

FIRST PEOPLES FICTION ELEMENTARY READING LIST



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Introduction

British Columbia's redesigned curriculum with its focus on Big Ideas gives educators space and flexibility to innovate. An important part of this curriculum transformation is the authentic and respectful inclusion of Aboriginal content, culture, and knowledge. The purpose of this reading list is to contribute to the wide variety of resources offered by the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) to educators in order to help them engage learners on the many aspects related to First Peoples governance.

Recognizing the role of the spoken word and that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations the stories included in the following list explore First Peoples culture, traditional knowledge, values, perspectives related to interconnectedness and continuity, relationships, communities, and families. While several of the books on the accompanying lists do not explicitly address First Peoples governance they do provide a sense of the world view and cultural values upon which First Peoples governance principles are based. The stories listed provide opportunities for educators and students to initiate a discussion of what First Peoples governance looks like and to explore "Big Ideas" related to citizenship, community, identity, service, sharing, social justice, empathy, and respect.

Abood, Debora (Ed.) with the support and participation of Elders from the Victoria Native Friendship Centre (2016). *I Know I am Precious and Sacred*. New Westminster, BC: Peppermint Toast Publishers.

ISBN-13: 978-0992151645

"I Know I Am Precious and Sacred follows a conversation between a child and loving grandfather as they talk about what the words "precious" and "sacred" mean. These culturally integral concepts are explained in simple, practical terms, so that little ones may recognize how they affect relationships in families and communities." Themes & topics ancestral teachings (value, dignity, and respect), personal identity. (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources*.) Reading level K – 3

Auger, Dale (2007). *Mwâkwa Talks to the Loon: A Cree Story*. Heritage House Publishing.

ISBN-13: 978-1894974325

"Dale Auger is a Sakaw Cree from the Bigstone Cree Nation. In *Mwâkwa Talks to the Loon: A Cree Story for Children*, Auger combines his knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, his Cree heritage with an undeniable talent for storytelling and stunning visual artistry. The result is an evocative, educational and thought-provoking new picture book from Heritage House Publishing. What's more, the result is a thoroughly enjoyable reading and viewing experience for readers young and old.

The story's protagonist, Kayâs, was a renowned hunter, admired by all for his ability to provide The People with the food necessary for their existence. Whenever The People were hungry, Kayâs would search the surrounding lakes and woods for the fish, animals and birds that sustain the village. Kayâs' special Gift was that he "knew the ways of The Beings he hunted." Indeed, Kayâs could even speak the languages of the creatures of the water, woods and air.

Over time, Kayâs became somewhat of a celebrity in the village. The People praised him and showered him with attention. Unfortunately, it did not take too long until Kayâs "loved the attention more than he loved hunting." Kayâs began to neglect his responsibilities, passing his time parading through the village. After a time the hungry People began to scorn Kayâs. Alas, when Kayâs returned to hunting, he found that he had lost his Gift.

Fortunately for Kayâs and for The People, the Elders of the village advise Kayâs to call upon Mwâkwa, the Loon. Mwâkwa owes The People a favour. At Kayâs' request, Mwâkwa is able to help the hunter provide food for the hungry village.

In our individualistic, egotistical modern world, Kayâs' story is an important one about the qualities of service and humility. It also contains an important message about the need to give thanks for the gifts that we enjoy. Furthermore, Mwâkwa Talks to the Loon contains environmental messages about our reliance on the natural world around us, and the necessity for us to attend carefully to our stewardship of the Earth.

The text includes a liberal infusion of Cree words. At the book's end, a glossary and pronunciation guide are included for the Cree words and phrases. Because of the way the story is written, however, it is not necessary to turn to the glossary and interrupt the flow of the narrative during the initial reading experience. Rather, the Cree words are supported by enough context that one is able to discern the words' meanings. Indeed, in most cases, the Cree words are immediately preceded or followed by the English equivalent. I like the fact that the Cree glossary and pronunciation guide is included, but it should be understood that its existence is no need for concern; rather, the Cree words add to the authenticity of the story and the educational value of the book.

