

The background of the cover is a photograph of a wet, mossy stone surface with scattered dry leaves and twigs. The text is overlaid on this image.

# School Libraries in Canada

An on-line journal of  
the Voices for School Libraries Network  
of the Canadian Library Association

# *Mazina...*

ISSN 1710-8535    Volume 30, Number 1    Winter 2012



## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Canadian Scholarly Literature and Research Regarding School Libraries in Canada

Treasure Mountain Canada is pleased to announce the second biannual TMC symposium to be held in Ottawa on June 2-3, 2012 in alignment with the CLA National Conference.

Treasure Mountain Canada is a participatory learning experience designed to aggregate and highlight relevant Canadian research and discussion on the role school libraries could play in educational reforms and transformations. The first symposium was held on June 1-2, 2010 in Edmonton, Alberta just prior to the Canadian Library Association Conference. The focus of the symposium was “Transforming Canadian School Libraries to Meet the Needs of 21st Century Learners”. Papers and work from this first TMC experience are archived for viewing and study at <http://tmcanada.pbworks.com/>

This first TMC laid the groundwork for the focus of work needed to transform school libraries to better address evolving needs in Canadian schools. One of the many excellent actions suggested in 2010 was the reworking of our National Standards for School Library Programs in Canada. Present standards as documented in Achieving Information Literacy have been a valuable tool for districts establishing programs and support for school libraries. As the world changes so do our needs in schools and the libraries that support learning for the future. Consequently the focus of TMC 2 will be concentrated on supporting the redevelopment of our National Standards. The theme will be, “Learning for the Future”.

The TM Canada Planning Committee is pleased to extend an invitation for papers for our second publication, which will be one of the essential resources for the symposium. At this time we invite teacher librarians and lead educators across the country to prepare papers to support this initiative. The papers are intended to provide direction and support for the new Canadian standards. We suggest three types of papers:

- Teacher research focused on a library strategy to boost student learning.
- or
- Academic research focused on the competencies learners need to succeed in the future
- or
- Either teacher research and/or academic research based on school library facilities of the future

We recognize the outstanding contributions so many have made to teaching and learning in Canada and we value every voice added to our work at TM Canada. Papers will be peer reviewed and posted online for study. For specific requirements for papers please refer to the attached checklist. We need papers by May 11, 2012.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Please let us know if you plan to submit a paper. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this initiative further please contact Carol Koechlin by email [koechlin@sympatico.ca](mailto:koechlin@sympatico.ca) or by phone 416 751 0889.

Visit <http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv28n2/282treasuremountain.html> to read *SLiC*'s account of the first Treasure Mountain Canada event.

# School Libraries in Canada

Volume 30, Number 1

Winter 2012

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# It is not enough to be etched in stone.

Derrick Grose

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Cree artist Jackson Beardy's painting *Rebirth* was featured on Canada's 1990 "greet more" stamp: First Nations cultural motifs enrich the wider community.

The Cree artist Jackson Beardy did a self-portrait in which he presented himself as a man divided. His left side was clad in bell-bottomed dress pants and a wide-lapelled jacket. He was carrying a briefcase in his left hand. His right side was dressed in buckskin and feathers. He had a ceremonial pipe in his right hand. As human beings, many of us search for a way to articulate our heritage and our identity in a contemporary context. We strive to understand ourselves and to be understood by those around us. I hope that this issue of *School Libraries in Canada* will help educators learn and teach about how First Nations are defining their place in Canadian society.

Did you rush to your dictionary when you read “*Mazina*” on the cover of this issue? In *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country*, Louise Erdrich explains that in *Anishinabemowin* (the Algonquin language of the Ojibwe people), “*mazina*” is the root for dozens of words concerned with images and the surfaces upon which they are put. The title, *Mazina*,” reflects not just the First Nations focus of this issue, but also the dynamic nature of cultures using both traditional and contemporary media to express themselves.

Although the root *mazina* is found in the word for “rock paintings,” *mazinapikiniganan*, it is also found in the words for “movie theatre” (*mazinaatesewigamig*) and “television set” (*mazimatesijigan*). The language is just one element of culture that evolves to reflect our changing world. This serves as a reminder for me of the importance of ensuring that our library collections, like the language, reflect both traditional and contemporary First Nations in Canada to ensure that their cultures be perceived as “not fossilized, unadaptive, not sealed into the past, but plastic, adaptive, assimilative” (in the words of John Collier quoted by Emma Laroque in *Defeathering the Indian*).

Recent news stories about the living conditions in First Nations communities such as Attawapiskat and about the threats to the environment in Gitga’at territory (and elsewhere) on Canada’s West Coast from the projected Northern Gateway pipeline highlight challenges faced by First Nations peoples and Canada as a nation. All Canadians need to know not just the current events but also their historical roots. In her memoir published in 2006, *Morningstar, A Warrior’s Spirit*, Morningstar Mercredi implores her

readers to, “step out of ignorance and denial to a place where we, as a human race, can understand each other's pain. Let us respect the sound of truth reverberating in the universe and hear those cries once silenced.” Her frustration and anger resulting from the challenges of communicating the complexities of issues surrounding treaties while “battling stereotypes, and picking up the slack of everyone’s romance with Pochahantas” are echoed by Thomas King who, later in this issue, talks about tempering anger with humour while writing *Dead Dog Café* for CBC Radio. We must listen to these and other voices because, to quote, once again, Emma Laroque, "It is only through a well-rounded knowledge of each other's life-views and life-styles that different people can appreciate each other."

School libraries must include the stories of Canada’s First Nations, both historical and contemporary, to affirm the identities of First Nations students and also to illuminate First Nations’ cultures so that all Canadians can learn about them and from them. It is only by hearing all of the stories that students (and Canadian society in general) can begin to understand and contribute to charting the best possible course for our collective future.

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# Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada Classroom-ready Products for Teachers and Students

Julian Wilson

Communications Advisor, Communications Branch  
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Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada



Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) has several classroom ready products on a variety of Aboriginal topics for teachers and students. The products are fully bilingual and are free to the public. If you are interested in obtaining any of the following products, please complete the online order form (provided below) to place your order.

Resources and Learning Exercises for the Teacher.

The Learning Circle is organized in thematic units, each with its own teaching activities. Each unit is designed to give teachers and students simple but effective exercises, projects and activities that will encourage students to learn more about First Nations. Educators can follow some of the exercise as stand-alone units on First Nation topics, or integrate them with existing curricula on Aboriginal peoples.

1) The Learning Circle

Elementary-Level Learning Exercises on First Nations  
Guide for teachers of children ages 4 to 7

2) The Learning Circle

Elementary-level Learning Exercises on First Nations  
Guide for teachers of children ages 8 to 11

3) The Learning Circle

Intermediate-level Learning Exercises on First Nations  
Guide for teachers of children ages 12 to 14

4) The Learning Circle

Five Voices of Aboriginal Youth in Canada  
High School-level Learning Exercises on First Nations and Inuit

5) Through Mala's Eyes

Life in an Inuit Community

The story of Mala, a 12 year old Inuit boy from Salluit in Nunavik, Northern Quebec

## Other Products

### 1) It's a Pow-Wow

A fun find-it game illustrating what you may find at a pow-wow

### 2) Claire and Her Grandfather

A story for children about First Nations and Inuit contributions. Features images to colour and a teacher's section on activities for the classroom (Maximum order 10).

A special edition of Claire and Her Grandfather has also been printed in English and Inuktitut (Supplies are limited). For this edition, quote QS-6152-010-BB-A1.

### 3) Kid's Stop Mousepad

### 4) Bookmarks

## First Nation, Métis and Inuit Cultural Artwork Products

The Cultural Artwork Products include representation from all three Aboriginal groups. As a classroom discussion can you identify the three Aboriginal groups in Canada and which artwork piece belongs to which Aboriginal group?

### 1) Jigsaw puzzle

### 2) Colouring Sheet

### 3) Temporary tattoo

## National Aboriginal Day (June 21st) Products

June 21st is recognized as National Aboriginal Day in Canada. Many community celebrations take place across Canada every year. What are you doing on National Aboriginal Day?

### 1) Postcards

### 2) Share in the Celebration!

### 3) Celebrate Canada! Poster

### 4) Cruncher (a trivia game)

### 5) Temporary Tattoo

Information sheets on a variety of subjects are also available in HTML and PDF in our Kid's Stop Section on AANDC's website at [www.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca](http://www.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca).

Aboriginal Success Stories profiled in several vignettes covering a wide range of topics are also available for viewing and class discussion at [www.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca](http://www.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca). The vignettes take approximately three minutes to view. The vignettes are meant to raise awareness and focus on all three Aboriginal groups from across Canada.

Contact Us!

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PDF Order Form: <http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slic/aboriginaltopicseng.pdf>



# Affaires autochtones et Développement du Nord Canada

## Produits prêts à être utilisés en classe par les enseignants et les élèves

Julian Wilson  
Counseiller en Communications  
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada



Affaires autochtones et Développement du Nord Canada (AADNC) offre plusieurs produits, sur divers sujets autochtones, prêts à être utilisés en classe par les enseignants et les élèves. Les produits sont offerts gratuitement au public dans les deux langues officielles. Si vous aimeriez recevoir certains de ces produits, veuillez remplir le formulaire en ligne (joint ci-dessous) afin de passer une commande.

