

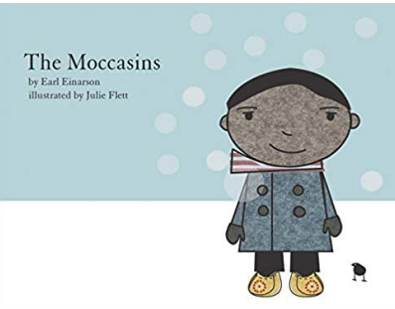
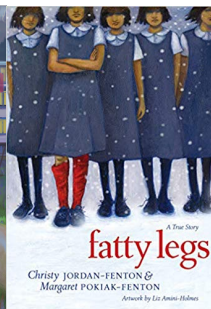
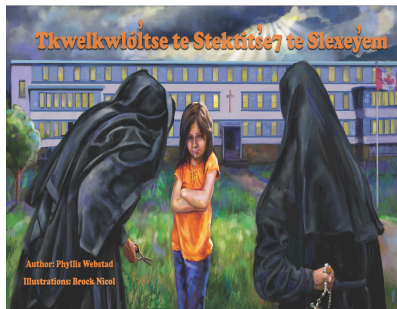
Indigenous Children's Book List:

Compiled

By

Brye Robertson

April 2019



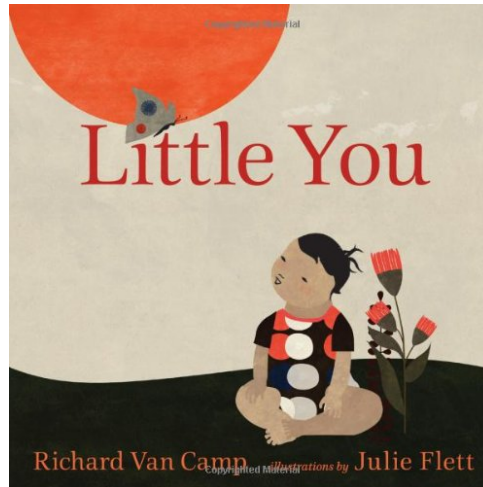
Indigenous Children's Book List: Written by Indigenous Authors.

As an Indigenous educator I have recently experienced that books written by Indigenous authors, which feature Indigenous children are lacking in most early learning classrooms. Unfortunately, most children's books that do have Indigenous characters (not written by Indigenous authors), use harmful stereotypes. It is important to be thoughtful when choosing the books we are bringing into the classroom. It is our job as early learning educators/child care workers to educate children with truths. The following is a booklist of children's books written by Indigenous authors, and/or illustrated by Indigenous artists. Each book in the list tells an authentic Indigenous story. Some books talk about Indigenous children's experiences with residential school while also portraying the strength and resiliency of Indigenous children. No need to worry about the stories being too traumatic, they all have uplifting and reassuring happy endings. These books are a great way to bring awareness, as well as introduce Indigenous culture and content into the classrooms, which contributes to a practice of reconciliation. Most of these books are available at your local library. Please be sure to do a little research about the authors and/or the illustrators of the Indigenous books you are reading to children. It is important they are authentic. Make efforts to be thoughtful when you are choosing a book to read to children and think about the message you are sharing with them. Be intentional when sharing stories. It is good practice to read books beforehand and be prepared to have a conversation with the children about the book, as well as the proper terms to use when referring to Indigenous people in Canada. Today most First Nation, Inuit and Metis peoples are referred to as Indigenous which is an umbrella term. Another conversation Indigenous children's books might evoke is the myth that Christopher Columbus found the America's when the true history is that Indigenous people have lived here for thousands of years.

Suggested Age 0-2 Years Old

LITTLE YOU

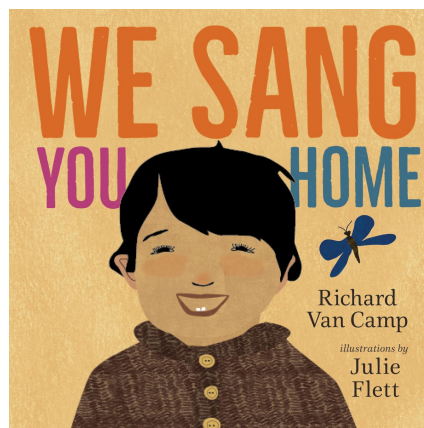
written by Richard Van Camp, and illustrated by Julie Flett,



is a sturdy board book, that celebrates the joys an infant brings to parents and the world. This children's book uses rhymes and pictures to captivate children's attention.

WE SANG YOU HOME

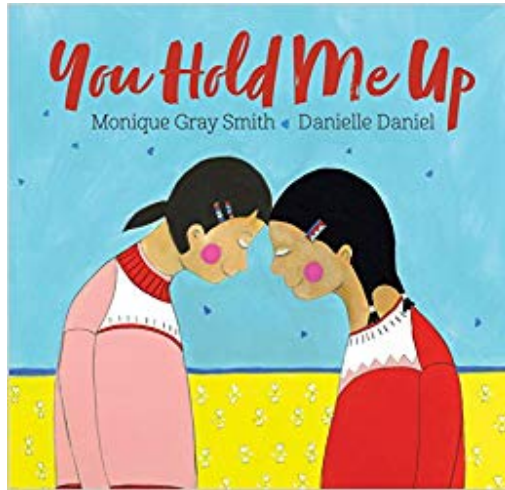
written by Richard Van Camp, and illustrated by Julie Flett



is a board book that celebrates a new baby and the beauty and joy a new family member brings. It is compiled with soft rhymes that young children can enjoy and as well as keep them interested. This book celebrates Indigenous families.