Auger's storytelling is enhanced as much by his vividly coloured artwork as by his words. The illustrations were created with acrylic on paper, and, through this medium, Auger has achieved an aesthetically pleasing texture in his work. Auger's paintings have an almost spiritual, mystical nature to them. He provides a mixture of interior, exterior and underwater images, all compelling and alluring. I find the depiction of Mwâkwa especially appealing. Even though the loon paintings retain the spiritual nature of the other illustrations, there is also a photographic realism to the way Mwâkwa has been painted. For me, the best painting of all is the one of Kayâs conversing with nikwîmîy, his same-spirit. Mwâkwa, beak wide open, recognizes the kinship shared with Kayâs, who wears the totemic image of the loon on his head.

Auger's masterful integration of language and art creates an important work with boundless relevance well beyond that of the Cree culture. This is a book for one and all. Highly Recommended." (*Canadian Review of Materials* Vol. 13, No. 5, October, 27 2006). Reading level 3-5.

Barber-Starkey (author), Joe, Montpellier (illustrator). (2000). *Jason's New Dugout Canoe*. Maderia Park, BC: Harbour Publishing.
ISBN-13: 978-1550172294

"This delightful story of a Nuu-chah-nulth boy explores First Nations traditions and values through the making of a canoe. Jason's first canoe is crushed during a storm, and he must replace it. Through Uncle Silas, he learns the traditional methods of canoe building - plus scores of stories and legends about his heritage. In an entertaining way, *Jason's New Dugout Canoe* also teaches the important lesson of patience, plus respect and reverence for nature and all its creatures.

The story is packed with stunning, full-colour illustrations by Paul Montpellier, which one reviewer has described as "wonderfully clear and detailed, capturing both closeness to nature and a sense of continuity of Native tradition." (From the publisher.)

Bouchard, David, Cutting, Robert, Michaud-Turgeon, Robyn (Eds.) (2014). *Turtle Island Voices Series*. Oakville, ON: Rubicon Publishing.

"Turtle Island Voices is a series of titles designed to foster awareness and understanding of First Peoples' cultures in Canada for both First Peoples and non-Indigenous learners. The books reflect a wide variety of cultural areas from Canada's west coast to the east. There are traditional stories, modern stories, and informational texts. Each book has a designated difficulty level. There is a 120-page teacher's guide for each grade of the Turtle Island Voices series, which includes detailed, guided instruction for each student book. Materials for grades 1-6 are available in French CD-ROM disks are available containing projectable versions of each title cautions. Although the developers made efforts to maintain authenticity of content, there may be some titles in the series for which appropriate community endorsement (i.e., re the authenticity of content) has not been obtained; as an example, the story in *Marvelous Machines* (grade 7) may not be endorsed by the Council of Haida Nation. Themes & topics varied aspects of First Peoples' lives, cultures, and heritages, across Canada (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources*.) Reading level 1 - 8.

Carlson, Keith Thor. McHalsie, Albert Sonny. (1999). *I am Sto:lo!: Katherine explores her heritage*. Vancouver, BC: Sto:lo Heritage Trust and Douglas McIntyre.
ISBN-13: 978-0968157718