Ressources et exercices d'apprentissage pour les enseignants.

Le Cercle d'apprentissage est divisé en unités thématiques comprenant chacune leurs activités d'apprentissage. Chaque unité est conçue pour donner aux enseignants et aux élèves des exercices, des projets et des activités simples et efficaces qui encourageront les élèves à en apprendre davantage sur les Premières Nations. Les éducateurs peuvent utiliser certains exercices en tant qu'unités indépendantes sur des sujets liés aux Premières Nations ou intégrer les exercices dans le programme existant portant sur les Autochtones.

### 1) Le Cercle d'apprentissage

Exercices d'apprentissage sur les Premières Nations pour le niveau primaire  
Guide pour les enseignants d'enfants âgés de 4 à 7 ans

### 2) Le Cercle d'apprentissage

Exercices d'apprentissage sur les Premières Nations pour le niveau primaire  
Guide pour les enseignants d'enfants âgés de 8 à 11 ans

### 3) Le Cercle d'apprentissage

Exercices d'apprentissage sur les Premières Nations pour le début du secondaire  
Guide pour les enseignants d'enfants âgés de 12 à 14 ans

### 4) Le Cercle d'apprentissage

Cinq voix de jeunes Autochtones du Canada  
Exercices d'apprentissage sur les Premières Nations et les Inuit pour les élèves du secondaire

### 5) À travers le regard de Mala

La vie dans une collectivité inuite

L'histoire de Mala, un garçon inuit de 12 ans vivant à Salluit au Nunavik, dans le Nord du Québec

#### Autres produits

1) Lisa participe à un pow-wow!

Un amusant jeu où il faut trouver des objets qu'on pourrait voir à un pow-wow.

2) Claire et son grand-père

Une histoire pour les enfants au sujet des contributions des Premières Nations et des Inuit. Le document inclut des images à colorier et une section pour les enseignants comprenant des activités pour les salles de classe. (Commande maximale de 10).

Une édition spéciale de Claire et son grand-père a été imprimée en anglais et en inuktitut (quantité limitée). Pour cette édition, veuillez mentionner le numéro : QS-6152-010-BB-A1.

3) Tapis de souris du Carrefour Jeunesse

4) Signets

#### Produits d'art culturel des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuit

Les produits d'art culturel comprennent des représentations des trois groupes autochtones. Dans le cadre d'une discussion en classe, vous pouvez déterminer les trois groupes autochtones au Canada et l'œuvre d'art qui se rattache à chaque groupe.

1) Casse-tête

2) Page à colorier

3) Tatouage temporaire

#### Produits pour la Journée nationale des Autochtones (le 21 juin)

Au Canada, on souligne le 21 juin la Journée nationale des Autochtones. De nombreuses célébrations communautaires ont lieu tous les ans partout au Canada. Que faites-vous à l'occasion de la Journée nationale des Autochtones?

1) Cartes postales

2) Soyez de la fête!

3) Affiche « Le Canada en fête! »

4) Les canards (un jeu-questionnaire)

5) Tatouage temporaire

Des fiches d'information sur une variété de sujets sont aussi disponibles en format HTML et PDF dans la section Carrefour Jeunesse du site Web d'AADNC : [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca).

Des histoires de réussites autochtones sont présentées dans plusieurs vignettes portant sur un grand éventail de sujets. Vous pouvez les regarder [www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca) et puis en discuter en classe. Les vignettes durent environ trois minutes. Elles visent à sensibiliser la population et à présenter les trois groupes autochtones au Canada.

Communiquez avec nous!

Courriel :

[infopubs@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](mailto:infopubs@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca)

Adresse postale :

*Publications et renseignements au public  
10, rue Wellington, bureau 1415  
Gatineau (Québec) K1A 0H4*

Site Web : [www.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca](http://www.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca)

Formulaire de commande PDF : <http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slic/aboriginaltopicsfr.pdf>

## Découvrez la collection : Peuples autochtones

Bibliothèque et Archives Canada (BAC) reconnaît que le patrimoine autochtone constitue une part essentielle de l'expérience canadienne. BAC s'est engagé à acquérir et à préserver ce patrimoine, et à permettre aux Canadiens de le découvrir. Le portail Ressources et services autochtones offre la possibilité de consulter de vastes et riches collections de documents d'origine privée ou gouvernementale, créés par les peuples autochtones du Canada ou concernant ces peuples, des copies numérisées de ces documents, des expositions virtuelles, des instruments de recherche et divers autres outils de repérage. De plus, le site contient un annuaire d'auteurs, d'artistes et d'illustrateurs autochtones; on y trouve également des renseignements concernant des journaux, des bibliothèques et des centres d'archives, et bien d'autres informations.

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/peuples-autochtones/index-f.html>



## Discover the Collection: Aboriginal Peoples

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) acknowledges that Aboriginal heritage represents a significant and vital part of the Canadian landscape. LAC is committed to its role in the acquisition and preservation of this heritage, as well as enabling the Canadian public to discover it. The Aboriginal Resources and Services Portal provides a window to vast and rich collections of resources created by, or about, Aboriginal peoples in Canada. The site features private and government sources to virtual exhibitions, finding aids and tools to locate materials, as well as digital copies of these works. The site also showcases a directory of Aboriginal authors, artists, illustrators, newspapers, library and archival communities, and much more.

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/aboriginal-peoples/index-e.html>

Reading has made me  
"a complete romantic and prone to  
making horrible decisions like  
following my dreams."

Comedian, television host  
and author

Dawn Dumont

tells *SLiC* about  
reading, writing and having fun.



Dawn Dumont--Comedian, program host,  
author and ardent reader!

Born and raised on Saskatchewan's Okanese First Nation, Dawn Dumont is a writer and comedian of Nehewin and Métis descent. She co-hosts *Fish Out of Water* on the Aboriginal People's Television Network and was featured in the CBC comedy special *Turtle Island Too*. In 2011 she published *Nobody Cries at Bingo*, a frank, yet humorous account of life as she was growing up on the reserve. CBC Radio has produced *The Trickster vs. Jesus Christ* along with three other plays that she has written. She wrote for APTN's animated comedy *By the Rapids* and has contributed to CBC Radio's *Definitely Not the Opera* and *The Debaters*. She kindly agreed to answer some questions from *School Libraries in Canada*.



**SLiC** - In *Nobody Cries at Bingo* you make frequent references to your love of reading: your need to be constantly entertained with cartoons or a book, the way you reveled in the number of words in a pictureless Mormon Bible, the enchantment of a visit to a university library and the profound insights you gained from your Uncle Frank's Conan comics. Why was reading so important to you?

**DD** - Both my parents are great readers. In a bad week, my mom read only two books. There were stacks of books everywhere in our house. One time our house was broken into and when we were reviewing the damages, we saw drawers and cupboards yanked opened to reveal books - mysteries, true crime novels, hardcover Jackie Collins, etc. It must have been a frustrating break and enter for those two idiots.

Also when I start a book and the author yanks me in with a good narrative hook, I'm completely lost. I'm not coming out until I've discovered the ending. I become very emotionally invested in stories, some might say to an unhealthy degree. I once woke up crying because I thought that Anne Shirley (of *Green Gables*) did not end up with Gilbert Blythe and then I remembered that she did end up with Gilbert Blythe and I was able to go back to sleep.

**SLiC** - How has reading influenced the rest of your life?

**DD** - It's made me a complete romantic and prone to making horrible decisions like "following my dreams."

**SLiC** - If you were growing up in similar circumstances today, do you think reading would have the same impact on you?

**DD** - Despite all the advances in technology and having several childhood fantasies come true (the making of the *Lord of the Rings*, 3-D movies, a safe place from which to spy on everyone i.e. the Internet), nothing could ever replace books for me. If I wasn't afraid of reprisals from bullies, I'd stick bumper sticker that says, "I'm a reader and there is no cure."

**SLiC** - You compare yourself with Anne of *Green Gables* saying that you lacked her imagination. Did you read many of Lucy Maud Montgomery's novels? What books and authors had the most influence on you as a child? Why do you think they were meaningful for you?

**DD** - I read the Anne Series long enough to make sure that she ended up with the right guy. I had to make sure that Anne was going to be all right. A few years ago, I read a biography of Lucy Maud Montgomery that said she was depressed for much

of her life but I don't believe it. Maybe she was just depressed between books which I can understand. It must have been hard to leave that world and rejoin this one.

Growing up, I was a big fan of Gordon Korman. He always made me laugh. I always wanted to be as nonchalant and obnoxious as his characters but alas, I was too much of a pleaser to ever be a smartass. Plus when I was a teenager, there wasn't anyone to rebel against. Most teachers and adults I knew were reasonable people who generally allowed me to be myself.

**SLiC** - Do you have any memories of school libraries when you were growing up? If so, which memories stand out most? Why?