YOU HOLD ME UP

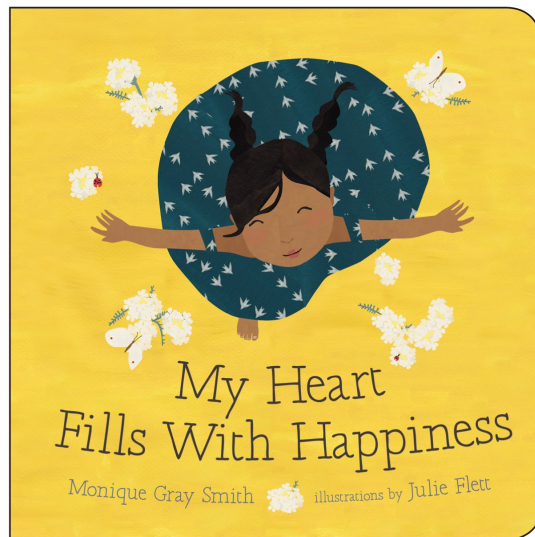
written by Monique Gray Smith and illustrated by Danielle Daniel.



This is a book that highlights the values that are important to Indigenous people and the importance of being respectful. Portrays a healthy way to treat people in your life.

MY HEART FILLS WITH HAPPINESS

Written by Monique Gray Smith and illustrated by Julie Flett

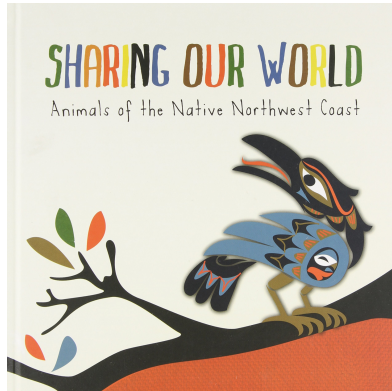


This is another great board book that has illustrations of Indigenous children and their family members. This book talks about some common Indigenous traditions and practices that bring children happiness.

Suggested Age 2-7 Years Old

SHARING OUR WORLD: AMINALS OF THE NATIVE NORTHWEST COAST

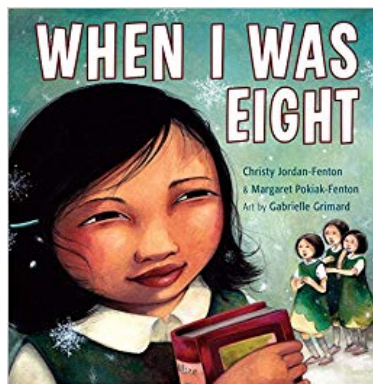
“The images and text in this book are the work of First Nations and Native artists from communities throughout the pacific Northwest



This book is a reminder of Indigenous people’s connection to the land and the animals, and that every being on the planet has a purpose and a connection. Animals are an enormous part of Indigenous people’s story and history and this book helps to tell that story.

When I Was Eight

written by Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton and illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard.

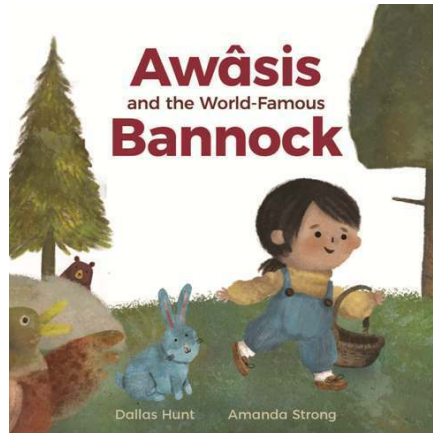


This children’s book tells a story of residential school from a young Inuk girl’s experience. She over-comes the inhumane treatment and eventually teaches herself to read, which is why she

wanted to go to the “outsider’s school” to begin with. He father did warn her that the school may not be the best place for her but she was determined to go and learn how to read no matter what kind of school it was.

AWASIS AND THE WORLD-FAMOUS BANNOCK

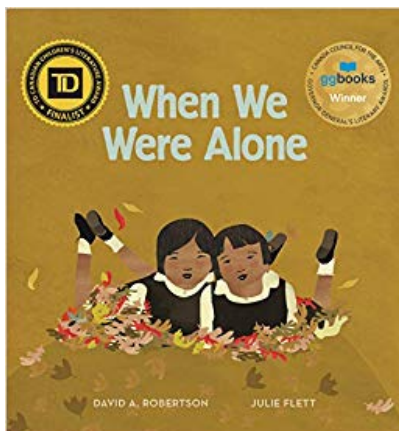
Written by Dallas Hunt and illustrated by Amanda Strong



This is a great story about a young girl’s mishap of losing her Kokum’s bannock when she is supposed to be delivering it to a family member. The girl finds help from some animal friends and in the end her and her Kokum are going to make bannock together. There are some Cree words in the book but don’t be afraid there is very easy pronunciations in the back.