“Katherine Explores Her Heritage is the student history text designed for grade 4 published by the Sto:lo Heritage Trust. This Coast Salish (Sto:lo) history was created to fill the need for the First Nations' perspective about a specific Aboriginal society. Several years were involved to designing and writing the text and the detailed process of community involvement is discussed by the non-Sto:lo author in the lengthy preface. The student book is designed as a story about a Sto:lo girl named Katherine whose family assists her in a school project about her cultural heritage. The book begins with an introductory chapter that briefly discusses the various cultural areas of Canada and then introduces the Sto:lo Nation who live along the lower Fraser River of British Columbia. The author stresses that Sto:lo culture is not static and that the Sto:lo people continue to be proud of their heritage. In chapter 2 the reader is introduced to Katherine McHalsie, a nine-year-old who lives in the community Shxw'owhamel near Hope in the Fraser Valley. We learn that Katherine is entering a new school and that one of the topics in this school year is learning about communities. Each student is assigned a class presentation about their heritage. Katherine learns that some classmates think Aboriginal people including the Sto:lo live like the TV images of Plains Indians. To dispel these stereotypes Katherine begins to learn more about her Sto:lo heritage by talking to her parents and extended family. From her father Katherine learns more about traditional Sto:lo housing, the importance of nature, fishing, the importance of the cedar, and carving. Her older brother tells a Sto:lo story that he learned in school. An elder shows Katherine and her family how to collect cedar roots in preparation for basket weaving. During this gathering Katherine learns how the Sto:lo people respect their environment and give thanks for the cedar. The next chapter discusses the importance of naming and how children receive their traditional names. A family picnic provides opportunities to learn about Sto:lo traditional land ownership and place names as well as special ceremonies known as potlatches. On the day before her presentation Katherine acknowledges what she has learned about her Sto:lo culture and feels confident to face her classmates and talk about important aspects of Sto:lo heritage. This book conveys the idea that Aboriginal cultural heritage continues in the contemporary Sto:lo Nation. Through Katherine's eyes we see how knowledge is passed on to each generation. The book includes wonderful colour photographs of Katherine and her family as Katherine learns about her culture. Archival images and illustrations add information about the culture in the past. The book includes detailed maps, glossary, index, and key to the Sto:lo writing system. The author has effectively woven Sto:lo language terms where appropriate throughout the story.” (From the publisher.) Reading level 4 - 8.

Dorion, Leah M. (author, illustrator). Fleury, Norman (translator). (2009). *The giving tree: A retelling of a traditional Metis story*. Gabriel Dumont Institute.

ISBN-13: 978-0920915905

“This charming story, richly steeped in Métis culture, focuses on the boyhood reminisces of Moushoom as he describes finding the “great giving tree” with his mother and father. This vibrantly illustrated children’s book is a beautiful retelling of a traditional Métis story. Both Leah Marie Dorion and the Gabriel Dumont Institute are very pleased to share this story with the Métis and larger communities since it emphasizes Métis core values and beliefs including strength, kindness, courage, tolerance, honesty, respect, love, sharing, caring, balance, patience, and most of all, the important connection with the Creator and Mother Earth. This resource also includes a Métis values chart, and an accompanying narration CD in English and Michif.” (From the publisher).

Dumont, Delia (author). Adams, Lorraine (Illustrator). (2010). *Jack and the Boys Adventure Series*. Duncan, BC: Eaglecrest Books.

“This series, featuring Jack the dog and his human friends, includes four titles: Adventure on Gull Island Brian and Adrien head out in their canoe to Gull Island with their dog, Jack. They are all having a great time fishing and exploring the island until something goes terribly wrong! Eagle’s Cry Jack and the boys set off on a hike when suddenly they hear a gun shot. Jack leads the boys to an injured eagle. Was the eagle shot? Will he survive? Where did the shot come from? Mountain Biking Adventure Adrien and Glynn head up the trails on their mountain bikes. Suddenly they spot smoke coming from one of the cabins. Soccer Adventure Adrien and Glynn have made it to the finals in the soccer tournament. When the game ends, the boys aren’t concerned about the score. Instead, they are watching their dog, Jack. Why is he with the boy from the other team? High interest, low vocabulary chapter book for young readers. Themes & topics include traditional knowledge, traditional technologies, relationship to the natural world, citizenship & service, sharing, fairness, respect, and friendship.” (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources*). Reading level 3 – 5.

Ferguson Plain, Ferguson. (author). (2015). *Nokomis and I*. Winnipeg, MB: Pemmican Books. ISBN 978-1-894717-84-7.