**DD** - The Balcarres Library was my library growing up. The librarian was Mrs. Townsend and we bonded when I was in Grade One. I went up to her during my first class visit and asked her if she had any "books about God." She led me to a section where I found a dozen illustrated bible stories. I wasn't particularly religious but most of my reading prior to discovering the school library was done at the doctor's office and our doctor only had bible story books. Mrs Townsend and I had a long relationship that ended only when I graduated from high school. (When I was a teenager, she would let me stay in there during lunchtime where I would read Shakespeare's plays, Sweet Valley High novels and have naps.)

**SLiC** - In some ways the humour in your anecdotal accounts of life in your community reminds me of Basil Davidson's Moosemeat and Wild Rice. Did you read Davidson's short stories or other First Nations writers when you were growing up?

**DD** - I haven't read any Basil Davidson but I'll look for it. I discovered Sherman Alexie in university and devoured all of his books in single sittings. Then I would go back and reread them slowly, savouring every word. There's a paragraph in one of his novels that burrowed inside of me. It was a perfect evocation of a family falling apart - tracing it from the kids sitting in the car outside the bar to them running off to live and die on the streets. I had seen this happen to families around me on the rez but no one had ever described it so succinctly before - and Alexie did it in ONE paragraph!

I'm also a huge fan of Louise Erdrich. Her perfectly paced novels with their moody dense content remind me of Toni Morrison (also a favourite writer). Erdrich's female characters - so strong and brittle at the same time - remind me of women I knew growing up. Women who were wild and crazy one moment, and frighteningly vulnerable the next. I wanted to be their friend but I was always afraid they would

beat me up.

**SLiC** - What are you reading now or what have you been reading recently? What attracted you to those particular readings?

**DD** - I'm reading the Rum Diary at the moment. I was pretty much entranced from the first page.

**SLiC** - Most of your writing credits are for the stage, radio or television. How is that different from writing a book like *Nobody Cries at Bingo*? Do you have plans for more books?

**DD** - I get to say more when I write books. I like that. Right now I'm working on my second book which is a novel.

**SLiC** - How has *Nobody Cries at Bingo* been received in First Nations communities?

**DD** - People laugh when I read it which is gratifying. When people come up afterwards, they tell me how it reminds them of home and they tell me stories of their lives growing up. I enjoy that a lot.



**SLiC** - In the opening shots of *Fish Out of Water* it is described as a show about urban Indians, not completely at ease in that environment and wanting to keep in touch with nature. Is that a true reflection of your personal feelings about city life and nature?

**DD** - I grew up so immersed in nature that I pretty much take it for granted. I've only realized after decades of living in the city that I miss walking through the long grass and then sitting on the front steps afterwards and enjoying the big blue sky. Then I'll glance down and start picking wood ticks off my pants. (In southern Saskatchewan, 10 minutes in the grass will result in at least double that amount of wood ticks.) The rest of the evening will be spent twisting the heads off the ticks and flicking them at the ground. It's as meditative as breaking bubble wrap.

**SLiC** - What advice do you have for young people who would like to pursue comedy as a career?

**DD** - Have fun. You can't control much in life but you can control that. Also, while comedy is a rewarding career - lots of travel, fun conversations in the greenroom, the satisfied feeling of a great show - never discount the awesomeness of being a trophy wife/husband. Just promise me, that you'll think about it.

**SLiC** - What aspect of your work (or your life) excites you most at the moment? Why?

**DD** - I live for that moment when I'm writing and I'm so in the zone that I forget about eating, drinking, and facebook.

**SLiC** - Is there anything else you would like to say to Canada's school librarians?

**DD** - Thank you for being there for the weird, gawky kids who need an escape from the jungle.

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# School Library Profile

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Thank you to Gail Ladouceur, the library technician at Lisgar Collegiate Institute in Ottawa, Ontario, for this library profile. You are invited to submit your own school library for consideration to be featured in a future edition of *School Libraries in Canada*. The form is available at:

English - <http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv27n1/profile.doc>

Français - <http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv27n1/profil.doc>

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Sketch by Ilana Modulevsky to be included in [OTF "Books of Life" Project](#)

## [Lisgar Collegiate Institute in Ottawa](#)

Lisgar Collegiate Institute is located in the centre of the city of Ottawa, a few blocks from Parliament Hill and across the street from the Rideau Canal. The school and its seventy teachers serve a diverse population of approximately 1050 students ranging from tenants in public housing to affluent residents of communities like Rockliffe Park and members of the diplomatic community. Although the school, in its present location, dates back to 1874 and is housed in a heritage building, it is a modern urban high school. Students come from more than fifty different countries and almost a third of them have a first language other than English. Although, there is a large program for gifted students in the school and, in general, levels of achievement are very high, there are students who are struggling academically for linguistic, economic and social reasons. The school's challenge is to meet the needs of a very diverse student population. There is a very high level of extra-curricular involvement on the part of students and they have been very successful in Math, Science, Music and Language competitions. The Reach for the Top team competes nationally and internationally.

The school library is staffed with one teacher-librarian and a half-time library technician. Twenty-three computers provide access to the Internet and there is a collection of 13, 829 books and audio-visual resources. The library participates in the Ontario Library Association's Forest of Reading Program and marks Canadian and International School Library Day on the third Monday in October. In 2011, the School Library Day activity was a scavenger hunt open to both students and staff. This year the library has taken on a larger project hosting the [OTF Books of Life Program](#) supported by the Ontario Ministry of Education to promote awareness of Ontario's First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities. This activity is being pursued by the Lisgar Culture Club which evolved from last year's "Reading for Understanding" Book Club.



Technology is juxtaposed with tradition in Lisgar Library's three small rooms.  
Photo Credit: D. Grose

Our circulation software identifies *The Catcher in the Rye* as the most circulated book in our library but that is probably attributable to the quality of its binding and to the length of time that it has been in the collection! Popular books that have been on our new books shelves in the last decade include, in non-fiction, *The Prisoner of Tehran*, *The Manga Guide to Calculus*, *The Manga Guide to Physics*, *Cracking the SAT* and *Logicomix: An Epic Search for Truth* and, in fiction, *The Book of Negroes*, *V for Vendetta*, *The Blue Girl*, *Motorcycles and Sweetgrass*, *Watchmen*, *Sophie's World : a novel about the history of philosophy*, *Q&A (Slumdog Millionaire)*, *Song of Kahunsa* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*.

The Lisgar library is a show piece for the school. Its cathedral ceilings with gold-painted embossed tin accents remind visitors that they are in a heritage building; huge portraits of trustees, principals and teachers dating back a century and more decorate some of the walls. These are juxtaposed with computers, printers and qr codes directing students to further information on topics that are featured on bulletin boards and in poster displays.



A QR Code leads a student to further information at <http://www.safeatchool.ca>;  
The QR code around the corner would take him to the NFB's *Across Cultures* site: <http://www3.nfb.ca/duneculturealautre/index.php?&lg=en>

Photo Credit: D. Grose

Many of the library's challenges are related to the beautiful building in which we work. Wireless internet is being installed across our school board in order of the complexity of the installations. The age of our building puts us at or near the bottom of the list. As a consequence, we have the challenge of finding computers for students to use when they cannot use their own devices because of lack of wireless access to the Internet. Other challenges include finding enough space for the students and the books, and replacing chairs more quickly than they wear out. We face other frustrations such as dealing with bug-ridden software on our coin-operated printer-photocopier and on-going reassurances from technical support people that they are aware of the problem and are working on it. The uncertainty of not knowing from one year to the next who will be paying for our electronic databases and what those databases will be also haunts us.

However, we have had successes that outweigh the minor irritants in our work. The library web site provides students with a huge variety of resources on-demand. After years of instruction about plagiarism and the use of style guides, growing numbers of students are more cheerfully documenting their work--more credit to citation generators than to the efforts of library staff but we do provide pointers and helpful links. Our book collection has increased by 30% over the last three years and with that growth there has been a broadening of the cultural and geographic diversity of the collection to better reflect the population of the school. Finally, a small quiet study and eating area between the security gate and the front doors is almost constantly in use; students are usually conscientious about cleaning up after themselves and treating it as a working area rather than a visiting area. Problems with food on the food-forbidden side of the security gate are much reduced. Minor victories free up more time for fighting major battles!

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Submit your school library profile for consideration for publication in a future issue of *School Libraries in Canada*.

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**Save the date! Kaleidoscope 10 November 1-3<sup>rd</sup> 2012**



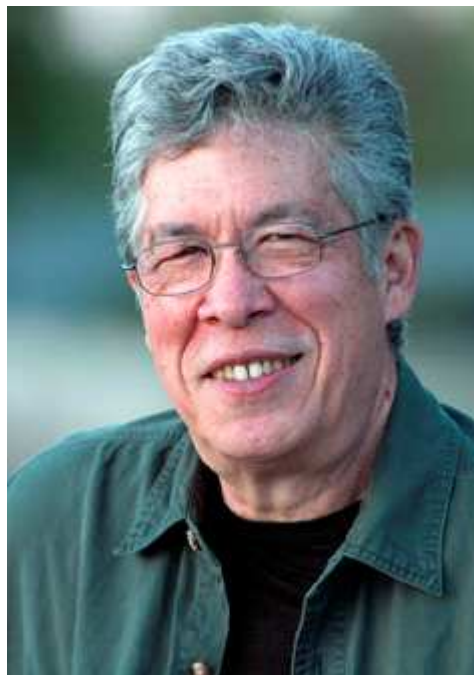
The Kaleidoscope Children's Literature Conference is presented by the Alberta Teacher's Association and the Alberta School Library Council of the ATA. Kaleidoscope 10 "Twisting the Lens" will take place in Calgary, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012. Kaleidoscope is a celebration of Children's Literature and has assembled hundreds of international writers, illustrators and publishers over its long and colourful history. Look for the Kaleidoscope 10 website launch November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 at [www.kaleidoscopeconference.ca](http://www.kaleidoscopeconference.ca) for early registration information and confirmed authors. Information will also be available from the ASLC website <http://ask.ca/>.



