired Up About Consent tackles the triggering realities of rape and sexualized assault towards women and feminine presenting persons. Sarah's book is written from a queer inclusive perspective. While this title covers hard topics, Sarah is unapologetically sex and body positive. They put the needs of the survivor first. Their focus throughout the book is to provide survivors with information on their rights, local support groups, and legislative changes. Sarah also highlights nontraditional forms of closure following traumatic events. This title would be beneficial for adults of all ages. Teens and young adults especially might find this helpful as they navigate changing bodies, consent, understanding sexual orientation and gender. Several chapters of this title focus on the University student experience, so this would be a good title for older teens during their transition from high school into post-secondary life.

Ruck, Lindsay. *Amazing Black Atlantic Canadians: Inspiring Stories of Courage and Achievement.* Illustrated by James Bentley. Nimbus Publishing.

Canadians of all ages might not recognize the names Delmore William "Buddy" Daye, Quentrel Provo, or Measha Brueggergosman (to name a few) but these Black Canadians from the Atlantic provinces made important contributions to their communities and to Canada. Learn about their courage and resilience in the face of hardship along with many other Black Canadians from the Maritimes.

Various Authors, edited by Simon Boulerice. *Carry On: Poetry by Young Immigrants.* Illustrated by Rogé Girard. OwlKids.

A collection of poetry written by recent immigrant students attending a high school in Montreal, comprising poems that are sweet, real and show a glimpse into the young immigrant experience. The simple verses relate very accurately what immigrants see and feel when they leave their home and arrive in this country, such as feelings of anxiety, loneliness and ultimately hope. The poems are accompanied by portraits illustrated by the talented Rogé, which add a whole new layer to this collection of poetry. Whatever the reason for reading this, these poems will move and delight you.