“Ojibwa artist and author Ferguson Plain weaves another delightful story focussing on traditional Aboriginal values. *Nokomis and I* is an insightful story of a young boy's journey through nature

with his grandmother Nokomis. As the boy and Nokomis walk, they discover a spider, Sespik, along their path. Nokomis stops to share the lesson of the spider's web, explaining how the Circle of Life is made up of humans, animals, plants, and stones delicately woven together. Each relies on their relationships to keep life in balance.

After offering thanks for Sespik's wisdom, Nokomis and her grandson walk further. They stop by a stream, and Nokomis shares the wisdom of the seven rocks, Niizhwaashwi Mishoomisag. Nokomis explains that each rock represents a human characteristic that make for a healthy, balanced life. A person should strive to possess wisdom, respect, love, honesty, bravery, humility, and truth. After receiving a lesson from the rocks, the boy bundles the rocks for grandfather Mishoomis' sweat lodge.

Ferguson Plain's strong connection to his Ojibwa culture is evident in the way he seamlessly incorporates traditional Aboriginal values into his book. The plot of *Nokomis and I* offers reflection on the interdependence of the natural world and personal characteristics while the interactions between Nokomis and her grandson demonstrate the importance of giving thanks and offering respect to nature and elders.

While the words provide one reading of the story, the illustrations enrich the story with additional meaning. Plain pairs his story with bold black ink illustrations juxtaposed against colourful watercolour backgrounds. The watercolour hues of purples, blues, and greys offer a stunning canvas for the ink silhouettes.

Each page follows a similar illustrative rhythm, with an image of the boy and Nokomis sitting or standing together under the Circle of Life. In each picture, Nokomis and her grandson carry a shadow, not of a human, but of a bear. I love the details, like the bear shadow, that allude to Plain's relationship with the Bear clan of Aamjiwanaang First Nations. The illustrations and text are creatively integrated into this book, providing a unique reading experience.

Plain's illustrations, combined with his text, offer layers of insight into Aboriginal values and beliefs. He also seamlessly incorporates select Ojibwa words into his text and provides a glossary for future reference. In a few short pages, Plain is able to communicate a wide array of Aboriginal cultural motifs.

Nokomis and I is a great medium to increase children's exposure to Aboriginal world views”

(*Canadian Review of Materials*, Vol. XX No. 23, Feb. 2014). Reading level 1 - 3.

Griese, Arnold (author). (1997). *Anna's Athabaskan summer*. Boyds Mills Press.
ISBN-13: 978-1563976506

“Anna, a young Athabaskan girl living in the Alaskan interior, enjoys the warm weather when she, her mother, and her grandmother make the annual trek to their summer fishing camp. The three stay very busy throughout the long Arctic days by tanning hides, picking berries, and cleaning and drying salmon; Father and Anna's older brother work at jobs in town. Finally, as fall approaches, Father arrives to transport them back to their winter home. Ragins' distinctive watercolor illustrations portray the rich variety of the Alaskan landscape and show respect for this modern Alaskan family that preserves ancient traditions. Pair with Virginia Kroll's *The Seasons and Someone* (1994), which covers an entire Arctic year; older children may like Kirkpatrick Hill's *Toughboy and Sister* (1990), which offers added details about the summer fishing season”. (*Booklist*, Vol. 91, June 1995). Reading level Pre-K – 3.

“The story, originally published in *Highlights for Children* magazine, vividly comes to life with realistic watercolor illustrations. The descriptive language, full of metaphors, similes, and imagery, re-creates in words the sights, sounds and smells of the place. The equally detailed and descriptive pictures capture every aspect of fish-camp activity. Both the text and the pictures, accurately reflect the pace of life, the spirit of cooperation, the importance of salmon and berries as food sources, the need to respect animals and the land, the sharing of stories, seasonal changes and life cycles, and the passing on of family traditions. (*School Library Journal*, May 1995). Reading Level 2 – 6.