When We Were Alone

written by David A. Robertson and illustrated by Julie Flett

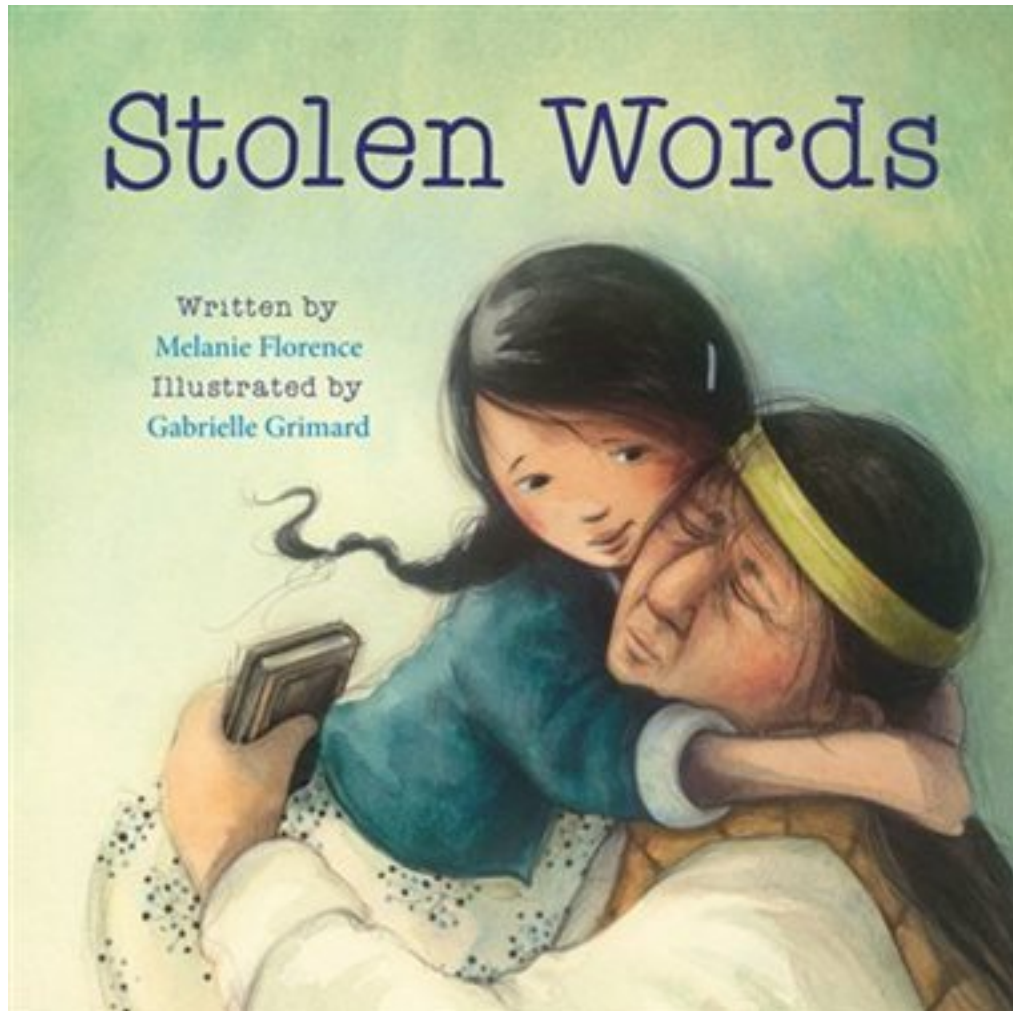


is a book about a curious grandchild that asks her Kokum about things that she does, such as wearing colorful clothes, wearing her hair in a braid, speaking Cree, etc. The Kokum explains to

the child about why she does those things so proudly and all of her explanations relate back to her residential school experience. It is a soft story, that is great to start a conversation about Canada's History with Indigenous Peoples.

STOLEN WORDS

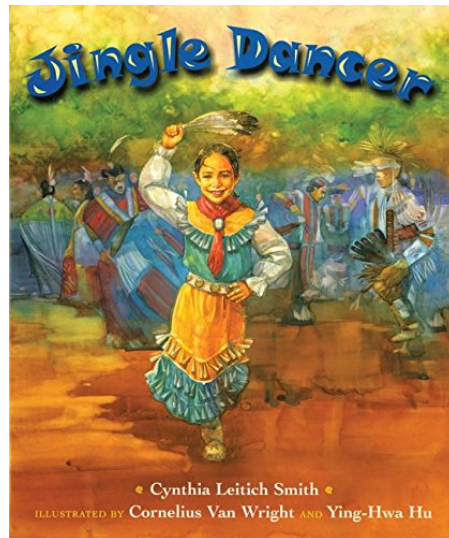
written by Melanie Florence and illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard



This is a book written about a granddaughter's curiosity about her Grandpa's missing native language. The granddaughter asks questions and her Grandpa tells her why he doesn't speak Cree. The granddaughter is so loving and helpful she finds a book to help her Grandpa with his language.

JINGLE DANCER

written by Cynthia Leitich Smith and illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hwa HU.



This is a great children's book about a young girl's determination to dance in the up and coming Pow Wow. She doesn't have all the material she needs for her dance regalia, so she sets out on a mission to find what she needs to be a Jingle Dancer.

SWEETEST KULU

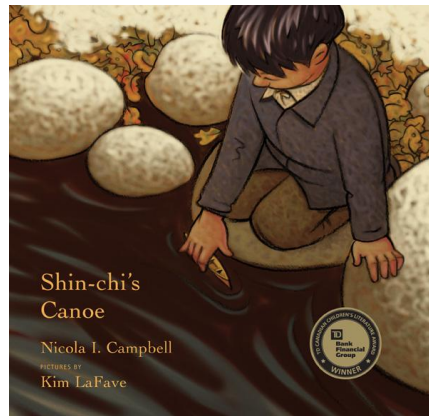
is written by Celina Kalluk and illustrated by Alexandria Neonakis.



This book is about a baby named Kulu and all the animals in the arctic that pay her a visit and bless her with great gifts she will use throughout her life. It reminds the reader about the importance of the animals around us and the greatness they have to offer.

SHIN-CHI'S CANOE

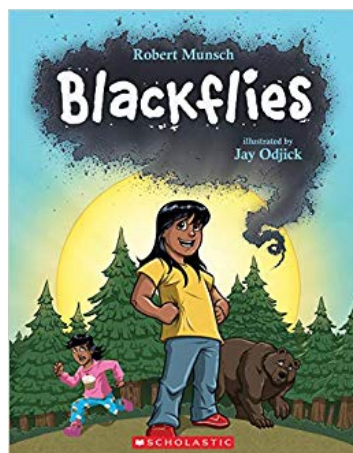
is written by Nicola I. Campbell and illustrated by Kim Lafave.



This book is about a family that experienced the law of children having to attend residential school and the memories the children brought with them to help them through their time at residential school. The brother and sister knew that when the sockeye salmon swim up river it will be time to go home to their family.