# They are really not children's stories

## Thomas King

"Stories are all around you.  
It's just a question of whether or  
not you listen to them."



Thomas King--Author, Academic,  
Broadcaster and Storyteller

In his stories, novels, lectures and broadcasts Thomas King discusses profound cultural and social issues while demonstrating his own sense of humour which reflects an understanding and acceptance of human nature. Born in 1943 in Sacramento, California, to a Cherokee father and a Greek mother, Thomas King grew up in a single parent home, raised by his mother who supported herself and two sons in a world where the workforce was dominated by men. King had a wide variety of work experiences before he settled into a career as an academic and a writer. King received his PhD in English literature at the University of Utah, and worked as the chair of the American Indian Studies program at the University of Minnesota. For ten years, he taught in the Native Studies program at the University of Lethbridge and he is now a Canadian citizen.

In addition to his career as a scholar and writer, Thomas King also wrote and performed on the radio show *Dead Dog Cafe Comedy Hour* from 1997-2000. Playing the role of an aboriginal person who had lost touch with his cultural roots, King used humour to promote awareness of Native cultures and political issues. As a professor of English at the University of Guelph, Thomas King specializes in Native Literature and Creative Writing. In 2003 he became the first speaker of Native descent to deliver the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Massey Lectures speaking on [\*The Truth About Stories\*](#). Taking a break from his work on his new novel, he kindly agreed to answer some questions from *School Libraries in Canada*.

*SLiC* - You have written a number of children's books including *A Coyote Columbus Story* (978-0888998309), *Coyote Sings to the Moon* (978-1558686427), *Coyote's New Suit* (978-1554702398) and *A Coyote Solstice Tale* (978-0888999290). What got you started writing children's stories?

TK - Well they're not. They are really not children's stories; they're stories. I guess that's part of the answer. Within a traditional context these would have been stories for everybody, not specifically children. I think what makes them children's stories in our modern world context is the fact that they are illustrated and they are put into books that make them look like children's books but, in actual fact, they are just stories for anybody. There are books on the market that are specifically for children, rhyming books that deal with language or books that deal with particular categories like animals, things like that where the intent, from the



get-go is to deal only with children and the content is leveled at them. I don't do that. Adults may not find my books as entertaining as children but, then again, maybe they do. *Coyote Columbus* certainly is a satiric piece and *Coyote Solstice* even more so.



ISBN 9780888998309



ISBN 9781554702398



ISBN 9781558686427



ISBN 9780888999290

*SLiC* - Is there anything that you particularly like about working with an illustrator?

TK - The only illustrator that I ever really worked with was Kent Monkman on the first book, *Coyote Columbus*. Most of the time the work just gets sent off. I would like to have some say on the illustrations and who the illustrators are, but that is not usually the case. I don't know if this is true for most children's writers but, in my case, most of the time the story was bought from me and then it was given to an illustrator by the publisher. It is not as though I did not know who the illustrator would be, but I didn't have much say in the matter. It is not a matter of working with an illustrator. I would enjoy doing that. I certainly enjoyed working with Kent. If you want that, you have to team up with an illustrator before you write the book, or you have to make the book and then send it to the publisher as a package. Sometimes you might want an illustrator, but that illustrator is more expensive than the publisher wants to pay. I know that happens because I have friends that do that.

*SLiC* - Who or what were your most important influences in learning the art of story telling?

TK - You know, I have no idea. It's not as though it is a trade. I suppose you come to it like that. I didn't. Stories were always told in my household and around the neighbourhood. I was always interested in stories. I used to make them up to explain the world I found myself in. Some of my stories, my mother didn't call stories. She called them something else. I would always have that inclination toward story telling. I suppose I just put myself into situations where I would hear stories. Stories are all around you. It's just a question of whether or not you listen to them. And whether or not the person you listen to is a good story teller. Most of us know who the good storytellers are to begin with, because most of us have at least one in our family. And so, you know some people can't tell a story to save their life. And other people just know how to craft a story. And that is really the art form of telling a story... knowing how to craft the story. Knowing how to make it available for an audience, how to make it interesting for an audience. How many times have you heard someone say, "I've got this great story," but then they tell it and it's just awful? And you want tell them, "If you did this to it, it would be a much better story." My mother told stories and my grandmother told stories but they weren't storytellers *per se*. I certainly have been around a great many native people who were terrific storytellers. And Harry Robinson, an Okanagan storyteller, out in the Penticton area, was a terrific storyteller. I've never met him, but I saw a lot of his stories in print. They certainly were an influence on my later work.

*SLiC* - Do you have any recollections of school libraries as you were growing up?

TK - As a matter of fact, I used to hide out in them. Not in the school libraries, but in public libraries. There was a Carnegie library in our hometown and in the summer time, when I did not have a job, I would sort of roam around town; there were guys who did not like me. I would hide out in the library basement where the fiction section was; I would take a lunch with me, and I would hide out there and read books. Number one, no one would ever think about looking for me in a public library, not the guys who were after me. And the other thing is that it was cool. Roseville, California, where I grew up, was hot as hell in the summer time, and the basement was cool, in the library.

TK - School libraries were not so much a place for memories. School libraries were a place where I did research when I was working on my degrees. The Roseville public library, I have fond memories of that place.

TK - In my elementary school I can't remember having a library. I am trying to remember if I had a library in high school and I just can't. I do have at the same time a strong impression of the Carnegie library in town. It was about 8 blocks away from the school. When I was growing up, that was an era of magazines. Magazines were just coming into prominence. *Look*, *Life*, the big ones, *Readers' Digest*, you know, you would go door to door selling magazine subscriptions, that was a big thing you got. I don't remember that we ever got any magazines but I know people who did. I filched a couple of copies from them .. *Outdoor Life*, *Playboy*, all sorts of stuff. And I only read it for the articles. That you did not get from the public library. You got anatomy books but they were all locked up. I remember that.

SLiC - Have you had any memorable experiences in a school library either as child or as an adult?

TK - No, I can't say that I have. I like libraries and I certainly use them, the one here in town *ad nauseum* for picking up my junk reading--I shouldn't say junk reading because I do some of the junk writing. But I can't say that I have had any memorable experiences. I don't do many school visits to libraries. Every so often I will, and I have probably done more library visits for children's books than any other pieces but, normally, it is book stores that bring me in for readings. Bookstores and then maybe conferences and things like that. Not so much libraries and the thing is I really don't travel much if I don't have a book that has just come out; I don't go around and do readings, it just takes up too much of my time. I keep myself off the circuit as such. I don't see how people manage that and write. I have friends that get to every festival and accept every invitation that comes along; it would drive me crazy.

SLiC - Before you began your career as an academic and a writer, you worked in a wide number of jobs, as a management trainee at a bank, a member of a ship's crew, a deer-culler, a photographer and a journalist. Of these early work experiences, which ones have had the most influence on your subsequent work?

TK - Oh God, I don't know that any of them did. They were all jobs. I mean photography certainly was something that stayed with me that I do as an art form now. But you have to understand that I grew up fairly poor and so jobs were a means to make money. They were not something that you liked, and a lot of those jobs. I mean I had hundreds. I worked as a craps dealer at Lake Tahoe. I don't know that any of them had a great influence on my life aside from keeping me alive and keeping me fed. They were interesting and when you look at the list you say, "Wow that's really interesting!" And yah, it was. I mean working crew on German tramp steamer from San Francisco to Auckland, New Zealand was engaging and I still remember that. That was a grand adventure on the high seas. We went to Tahiti and had three or four days in Tahiti, free to roam around and feel sort of like Jack London, but, in the end, they really were jobs that I did for the cash.

TK - You get to see the world and I think when you do that kind of travelling and that kind of work you come to an understanding of what the world is, what it's really like. Those of us who live in North America really have no clue. We live in a sheltered cocoon and it will bite us one of these days.

TK - Frankly, the world cannot support our extravagances; we don't know that yet. We talk about it; we have conferences on the topic, but until you get out there and look at how the people in the rest of the world live and manage you have no clue. We go on vacation in third world countries and go, "Oh my god I couldn't live like that!" Well maybe you will!

TK - You have got China and you have got India that are becoming industrialized nations; you know the balance of power is going to shift and that power shift is part of the changes that are going to take place. I have no idea what the world is going to be like for my grandchildren. But that's off the topic.

SLiC - Your work in fiction includes the short story collections *One Good Story That One* (978-0006485254) and the deceptively titled *A Short History of Indians in Canada* (978-0002007023), and the novels *Medicine River* (978-0140254747), *Green Grass, Running Water* (978-0553373684) and *Truth and Bright Water* (978-0006481966) as well as your mystery novels. As a writer, what is your favourite aspect of each genre?