Harris, Christie (author). Reid, Bill (illustrator). (1992). *Raven's Cry*.
ISBN 978-1-55054-055-0

“The Haida are a proud and cultured people, whose home is Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands) off the coast of Northern British Columbia. Until the first Europeans arrived in 1775, the Haida were the lords of the coast. The meeting of cultures was a fateful one: the Europeans had the advantages of firearms and immunity to their own deadly diseases. In just 150 years, the Haida and their culture were pushed to the edge of extinction.

Christie Harris recreates this tale of tragedy and the ultimate survival of native spirit with dignity, beauty and ethnographic accuracy. *Raven's Cry* is a Northwest Coast classic—a moving and powerful work that is a fictionalized retelling of the near destruction of Haida nation.” (From the publisher.)

“This is outstandingly well written narrative history. It follows the last 100 years of the Haidas, a prosperous, highly cultured tribe which once dominated the western shores of Canada. Mrs. Harris starts their story in the late eighteenth century, showing enough of their matriarchal family structure, their legends, their livelihood and their devotion to excellence in the arts to make the reader suspect that North America had a tribe to compete with the Aztec and Mayan. At this point, the first fur trading schooner finds them with brutally dramatic results. The intrusion of Western civilization brought firewater, tuberculosis, and the loss of a rigidly structured courtesy. No children's book has ever conveyed so well without rationalizing what the fundamentalist missionary can do when tribal myth and rite are withdrawn and a narrow Christianity offered in its place. By following one family of chiefs through the generations to the 1870's, the author shows the decimation of their numbers and the destruction of their pride. The black and white illustrations are by the great-nephew of their last and greatest totem carver. These have the same power in form that the text achieves. (*KIRKUS REVIEW*, Sept. 1996).

Johnston, Basil (author). (1982). *Ojibway ceremonies*. Toronto, ON: McClelland and Stewart. ISBN 0-7710-4446-1.

“Recounted in the style of the tribal storyteller, this book is a fictional account of the life of Mishi-Waub-Kaikaik (Great White Falcon), a boy born before the entrenchment of European settlers in Ontario and the Great Lakes region. The story begins with the Naming ritual performed by the medicine man and proceeds through the Tobacco Offering and Drum Ceremony, initiation rites, and war and marriage ceremonies. As previously foretold in a vision, he is initiated into the secret society of the medicine man after serving a long apprenticeship in learning mythical origins, rituals, and chants. Throughout are interesting descriptions of ceremonial offerings and their purpose, death and burial customs, and the book closes with a council meeting that authorizes the chiefs to sign a treaty exchanging their traditional lands for reservations.

Ojibway Ceremonies is a useful resource for grades 7 and up concerning Ojibway customs and folklore. While written as fiction, the rituals and ceremonies are authentic. It is prefaced by a list of place names, and three appendices give the Ojibway language text of various Petitions and the Invocation to Council.” (*Canadian Review of Materials* Vol. 11, No. 6, November, 1983). Reading level 7 and up.

Meuse-Dallien, Theresa (author), Stevens, Arthur (illustrator). (2003). *The sharing circle: Stories about First Nations culture*. Halifax, NS: Nimbus Publishing.

ISBN-13: 978-1551094502.

“Matthew loves to play games with his friends and share his toys with them. But most of all he loves to share the special treasures that remind him of his First Nations culture. Perhaps his favourite treasure is the medicine pouch that his grandfather made especially for him. This is where he keeps many of his other treasures. *Sharing Circle* includes seven children's stories about First Nations culture and spirituality practices. All seven stories, The Eagle Feather, The Dream Catcher, The Sacred Herbs, The Talking Circle, The Medicine Wheel, The Drum, and The Medicine Pouch explore First Nations cultural practices and teach children about Mi'kmaq beliefs and heritage.” (From the publisher.)

McDonald, James Andrew (author), Samson, Gerald (illustrator). (2008). *Stories of Robin Town*. Gila Kyew Nluulk Head Start and Daycare.