BLACKFLIES

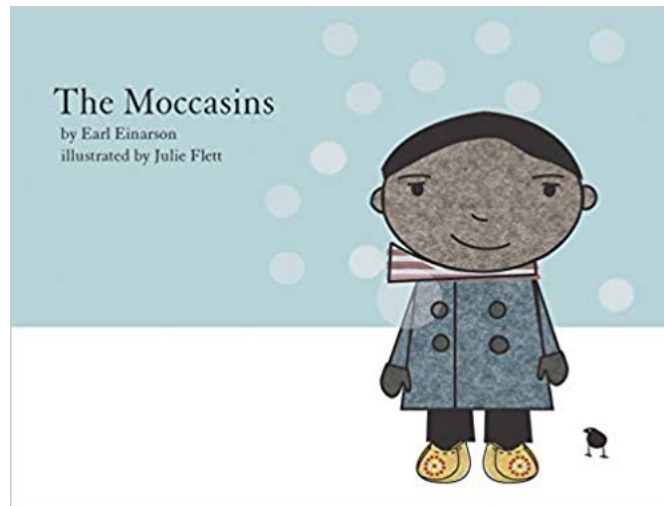
Written by Robert Munsch and illustrated by Jay Odjick



This is a great story about a young girl wanting to go outside and enjoy the beautiful spring weather, but with spring weather comes flies and mosquitos. Young Indigenous children who live in rural areas have to deal with flies and mosquitos on a regular basis, this book is a great portrayal of the realities of playing outside.

THE MOCCASINS

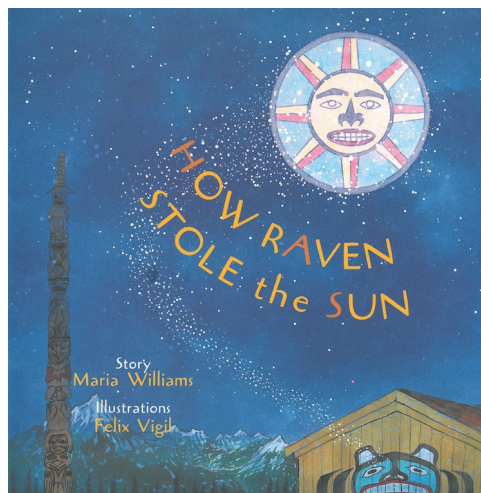
Written by Earl Einarson and illustrated by Julie Flett



This is a great read about a young boy that was gifted a pair of moccasins from his foster mother to remind him to be proud of his Native heritage. The boy loved the moccasins and eventually when he was a grown man with a family, he had the honor of gifting the moccasins to his son.

HOW RAVEN STOLE THE SUN

Written by Maria Williams and illustrated by Felix Vigil

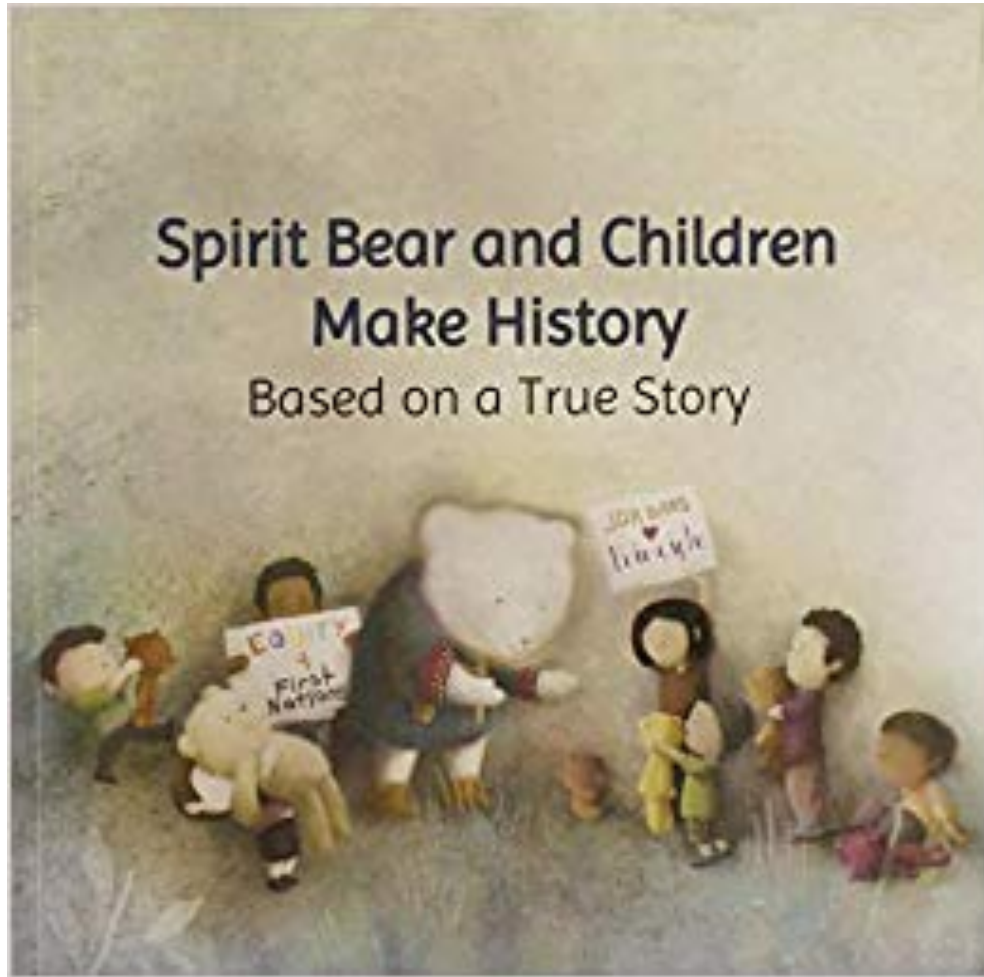


This is a great story about how the trickster raven, helped to get the stars, the moon, and the sun into the sky. Of course, he has to trick the chief to make it happen and in the end the raven ended up a black bird. It is the one of many stories about the raven who is known to be a trickster.