TK - What I enjoy about the short story is that I can actually complete one in a reasonable amount of time generally speaking, but, by and large, I don't start a short story unless I have got a really good idea for it. Especially these days I don't. So if I get a good idea for a short story and I think that will work and I can complete the whole, then I go for it, and I enjoy that. I enjoy being able to write a poem if I can think of a good topic and a way of approaching it. I guess the best part of short stories is that they tend to be short, as is the amount of time you have to commit to them.

TK - The longer works are much more difficult, but I enjoy the process of writing a novel. I don't enjoy that initial plunge when I have to sort of commit myself to something when I have no idea whether it is going to work out or not. It really is diving into a pool blind and not knowing if there is any water in there. I am working on a novel right now; I am about a hundred pages into it I guess and I'm not sure it will come to anything. I seldom start my literary novels with any kind of an idea of where it is going to go. I normally start it with characters and perhaps a situation, and then I try to work it out from there and I have to make this leap of faith that I will find my way through the novel. So those aren't quite as enjoyable. They are fraught with a fair amount of tension because you don't want to fail.

SLiC - How often have you abandoned a project?

TK - I was afraid you would ask me that. More than I want to remember. I have only written three literary novels. I have written more books than that certainly, and couple of genre pieces, my detective novels. Only three literary novels and one of the reasons is it takes a long, long time and sometimes when I start I have all kinds of starts and stops. Generally, I am a bulldog and if I think I have good idea I'll just grind it to death. Have I had to abandon any large projects? I don't think of them as abandoned; I think of them as resting.

TK - There's no point in throwing anything away. You have created this. Who knows if you can use a piece of it later on? I am wood worker too and my shop is full of small pieces that keep getting smaller and smaller each time I work on them, but I don't toss them out until they are chips just in case I can use them.

SLiC - Why did you choose to adopt the pseudonym Hartley Goodweather when you wrote your Dreadful Water mysteries, *Dreadful Water Shows Up* (978-0006391791) and *Red Power Murders* (978-0006395515)?

TK - It was just that I wanted to keep my genre novels, my genre writing, away from my literary novels. I didn't want people who knew *Medicine River*, *Green Grass, Running Water* and *Bright Truth* to pick up Dreadful Water thinking that it was a literary piece. I would have kept doing this except that the first one didn't sell too well and the publisher wanted to put my regular name on it in hopes of developing an audience for it. So I was sorry we had to do that, but we did; I would have liked to have kept writing under Hartley Goodweather. And it also gave me a certain hiding spot, a mask to hide behind, which was kind of fun. We all like to wear a mask on occasion I think.

*SLiC* - You edited an anthology of contemporary Canadian Native prose entitled *All My Relations* (978-0771067068) which was published in 1990. If you were to assemble a similar anthology today, how would it be different?

TK - That was hard work, doing that anthology. I swore I would never do another one and I actually I did, there was a second anthology that came out. That was with one of the literary magazines, and I did that despite that fact that after I did the first one I said I would never do another one. It was a lot of work, a lot of busy work: a lot of correspondence, a lot of working with other writers dealing with emotions and egos. We all have those. I did it because I wanted to see the work of native Canadian writers out there and available, and that part of it I was able to accomplish with that anthology. There were quite a number of Canadian writers and the second one was even more work than the first one, but I did it again because there was some time between the first one and the second one. Not a lot had happened and I really wanted to encourage native writers to work and get published and whatnot. I don't know that I would do another one. And I don't know how it would be different. Anthologies are anthologies; they are collections and when you start to collect you do not know what you are going to find, what's available, what's out there. The easier part this time, if I was going to assemble an anthology, is that now there are a number of established native writers out there which was not the case in 1990, so you can create the backbone for an anthology out of those works and those individuals and then go looking for the new voices. Now you have got a native writer that has won the Giller, a major prize in Canadian Literature. I was there for that dinner, as a matter of fact I saw Joseph [Boyden]. Joseph is a great writer, brilliant; we don't have a great many native novelists in Canada, but we have had some really good ones.

*SLiC* - Besides helping us to learn to "Stay Calm, be brave and wait for the signs" (and inspiring an abundance of laughter), your CBC Radio program *Dead Dog Café*, promoted awareness of issues concerning Canadian First Nations and the country as a whole. What was the biggest challenge in producing the show and what aspect of the experience was most gratifying to you?

TK - Well the biggest thing was trying to come up with episodes for week after week after week... I would write them all at once or I would write them in blocks of seven or eight, and then we would go in the studio and lay them down, and just coming up with ways to attack the material was challenging. A lot of the stuff I was writing about pissed me off and I was angry about it, so I had to find some way to push that anger down to allow humour to make it palatable. Canadians are like most North Americans in that they don't know anything about Native history. They really don't. They think that if they know the name Attawapiskatt they know what is happening, but they don't, and they have no background on that. How do you provide that kind of history on a fifteen minute radio show? When Stephen Harper gets up in the House of Commons and talks about having given 90 million dollars to Attawapiskatt, the average Canadian sees that as a lot of money but what they don't see is that much of that has never left the government's hands. If I were to do a story like that on *Dead Dog* I would have one of those things that has the money coming out of the hands of Ottawa and then you have a cash register up there where there is no ching ching at all. To use another analogy, the money is like a snowflake falling through a July sky. But nobody understands that. Right now, there's an accountant being paid \$1300 a day. What kind of business outside of a large corporation pays a bean counter \$1300 a day? When I talk about something like that, I really have to find a way to get around the general prejudices and put a little humour in there to make it easy to go down and still cut people, make them aware. I don't try to educate them as much as to make them say, "What? What?" And if they are interested, they can find out for themselves. I just wrote a history book called *Happy Trails*, a history of Indians in North America that will be out in September of 2012. It really is in some ways like *Dead Dog* meets the academy. It does have a fair amount of satire in it, a fair amount of anger too. I didn't really hold back. There is not that much I can lose really, so we will see how that one goes over. That will probably have more difficulty being accepted because I don't pull my punches as much there as I generally do.

*SLiC* - The Coyote is a central figure in most of your writing. What is the most significant example of Coyote's mischief in your own life?



TK - Coyote isn't so much a mischief maker. Really, he is a cautionary figure. People use tricksters in their stories not so much to talk about trickiness as to talk about what you shouldn't do. Bad behavior for instance and the repercussions it can create in a community. I have lived a chequered life, let us call it that, and I suppose I understand a character like coyote. What coyote is, is a character of immense appetites. Coyote has an appetite for everything: money, power, shiny stuff; anything you could think of, in the right context, coyote wants. His appetites, sexual appetites, get him into trouble all the time in traditional stories. And I suppose that aspect of Coyote is the critical one for me. He can't control his appetites and it is a danger and in many ways Coyote becomes a metaphor for North America.

SLiC - It sounds like you and North America have a lot in common.

TK - We do. North America can't control its appetites either. Now, I try to control mine because I know what lies on the other side of that, but I have not always been successful. Coyote is always a little reminder. I always tell myself a little Coyote story and there are some good ones.

SLiC - Do you mind sharing a few hints about the novel that you are working on right now or other project you have in the works?

TK - The new literary novel I am working on is called *The Back of the Turtle* and I am just getting into that and I have no idea where it's going to go. It has some very interesting characters. One character I just absolutely love and I have to be careful not to use it too often or too much but I do not know what is going to happen with it or even if I will finish it. It is somewhat of an apocalyptic novel. I always wanted to do one of those. Peggy Atwood did one, at least. They are kind of fun you know. How are we going to end the world? What is the downside of the way in which we have allowed ourselves to be so greedy?

SLiC - Another cautionary tale?

TK - Maybe more a mirror that I am trying to construct. I think that's it. This book is really more a mirror that I want to hold up to the face of North America and the world in general. Now that suggests, "Oh boy! King's going to do this big thing!" but it's not that so much. That's the idea, but how it is going to translate into a novel is probably something less than that. The novel can only incorporate so much.

SLiC - Is there anything that you would like to add?

TK - Not really. I am not really good on interviews. I live in my head pretty much. Once I turn these books loose, they are no longer mine. I have no control over what people do with them. It's kind of like raising children. We set them free and they go off and we ask, "Why did they do that?" I often hear people talking about my books and I hear things that make me ask, "How did they get that idea?" But the answer is that once that book is out there, different people read it in different ways.

# Action is Eloquence: Advocacy Advice for School Libraries

by Anita Brooks Kirkland

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“Action is eloquence”. When I saw the quote from Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus* on of all things a fridge magnet from Ontario’s Stratford Festival, I knew I had discovered my professional mantra. We demonstrate our worth and move the profession and program forward through what we do every day. Talking the good talk is not enough. Platitudes are not enough. No matter how undervalued we feel we are, wallowing in collective self-pity and focusing on blame may make some feel better in the short term, but it is no way to create allies, improve our own practices, and move forward.

The past decade has held huge challenges for library program advocacy. But largely because of the tireless action of so many in our profession, the climate is changing. Opportunities to make strategic connections and to grow as a profession have never been better. It’s up to every one of us to grasp and exploit these new opportunities.