ISBN 1-896445-28-4

“Three initial titles in this series of picture books depicting the history of the Kitsumkalum people are: *Newcomers Arrive* - This story explains how Kitsumkalum came to consist of two Tsimshian Eagle clans. *The Robin People* - This story describes how the ancestors of the Kitsumkalum people come to live in the Kitsumkalum Valley, and the mysterious people whom Nisgeel and his family encountered on their search for a new home. *The Salmon Are Gone* - This title describes how two clans were relocated to another area within their traditional territory due to a rock slide that affected their salmon supply. Books incorporate Tsimshian text in context, and provides translation and pronunciation guide. Themes & topics: family and community roles, decision making, traditional knowledge.” (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources*.) Reading level 2 – 3.

Mishenene, Rachel A., Toulouse, Dr. Pamela Rose (Eds.). (2011). *Strength and struggle: Perspectives from First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in Canada*. Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

ISBN-13: 978-007106703

“This anthology of interviews, essays, memoirs, and various types of creative pieces (poetry, graphic journal, story) captures perspectives and insight from a variety of contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists, thinkers, jurists, and other public figures. features f two alternate Tables of Contents show differing ways of grouping the selections included in the anthology – allowing for a richly layered perspective on the contents f support for discussion of the selections includes explicit questions focused on big ideas (e.g., “How have your experiences defined your identity?” “What would you stand up for?”); for each selection there are also thinking and discussion prompts of things to consider before, during, after, and beyond reading the individual selection f author statements and/or biographies help provide context for each selection f glossaries of literary terms and of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit terms help ensure that the material is at all times accessible to a range of readers. Themes & topics identity, traditional ways of teaching & learning, goal setting & realization, struggle and resilience, self-determination, history.” (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources.*) Reading level 7 – 9.

Sawyer, Don (author), Freynet, Gilbert (illustrator). (2015). *Where rivers meet*. Pemmican Publications.

ISBN-13: 978-0921827061

“After tragedy turns her world, high school senior Nancy Antoine searches for meaning in her life. The traditions of her people offer a lifeline, but is she strong enough?” (From the publisher). Themes and topics: character, citizenship, courage, justice, perseverance and wisdom. (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources.*) Reading level 8 – up.

Simpson, Caroll (author). (2013). *The salmon twins*. Victoria, BC: Heritage House Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-1927527009

“In her third book inspired by First Nations’ stories, children’s author and illustrator Caroll Simpson explains the significance of community values. She introduces readers to a world of creatures like Sea Lion, Killer Whale, Dogfish and Kingfisher. Her dramatic tale of young twins and their transformation shows how working together keeps a community healthy.

When new twins are born in a mythical Pacific Coast village, everyone celebrates because the birth of twins is a rare occasion; twins are the children of the salmon. But when the twins grow

selfish and greedy, Thunderbird transforms them into a Two-Headed Sea Serpent. Can the Serpent's heads learn to work together? The question becomes more important when the salmon don't run up the river and the villagers start to go hungry. The Serpent's heads have to co-operate with each other to solve the mystery and restore the salmon run.

Written for children aged 3 to 10, this charming story is illustrated with Simpson's distinctive colour paintings that celebrate First Nations culture. A glossary of mythical creatures and sea life provides informative teaching points and invites further exploration of West Coast cultures." (From the publisher). Reading level Pre-K - 5.

Spalding, Andrea (author), Scow, Alfred (Author), Gait, Darlene (Illustrator). *Secret of the dance*. (2006). Orca Book Publishers.

ISBN-13: 978-1554691296.

"This picture book is a fictionalized version of a real incident in the childhood of Kwakwaka'wakw elder Alfred Scow. Alfred's family sailed from Gilford Island to isolated Kingcome Inlet to attend a forbidden potlatch. His parents forbade him to attend so he wouldn't be apprehended if they were raided by the authorities. Alfred sneaked inside to watch and recognized the Hamatsa. Beautifully written and incorporating fantastic, creative illustrations of Coast Salish designs, this book shows students the relevance of traditional practices. Themes & topics performance, ceremony, tradition. A corresponding Teacher Guide is available through Orca Books." (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources*.) Reading level 2 – 4.