Suggested Ages 6-12

**SPIRIT BEAR AND CHILDREN MAKING HISTORY: BASED ON A
TRUE STORY**

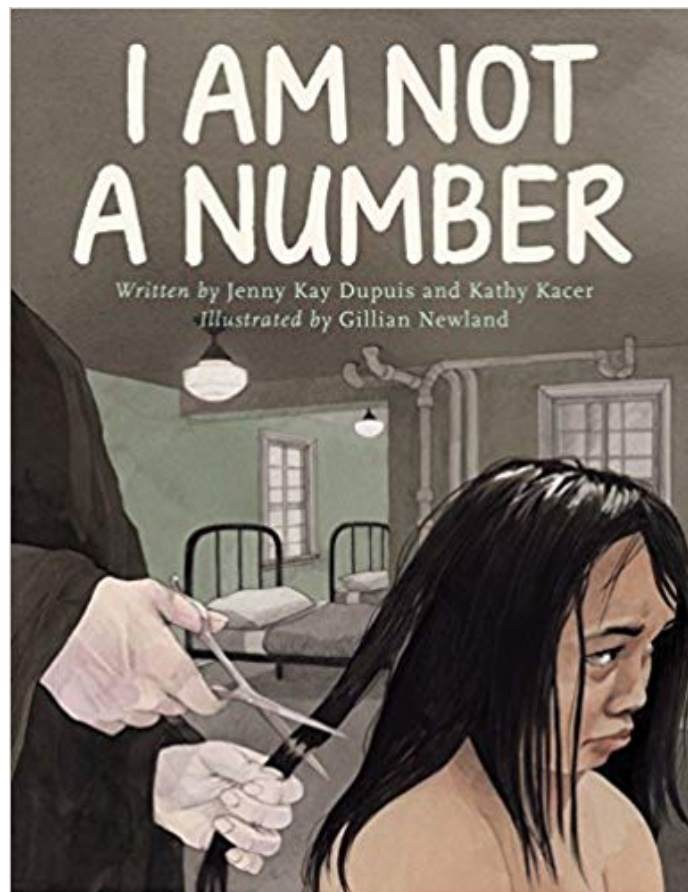
Written by Cindy Blackstock and Eddy Robinson and illustrated by Amanda Strong



This is a great read for children wanting to learn about the inequities faced by First Nations children in Canada. The book written from the Spirit Bears perspective shares the story and the timeline of Cindy Blackstock's Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations legal battle with the Canadian Government on the basis of human rights complaints. A great tool to learn about the mistreatment First Nations children face at the hands of the Canadian Government.

I AM NOT A NUMBER

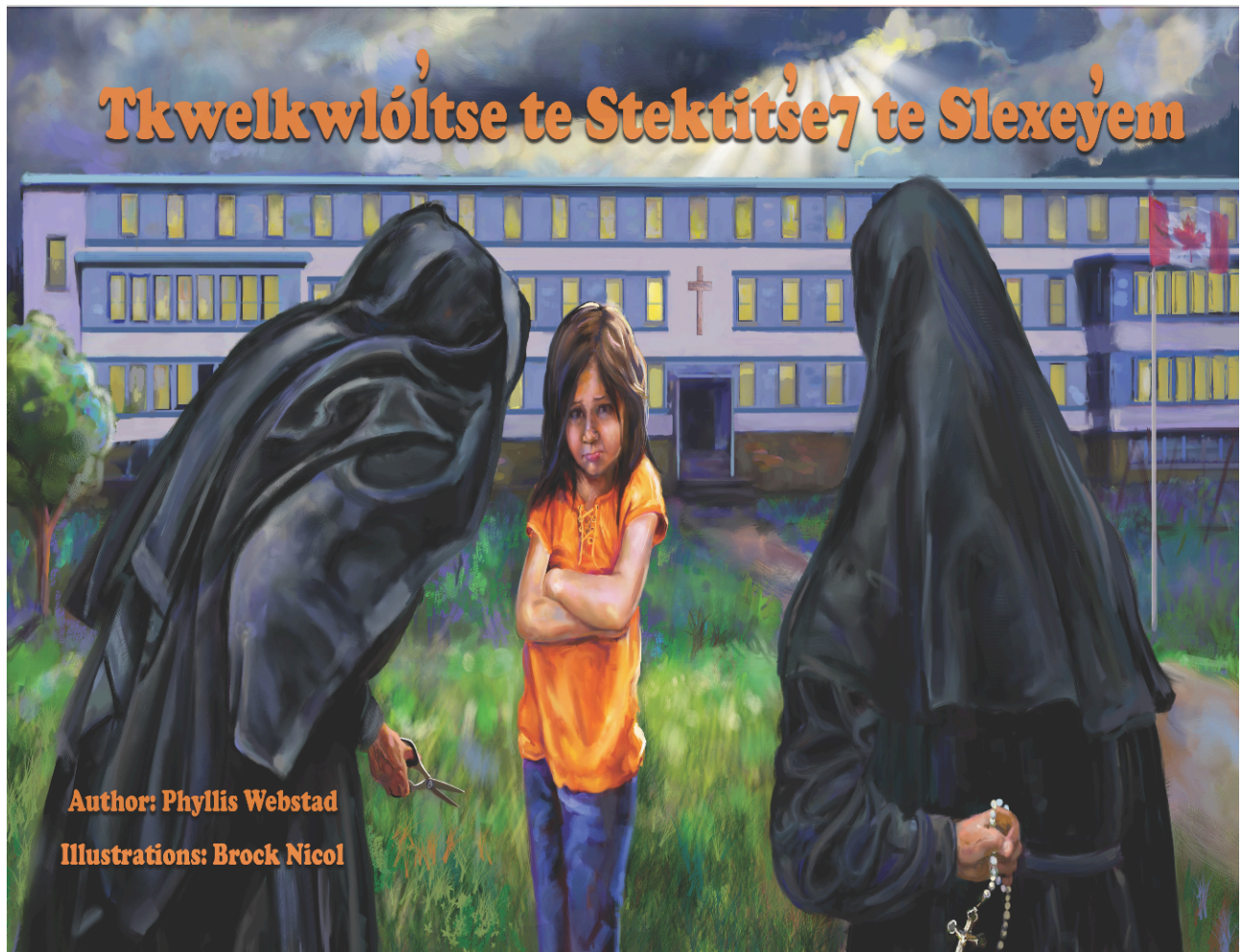
written by Jenny Kay Dupuis and Kathy Kacer and illustrated by Gillian Newland