If there’s one lesson that I have learned very deeply it is that advocacy has to have substance. Complaining and blaming may feel good at the time, but like junk food, they have no nutritional value. Nurturing and growing our professional practices, doing our very best with what we have, and making strong connections with the larger goals of education will move us forward. Being complacent or focusing on the negative will not.

I call this approach action advocacy. And with due respect, I offer these ideas to move libraries and library programs forward.

Don’t wait for the leadership to lead.

School libraries exist as part of large and complex educational institutions, and the reality is that many of our institutions just don’t get us. Even those most eager to believe often find the reasoning behind library advocacy to be quite intangible. And often we don’t help. We are passionate about what we do, but when we try to explain it we tend to be strong on the generalizations but short on the specifics.

The first step in program advocacy is for each of us individually, and all of us collectively, to seek more insight into what we do. We must know our practice deeply, be in constant learning mode, and demonstrate our professionalism consistently. If we cannot articulate and demonstrate our program’s worth, how can we expect decision-makers, funders, policy-makers and administrators to understand it? We are responsible for leadership, and leadership comes from within.

Education has changed. Don’t keep fighting the old battles.

We like to say that educational institutions are slow to change, but looking back on the past decade, certainly we can see faster and more coherent growth in knowledge about instructional practices than ever before.

A decade ago the battle lines were clearer. It was standardized testing vs. constructivist learning, leveled literacy texts vs. free voluntary reading. Despite overwhelming odds it was easy for us to feel superior. But who won that battle?

Don't get me wrong. At the time it was a battle worth fighting. But the back-to-basics political atmosphere that drove educational reform in the mid 1990's has matured. Knowledge about learning and assessment has grown along with expectations for teachers. The art of teaching is evolving into the science of teaching. We know far more about effective practice now. Today's context is about data-driven decision-making, assessment for learning, differentiation, precision, alignment and accountability.

The challenge to school library practitioners is to make connections with this reality and align our practices accordingly. It is time to explicitly and strategically see our role in terms of direct benefits to learners, aligned with the larger goals of the institutions that employ us.

A bit of humility goes a long way. In the late 1990's it was perhaps justifiable for us to feel a bit superior in the face of simplistic back to basics notions about instructional practice. But keep that kind of talk to yourself. Education has matured and there are new opportunities for us to connect our programs to school success goals. There is nothing as off-putting to other educators than for teacher-librarians to tell them that we know more about process teaching, that we've been doing this kind of thing forever, that they're finally catching up with our innovative strategies, etc., etc., etc. – exactly the kind of talk heard far too frequently when teacher-librarians congregate. We need to get over it, celebrate new opportunities, and learn along with our colleagues rather than patronize them.

Embrace action research.

Educators today are expected to use a full range of real data to inform practice. We are expected to be precise, picking the best instructional strategies to meet the differentiated needs of learners. Education is embracing the idea of action research to improve practice. A large body of action research informs the profession as a whole. Look no further than programs like the Ontario Ministry of Education's *Teacher Learning and Leadership program* (A HREF="<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teacher/tllp.html>") to understand the credibility of action research in today's context.

Teacher-librarians need to embrace action research. Individual action research projects can start to explore how different aspects of the school library program and instructional strategies used in those programs impact student learning. Action research provides opportunities to explore how school library programs advance the larger goals of K-12 education. Most importantly, good action research can teach us about ourselves, and help us to improve our own practice.

A body of action research has the potential to answer some of those difficult "how" questions more precisely and confidently. Through action research we can move beyond the sweeping platitudes that sometimes characterized old-style advocacy to providing clear and precise reasoning.

Consider the Steve Jobs effect.

I read a fascinating article a year or so ago, "Is Steve Jobs a role model for librarians?" (Kohl, 2010). Kohl offers very useful insight into how to help decision-makers understand the potential of libraries. He suggests that if we make strategic decisions based only on what people say they want we would end up with "the best

19th-century library in North America.” He uses Apple founder Steve Jobs as his example, attributing Jobs’ success to his proactive ability to find “opportunity-driven possibilities” rather than “market-driven solutions.”

Steve Jobs was a proactive innovator, not a reactive inventor. Adopting the Steve Jobs mindset means figuring out what our clientele is trying to achieve, and making their goals our own. We can contribute to education in ways that other educators may not be able to imagine on their own. Rather than competing with those goals, think about how libraries can advance education in new ways.

Don’t fight leveled texts for classroom literacy instruction. You won’t win. Rather, help other educators understand the library’s unique contribution to literacy, where the entry point is interest, not level. Embrace the changes that technology is making for learning. Make the connections to information ethics and context that are at the core of library instruction. Embrace the new found fervor that many educators have for designing instruction that fosters critical thinking. Make the connection to what I like to call “critical answering”, the information literacy skills at the core of our practice. Make the connection between teaching the research process and assessment for and as learning. Put library learning at the core of what your school is trying to achieve.

Start from where you are and build credibility.

A decade ago library programs and teacher-librarian staffing in my school district underwent drastic cuts, just as I was taking on the role of library consultant. In that highly emotional context, many were watching for us to fail. The system had clearly lost confidence in the role of the school library, at least at the elementary level. We could have very easily allowed failure to happen – the odds seemed quite overwhelmingly against our success. But we chose a different course. We challenged ourselves to do the best with what we had, to always try to improve practices, to leverage and expand our sphere of influence, and in the process earn respect and credibility. And although we still have a long way to go, our innovation in the face of the challenge has moved the program forward in ways that we could not have imagined possible a decade ago.

Nobody is going to believe in you and in your program if you are only able to contribute under the most ideal conditions. Advocacy is a long slog. Complaining is easy. Action advocacy is hard work. But with so many opportunities before us in this exciting period of change in education and in school librarianship, it’s hard work that holds huge potential. Start from where you are and set realistic and achievable goals. Align, connect and learn. As they say, necessity is the mother of invention. Through action advocacy we have huge opportunities to innovate and lead change.

## References

Kohl, D. (2010). Is Steve Jobs a role model for librarians? *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 36(3).

Ontario Ministry of Education (2012). *2012-2013 Teacher Learning and Leadership Program*. Retrieved January 29, 2012 from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teacher/tllp.html>.



# Action Research Process for Teacher Librarians Made Simple



from the Organizers of Treasure Mountain Canada

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- Consider your present program and the needs of learners today.
- Identify a target for improvement.
- Develop questions to guide your work.
- Imagine how you might achieve your target.
- Investigate what others have tried and develop your own plan.
- Try it out, adjust strategies if necessary and keep track of your evidence.
- Analyze and interpret your results.
- Prepare a summary report and share.
- Apply your findings to better address learning needs in your school library.

NOTE: Working with another teacher or a small group will enrich the process. It is always helpful to build a learning network and bounce ideas around with others.

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Resources to help you get started:

Ontario Library Association. <http://www.accessola.com/osla/toolkit/intro.html> *Think You Can't? Yes You Can! : Teacher Librarian's Toolkit for Student Success.*

Harada, Violet. *Librarians and Teachers as Research Partners: Reshaping Practices Based on Assessment and Reflection* <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~vharada/Research-Partners-2005.pdf>

Sykes, Judith. 2002. *Action Research: Practical Tips for Transforming Your School Library*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

Alberta Teachers' Association. *Action Research Guide for Alberta Teachers*  
<http://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Professional-Development/ActionResearch.pdf>

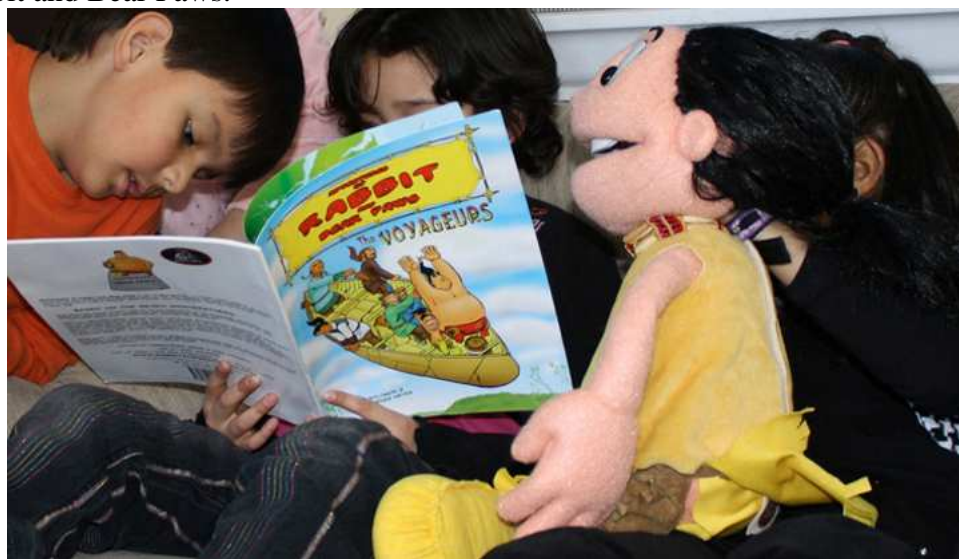


Stories showcase the customs and traditions of the Anishinabek and help children be proud of their origins.