"Many years ago, when the world and I were younger, my family defied the government."

Thus begins a very well written, wonderfully illustrated story by Andrea Spalding. This book deserves many accolades.

The tale is a memory of 1935, and Wat'l'kina is a young boy who overhears the Indian Agent snarl at the elders, telling them that dancing was against the law. Wat'l'kina can sense something is going on as the boat is packed with boxes that are covered by blankets. The elders organized a potlatch under the guise of a fishing trip to catch the running salmon. The families that traveled to Kingcome Inlet had to be sure that they were not followed by the Indian Agent and had to be very quiet as they approached the neighbouring band. Once there, the potlatch begins, and Wat'l'kina is drawn to the sound of the drums and the singing. He peeks in and is allowed to watch for a little while. He is amazed by the dancing and is both proud and thrilled to be watching, especially when he catches a glimpse of his father dancing.

The illustrations by Darlene Gait are crisp, vivid and seamlessly join the telling of this tale. The combination of real world imagery dashed with that of First Nations beliefs is striking. It is easy to spend time examining the distinctive illustrations.

Secret of the Dance should be a "must have" for school libraries and classrooms.

Highly Recommended. (*Canadian Review of Materials* Vol. 13, No. 4, Oct. 2006). Reading Level 2 – 5.

Storytellers of the Lil'wat, Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh nations. (2009). ***People of the Land: Legends of the Four Host Nations***. Penticton, BC: Theytus Books. ISBN 978-1-894778-77-0

"Spectacular imagery (a blend of the traditional and the modern) adorns this rich anthology of Lil'wat, Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations traditional stories. These stories link people to the land and to each other and pass on traditional knowledge and history. These sacred teachings — which range from creation stories to naming stories — are collected in an anthology of stories willingly shared by the respected storytellers of each nation. The book is a unique commemorative collection that celebrates the four host First Nations on whose ancestral territories the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games were held. Themes & topics traditional knowledge, storytelling, sacred teachings, connection to the land (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources*.) Reading level 4 – 9

Vickers, Roy Henry, Budd, Robert. (2016). ***Peace dancer***. Madera Park, BC: Harbour Publishing. ISBN 13: 978-1-55017-739-8

It's the Northwest Coast First Nations version of the flood story — a story found all around the world in many different variations. It's beautifully illustrated, as always, with about 20 incredible pieces of original art by Vickers, a renowned West Coast artist known for his vivid colours and mixture of traditional Aboriginal art with a modern twist.

Vickers first heard the story from Chester Bolton in Kitkatla on the north coast of British Columbia.

"This story is as old as the tides that rise and fall on our shores, yet the lessons taught may be more important now than they were thousands of years ago," Vickers says in the book.

The story tells of a village where the children have not been taught the wisdom of their ancestors. The land floods and everyone has to flee in canoes, which they eventually tie up to a rock high on Anchor Mountain. Feathers begin to fall from the sky because the birds have

nowhere to land. An elder realizes that the village needs to return its people to a love and respect of the land and animals and the waters begin to recede. Once everyone is home safe, it is decided that a special song and dance will be created to remind the people of the need for love and respect — that becomes the Peace Dance.

Vickers saw a Peace Dance as a young man and questioned why the dancer was shaking eagle feathers on the audience. An elder told him the dancer was blessing the audience, but Vickers learned the full story when he became a Peace Dancer himself.

“Our stories are important. They hold lessons for people who are willing to learn,” Vickers says in the book.

The story adds to the lexicon of global flood stories around the world, such as the story of Noah’s Ark or the Mesopotamian story of Gilgamesh, Budd said in an interview.

“It’s very exciting for us to add this story into the huge body of work of flood stories. It’s really a cool thing,” Budd said. “Another really interesting thing about this one is that in the Noah’s Ark story, Noah’s Ark ends up on Mount Ararat, which is currently in Turkey. In this story, the people end up tying their canoes to a place called Anchor Mountain, which is still known as Anchor Mountain to this day.”