This book tells the story of children being taken from their home to attend residential school by the Indian Agents (what they were called at the time). The children are taken and subjected to horrible things at residential school, but the resiliency of the children, families and the community shine through and the ending portrays the strength of Indigenous people. After reading this book it is advised to have a conversation about the language and proper term to use when talking about Indigenous peoples. This book uses the term Indian when referring to the Indian agents because that is what they were called at the time, but now that word is a derogatory term and no longer used. Indigenous is an umbrella term that refers to First Nation, Inuit, and Metis people of Canada.

THE ORANGE SHIRT STORY

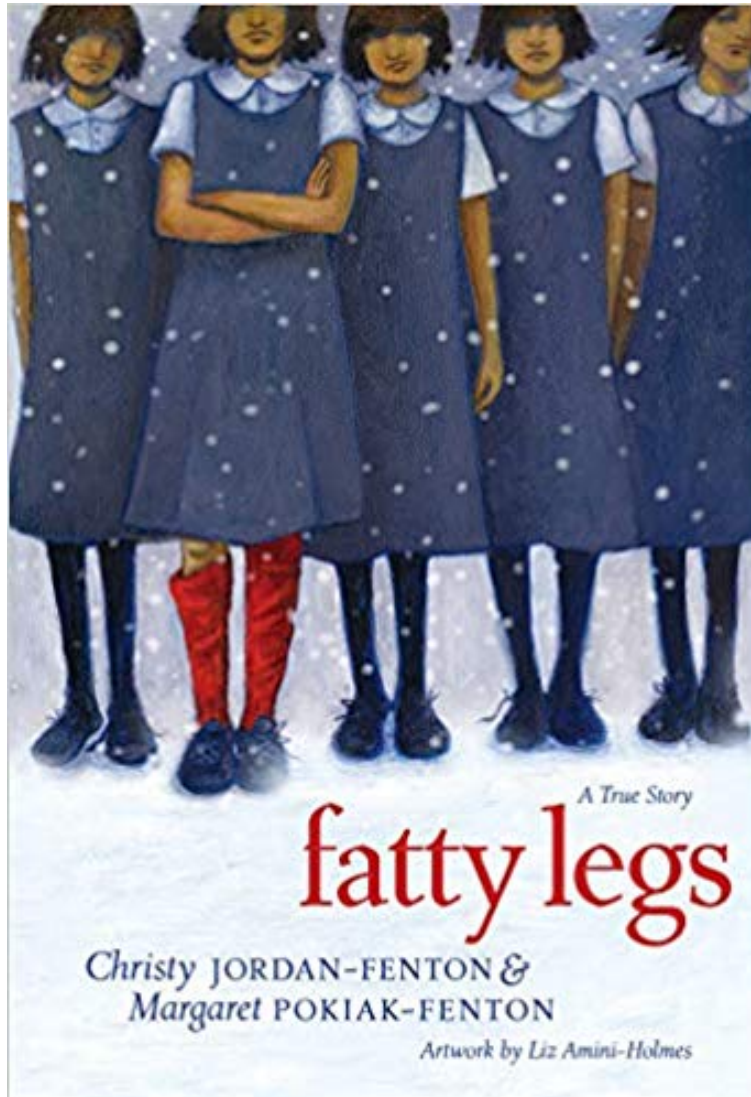
Written by Phyllis Webstad and illustrated by Brock Nicol



Every year on September 30 people in Canada wear an orange shirt for what is known as Orange Shirt Day (OSD). We do this to remember all the survivors of the residential school system in Canada and the horrific abuses children suffered. This story is about how we came to recognize OSD, and the origin of the story. Phyllis was sent to residential school and like all the children she was stripped of all of her belongings including her orange shirt. This book depicts the real history of Canada's treatment of Indigenous people, while portraying the resiliency as well.