Chad Solomon

The stories of *Adventures of Rabbit and Bear Paws* are set in colonized North America during the 1750's. They feature the comical adventures of two brothers, Rabbit and Bear Paws. The stories are for the young, and the young at heart, and are based on the Seven Grandfathers who provide the foundation for character education. The Seven Grandfathers are Respect, Bravery, Love, Honesty, Humility, Wisdom and Truth.

All our stories are inspired by my family and friends. When I was a child, my family and I would visit with my late grandparents in the French River, Ontario area. My late grandfather Art Solomon, a traditional healer and Justice Activist, would spend his time building wooden toys and playing with me and my siblings. Even in the winter cold, he would go tobogganing with us. I learned from my grandfather that, no matter how old I become, I should always be young at heart, and that laughter is the Greatest Medicine. This is the spirit behind the characters of Rabbit and Bear Paws.



The creation of *Adventures of Rabbit and Bear Paws* is a collaboration. Christopher Meyer is the co-writer, and I co-write and illustrate the stories with guidance from my community Elders. The latest member to our creative team is Tanya Leary, a First Nations teacher from Georgina Island, Ontario.



© ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CHAD SOLOMON AND LITTLE SPIRIT BEAR PRODUCTIONS. 2007 WWW.RABBITANDBEARPAWS.COM

When I was a kid, my dad gave me a poster of Alwyn Morris, an Olympic Mohawk Athlete. On the poster it said: "If you have it in you to dream, you have it in you to succeed." This saying would be the driving spirit behind me starting my own publishing company, Little Spirit Bear Productions. Along the way on my chosen path, I have received guidance and help from many elders, mentors and teachers. People like Joseph Mcquabbie, Guy Dumas, Kirk Jones (Kool Press), Maria Martella (Tinlids.ca), Jeff Burnham of GoodMinds.com, and so many, many more.

We, as a creative team, have been very blessed that the Elders could see what we were trying to do with our work right from the start, and that the community has been very supportive. We continue to receive the support of the Elders and youth who enjoy our interpretation of the Teachings.

To give an idea of the support we receive, here is part of a message from the Grand Council and Chief Patrick Madahbee:

"In showcasing the customs and traditions of the Anishinabek, Chad's stories help our children be proud of their origins, while at the same time exposing other children to our rich history. That is why we are pleased to include the monthly Rabbit and Bear Paws comic strip in our official publication, *The Anishinabek News*. In the months ahead, we look forward to helping Chad share his stories with thousands of readers who are interested in learning more about their First Nation neighbours. We know the Late Art Solomon - a respected Elder - would be very proud of the journey his grandson has begun. Miigwetch."

If you would like to discover more about our stories, please visit our website at <http://www.rabbitandbearpaws.com>

Miigwetch (Thank you)



# Free the Children / Enfants entraide



## Local Spotlight: Aboriginal Education

In partnership with:



*local*  
**spotlight**

Every February, we raise awareness about an issue that is important to our own communities. This year, the spotlight is on the successes and challenges of Aboriginal youth education.

*free the children campaigns.*

DROUGHT IN EAST AFRICA | HALLOWEEN FOR HUNGER | VOW OF SILENCE | HAÏTI: LA SOLIDARITÉ | LOCAL SPOTLIGHT: ABORIGINAL EDUCATION  
LOCAL SPOTLIGHT: ONE NIGHT OUT | FIVE DAYS FOR FREEDOM | ALTERNATIVE INCOME | BRICK BY BRICK | CLEAN WATER | CELEBRATE FOR CHANGE

*local spotlight:  
aboriginal education.*

*february 13 to 24*

In partnership with the **Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative**, Free The Children is shining the spotlight on the successes and challenges of Aboriginal youth education.

Almost half of Aboriginal people aged 20 to 24 reported having less than a high school education in 2001. Without a high school diploma, young people—Aboriginal and not—face higher risks of unemployment, crime, poor health, poor housing, and low self-confidence. But the situation is not hopeless.

The Local Spotlight: Aboriginal Education campaign consists of two weeks of learning and awareness on Aboriginal history, culture and tradition, as well as the challenges and opportunities present for Aboriginal education today. Join participants from all around the world, who are informing themselves and others on this topic.

Help shine a spotlight on Aboriginal education and make it a priority in Canada.



Check out these speakers from Free The Children's signature event We Day.

Visit:

[http://www.freethechildren.com/getinvolved/youth/campaigns/campaigns.php?type=local\\_spotlight\\_aboriginal\\_education](http://www.freethechildren.com/getinvolved/youth/campaigns/campaigns.php?type=local_spotlight_aboriginal_education).



## Articles from Recent Issues of *SLiC* Related to First Nations, Metis and Inuit.

1) ". . . it will be the artists who give them their spirit back."

Pemmican Publications and its efforts to promote Metis culture.

<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv27n2/272pemmican.html>

2) "Invisible Women: World War II Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada"

Grace Poulin

<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv27n3/273poulin.html>

3) Expressions: The inspiring example of contemporary Aboriginal artists in Canada  
Canada Council for the Arts

<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv28n2/282expressions.html>

4) "Lead an interesting life . . ."

Drew Hayden Taylor

<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv28n2/282haydentaylor.html>

5) "Anyone can do anything"

SLiC interviews Susan Aglukark

<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv28n2/282aglukark.html>

6) "School Library Profile: John Arnalukjuak High School"

Dwight Maloney

<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv28n2/282profile.html>

7) "Fiction focused on the Inuit"

Dale Simmons

<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv28n2/282simmons.html>

8) "School librarians are the heartbeat of the school. . ."

SLiC interviews Métis author and storyteller David Bouchard

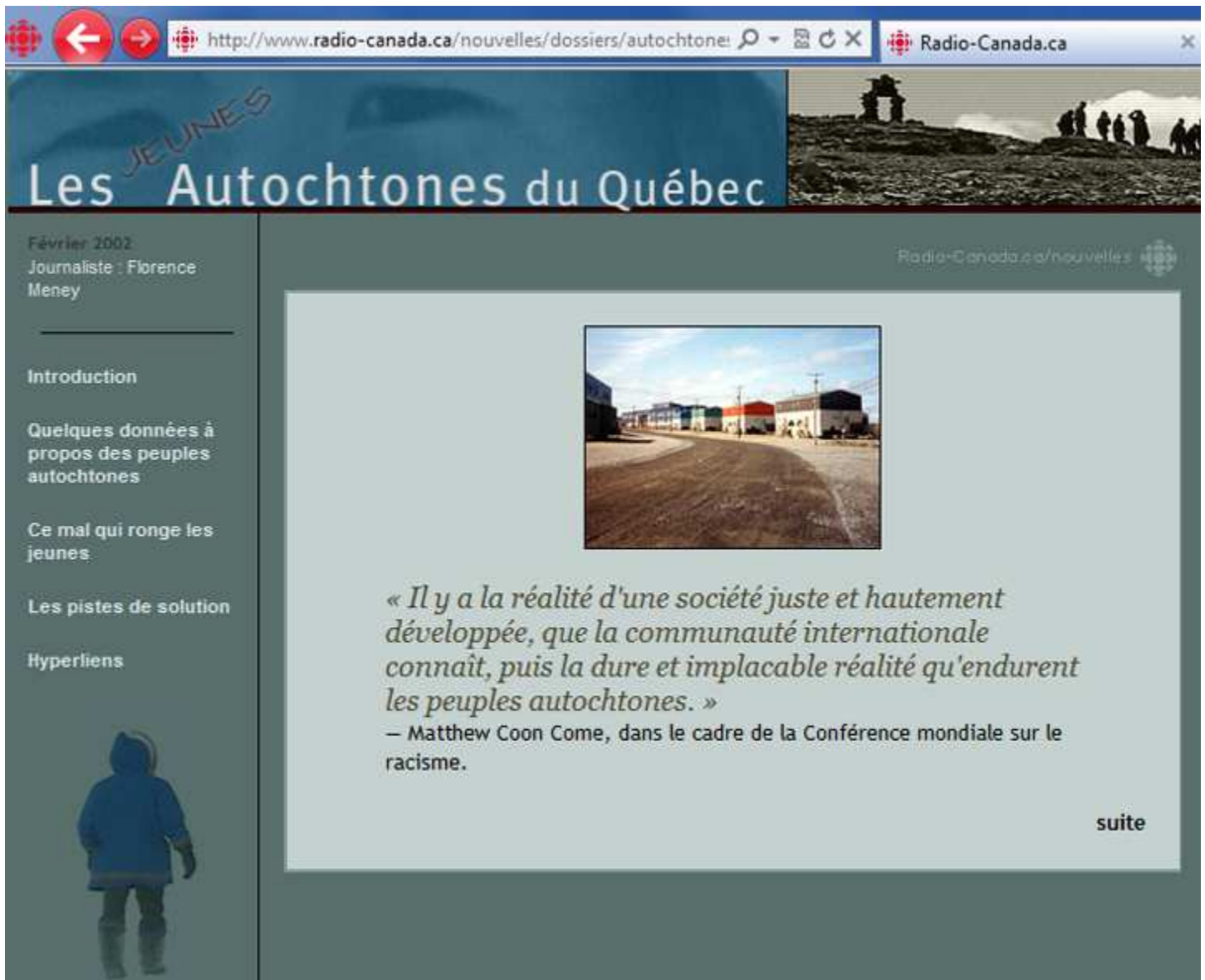
<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv28n3/283bouchard.html>

9) "School Library Profile - Chief Julius School, Fort McPherson, N.W.T."