Vickers said the stone that anchored the canoes is still up on the mountain.

“When I was told about this story and I repeated the story to a friend of mine, he said he had climbed up Anchor Mountain and that there is a big stone there that he was told is the anchor that the canoes were anchored to during the flood,” Vickers said. “The other thing that’s incredible about this is that there are so many mountains, lakes, and islands that were renamed by the cartographers who were working for the government, but this mountain actually carries the same name — Anchor Mountain — that it has had all these thousands of years.”

The message in this legend is more important than ever, Vickers said in an interview.

“We have to clean up our act. From my point of view, there is no time in the history of telling this story that it is more relevant to the world than it is now,” Vickers said. “We have a greater ability to completely destroy this planet and so we also have an ability to completely heal this planet. To me, the lessons of this story are to return to love and respect for our Mother Earth.

And it’s a message for all ages, not just children.

“It’s actually not the young people, it’s the older people. We are the mentors for the younger people, so what we do and what we say governs the course that they will take. It’s a message for the leaders of this world,” Vickers said. (From the publisher). Reading level Pre-K -3.

“Roy Henry Vickers and Robert Budd have collaborated before to produce attractive and engaging picture books relating traditional stories from British Columbia's northwest coast. Peace Dancer is the fourth in their series of Northwest Coast legends. As with its predecessors, Peace Dancer is likely to be enthusiastically received. As the text states on the opening page, "This story is as old as the tides that rise and fall on our shores, yet the lessons taught may be more important now than they were thousands of years ago." Peace Dancer is the story of a great flood that descends upon the land as a consequence of the people departing from what they know to be right. When children capture and abuse a crow, the Chief of the Heavens is angry at their ignorance and lack of respect. Rains flood the earth, and, in what is an unmistakable similarity to the story of Noah's Ark, the people take to their canoes to wait for the rain to cease and the land to dry.

Vickers' highly stylized illustrations reveal the obvious influence of traditional west coast art. Early and late in the book, the art is brightly and boldly colourful. Appropriately, during the flood scenes, the palette takes on a somber, gray feel that reflects the depressed spirits of the people shivering in fear as they attempt to ride out the storm. Almost every double page spread includes brief written text with a facing page consisting of a full-page illustration. No illustration is particularly detailed, but each picture adds to the written text and solidifies the link between this modern book and the traditional origins of the story.

Parents and teachers will enjoy sharing Peace Dancer with children. It is a fine book, and Harbour Publishing can be proud of their achievement. Highly Recommended. (*Canadian Review of Materials* Vol. 23, No. 5, October, 2016). Reading level K – 3.

Wheeler, Bernelda (author), Bekkering, Herman (illustrator). (1993). ***Where did you get your moccasins?*** Winnipeg, MB: Portage and Main Press. ISBN 0-919143-15-6.

“This picture book tells the story of Jody, who attends an urban multi-ethnic school. When his classmates ask him about his moccasins, it gives Jody the opportunity to talk about his family and culture. Themes & topics traditional knowledge, sharing, and respect.” (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources.*) Reading level K – 2.

Wright, Marion (Roze) (author), Hilgemann, Judy (illustrator). (1996). ***My elders tell me.*** Port Hardy, BC: Tri-Bands Education Committee and School District No. 85 (Vancouver Island North). ISBN-13: 978-1550564914

“Marion Roze Wright gathered materials and consensus for this anthology, rendered as a season-by-season story about two nine-year-old cousins who live near Port Hardy. This wide-

ranging volume provides some Kwakwaka'wakw language terms and educational sidebars, and contains factual information as it tells the story of two cousins and their adventures and experiences throughout the seasons. An index allows readers to quickly find specific information they may be seeking. Themes & topics: seasonal cycle, Elders, tradition, family and community roles. Based on input from the elders of Quatsino, Fort Rupert, and Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw." (*First Nations Education Steering Committee: Authentic First Peoples Resources.*) Reading level 3 – 4.