FATTY LEGS

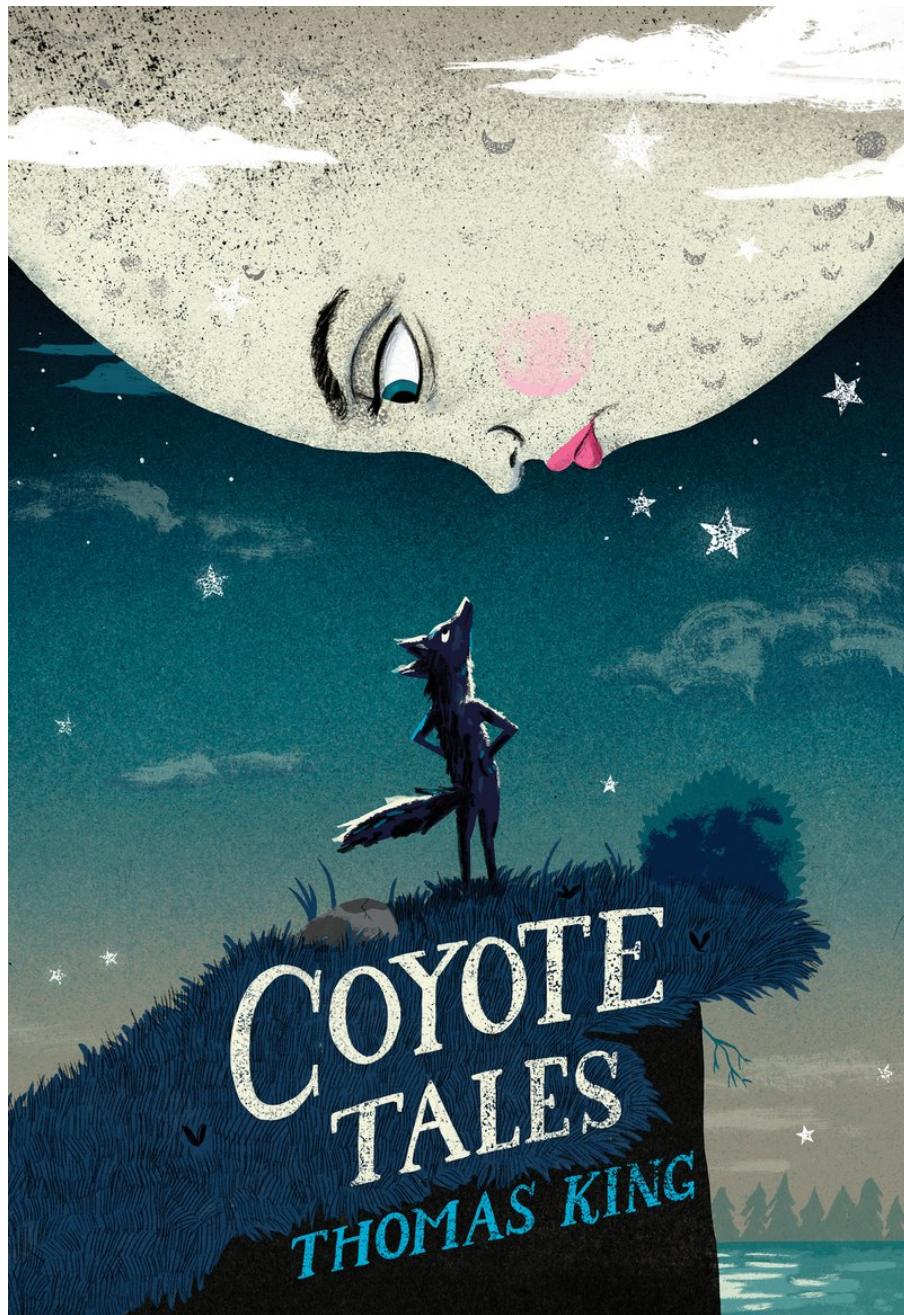
written by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton and illustrated by Liz Amini-Holmes



This chapter book consists of just over 100 pages of a true story. A young girl living way up north was intrigued by what she saw when she went to town to pick up supplies with her father. She convinced her Dad to let her attend residential school, and what happened to her there was horrifying. In true Indigenous fashion the young girl made it through the hardship and came out stronger because of it. This story portrays the true resiliency of Indigenous peoples and it a great read for a young adolescent.

COYOTE TALES

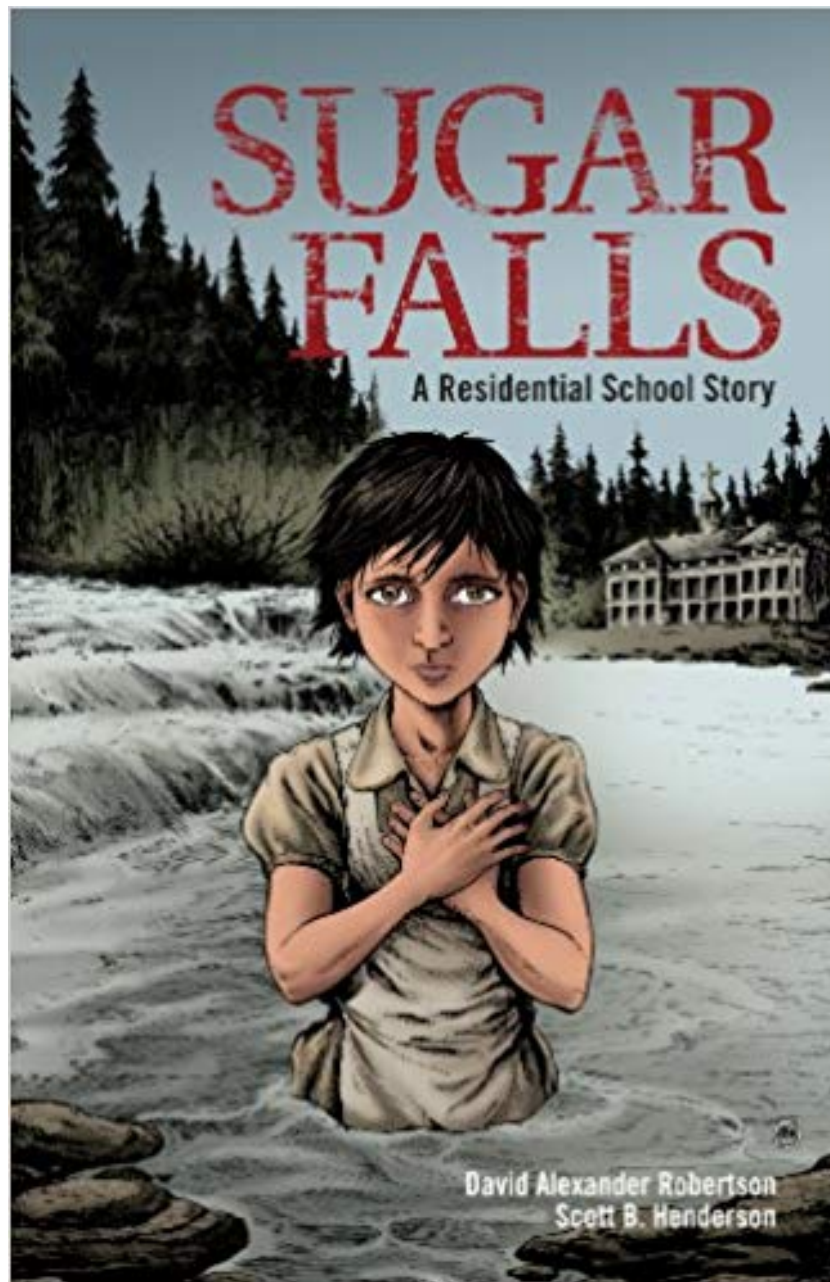
Written by Thomas King and illustrated by Byron Eggenschwiler