Wendy Doucette

<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv29n1/291profile.html>

# Je l'ai entendu à la radio / I heard it on the Radio



<http://www.radio-canada.ca/nouvelles/dossiers/autochtones/mal.html> - Les Autochtones du Québec

# Aboriginal

## Historic First Nations summit may not yield concrete outcomes



First Nations chiefs want to negotiate a cabinet-approved timeline for concrete improvements for native communities, possibly within the year. But the prime minister's office is downplaying expectations for next week's historic Crown-First Nations summit. 3:49 PM ET

- ANALYSIS | First Nations to raise 'bread and butter issues' with Crown
- First Nations call for better airports on reserves
- Enbridge pipeline deal with B.C. First Nation collapses

### Features



**8th Fire**  
Aboriginal Peoples, Canada & The Way Forward



**CBC North**  
Daily programming in Gwich'in, North and South Slavey, Chipewyan, Inuvialuktun, Inuktitut and more Aboriginal languages



**From the CBC Archives**  
Television and radio clips about Aboriginal history and issues from the CBC Digital Archives



**Truth & Reconciliation: Stolen Children**  
CBC's special series around the Truth & Reconciliation Commission. Analysis, background, history.

### Programming

#### Trailbreakers

##### TRAILBREAKERS

Stories of Aboriginal people who are breaking new ground in their communities



Weekly podcast of the hottest Aboriginal music in Canada

### Stay Connected with CBC News



### In Depth

OVERVIEW | **History**  
**Aboriginal Canadians**

INTERACTIVE | **Canada's Aboriginal Languages**

2006 CENSUS RELEASE | **Aboriginal Peoples**

CELEBRATE | **National Aboriginal Day**

POLITICS | **Women in First Nations**

### LEGENDS PROJECT Legends Project

The listing of the Legends Project has been recently updated!

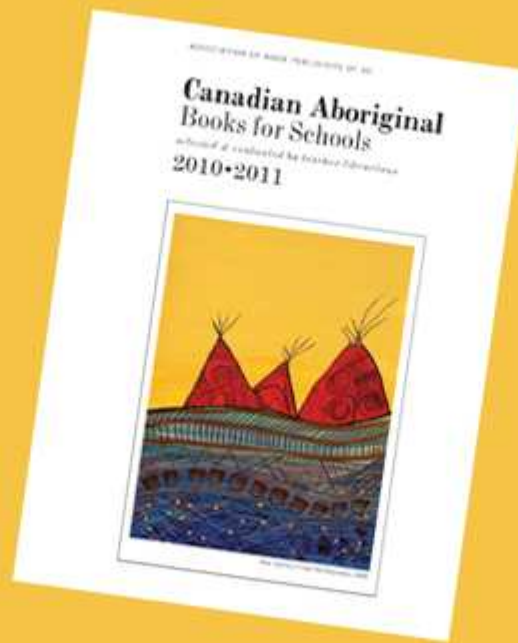
- Legends XI: from Ahlankook | LISTEN = (runs 53:58)
- Legends X: Legends of the Kwakwaka | LISTEN = (runs 53:58)
- Legends IX: Gwich'in Legends | LISTEN = (runs 53:58)
- Legends VIII: Legends of the Innu of Mashinukash, Quebec | LISTEN = (runs 53:58)
- Legends VII: Legends of the Kainai: Stories from the Blackfoot | LISTEN = (runs 53:58)
- Legends VI: Kuskap's People: Stories of the Mikmaq | LISTEN = (runs 53:58)
- Legends V: Legends of the Old Massett Haida | LISTEN = (runs 54:49)
- Legends IV: Legends of the Shuswap | LISTEN = (runs 54:25)
- Legends III: Legends of the Mushuau Innu of Natuashish | LISTEN = (runs 56:22)
- Inuit Legends II: Legends of the Eastern Arctic | LISTEN = (runs 54:50)
- Inuit Legends I: An Inuit Journey | LISTEN = (runs 1:00:36)
- History of the Legends Project

<http://www.cbc.ca/aboriginal/2010/08/legends-project-7.html>

<http://www.cbc.ca/aboriginal/> - CBC Aboriginal

<http://www.cbc.ca/aboriginal/legends-project/> - CBC Aboriginal Legends Project

<http://www.cbc.ca/trailbreakers/> - Trailbreakers with Don Kelly



## Publishers recommend . . .

Publishers of Canadian authors and illustrators are invited to submit the title of one book they have published in the last year that they would consider a "best book" or a "neglected gem". Let *School Libraries in Canada* know about recent works to satisfy the needs and interests of school library patrons.

## Fiction



### *Acts of Courage: Laura Secord and the War of 1812*

by Connie Brummel Crook

Pajama Press, (Feb. 15) 2012.

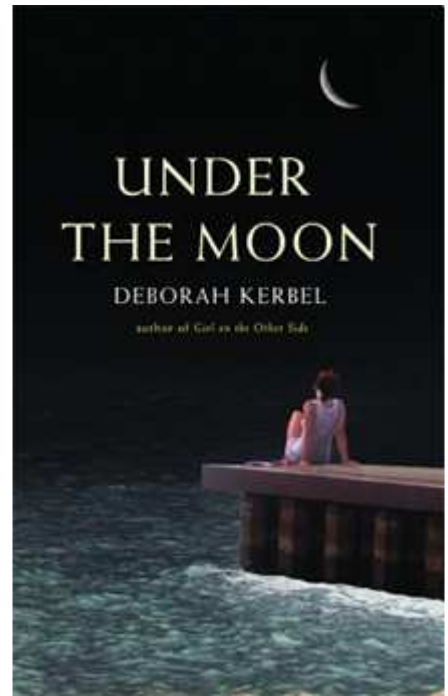
222 p. Ages 10+. ISBN 9780986949579

The story of Laura Ingersoll Secord, from her early days when her family immigrated to Upper Canada, to her part in the War of 1812, her courageous rescue of her husband from battlefield, and her amazing twenty mile trek to warn the British of impending American attack at Beaver Dams.



*Under the Moon*  
by Deborah Kerbel  
Cormorant Books, 2012.  
200 p. Young Adult . ISBN ISBN 978-1-77086-090-2.

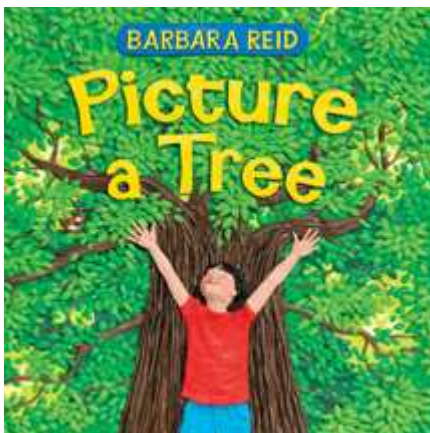
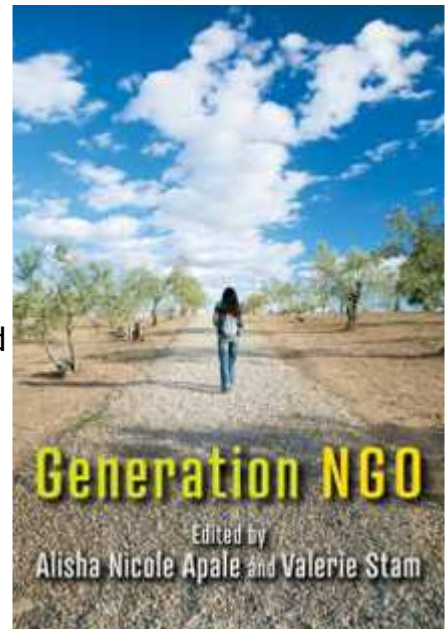
Since the death of her Aunt Su, Lily has lost the ability to sleep. She leaves the house at night and meets Ben, a boy with a troubled past and future. Lily has no idea that Ben could find her sleep and save her life—if she saves his.



## Non-Fiction

*Generation NGO*  
by Alisha Nicole Apale and Valerie Stam  
Between the Lines, 2011.  
222 p. Age 14+. ISBN ISBN 9781897071755 .

Snapshots of young international development professionals and their first experiences with inequality and poverty, power and privilege, stereotypes, identity, social location, prejudice, and injustice. Useful for Canadians contemplating development work abroad (and also for more seasoned veterans of NGO forays long after they have returned from the field).



*Picture a Tree*  
by Barbara Reid  
Scholastic Canada Ltd., 2011.  
32 p. Ages 3-8. ISBN 978-1-4431-0761-7

Picture a tree – what do YOU see? A tree can conjure a pirate ship, a clubhouse, a friend; an ocean, a tunnel, and a home-sweet-home. Its majestic presence evokes family, growth, change, endings and new beginnings. Barbara Reid brings her singular vision and her signature Plasticine artwork to this celebration of trees – and you will never look at them in quite the same way again.

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