This book has a couple of stories in it. The first is about a woman, coyote and the moon. The story reminds coyote the importance of the moon. The next story is about coyote and his suit and how the raven plays a trick on him, other animals and humans.

SUGAR FALLS: A RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL STORY

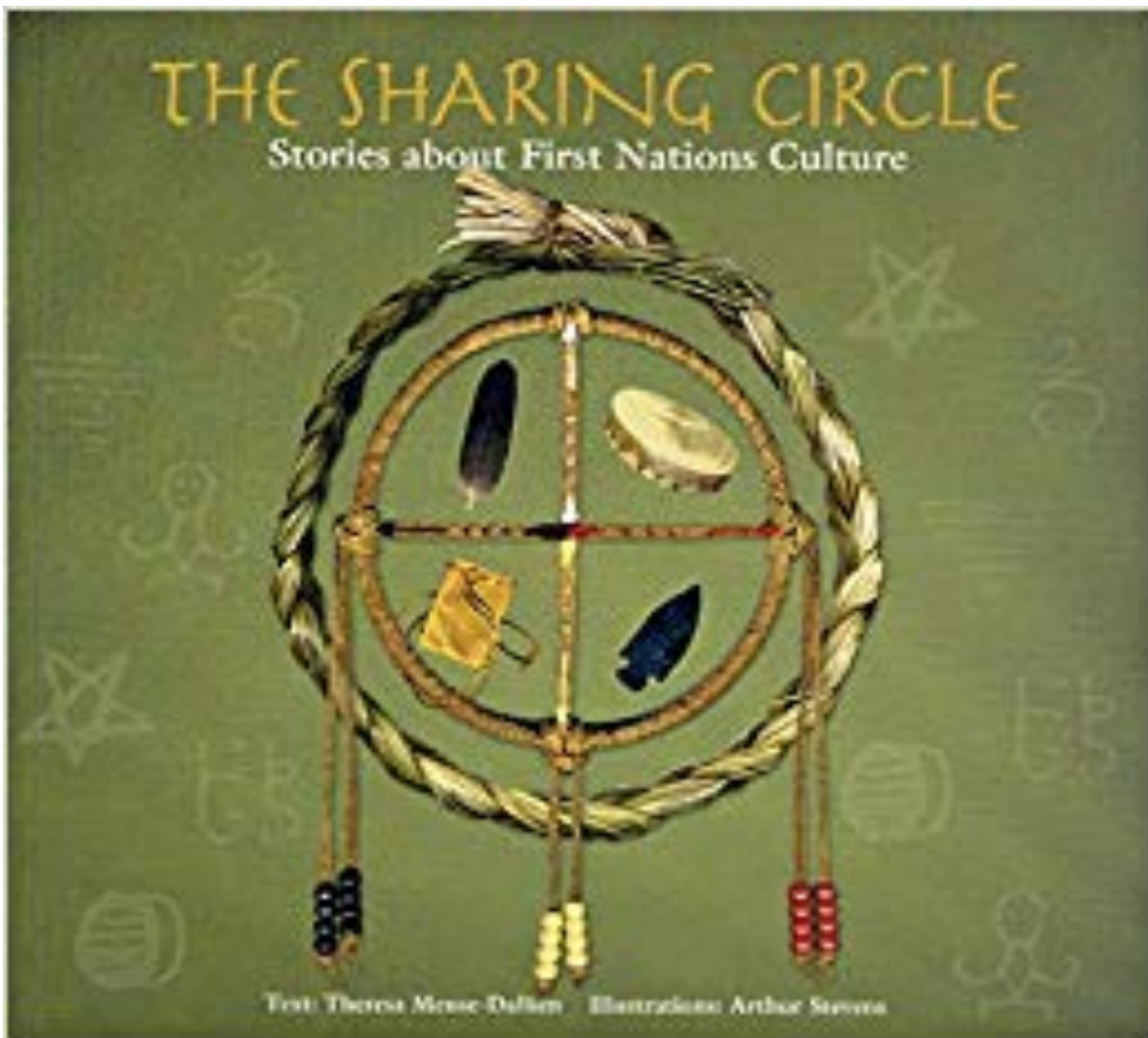
Written by David Alexander Robertson and illustrated by Scott B. Henderson.



This story is written in comic book form. It starts off in present day, while in school a young boy is told to do an assignment on a residential school survivor. He doesn't know anyone but thankfully his friend's mom is a residential school survivor and she agrees to be a part of his assignment. She ends up telling the boy her experience at residential school.

THE SHARING CIRCLE: STORIES ABOUT FIRST NATIONS CULTURE

Written by Theresa Meuse-Dallien and illustrated by Arthur Stevens



This book is a great tool to learn and teach about First Nations culture. There are seven different stories within the book which talk about important aspects of Indigenous culture such as, The Eagle Feather, The Dream Cather, The Medicine Wheel etc. This book is a great start to conversation about Indigenous culture and beliefs.