

**Reading Suggestions from Wapiti Regional Library**  
**Indigenous Reads for Children**

**Title: Nokum is My Teacher**

**Author:** David Bouchard. Illustrated by Allen Sapp

**Description:** A poetic story of a young indigenous boy, posing questions to his grandmother, his “Nokum”, about the wider world beyond the familiarity of their home and community. Through a series of questions, Nokum guides her grandson towards an understanding of his need to fit into and learn more about this large world beyond the reserve. Nokum offers her grandson a vision of a world he can enter through imagination and reading, while retaining respect for the ways of his people. (Source: Red Deer Press)

**Title: I am not a Number**

**Author:** Jenny Kay Dupuis and Kathy Kacer. Illustrated by Gillian Newland.

**Description:** When eight-year-old Irene is removed from her First Nations family to live in a residential school she is confused, frightened, and terribly homesick. She tries to remember who she is and where she came from despite the efforts of the nuns to force her to do otherwise. When she goes home for summer holidays, her parents decide never to send her away again, but where will she hide and what will happen when her parents disobey the law? (Source: Second Story Press)

**Title: Firedancers**

**Author:** Jan Bourdeau Waboose and C.J. Taylor.

**Description:** As night sets in and the fire crackles, a young indigenous girl is amazed when her grandmother invokes the spirits of their ancestors. She learns the mystical firedance and creates a bond with her people and their heritage that will last a lifetime. (Source: Stoddard Kids Publishing)

**Title: Dakota Talks about Treaties**

**Author:** Kelly Crawford. Illustrated by Donald Chretien.

**Description:** 'Dakota Talks about Treaties' is about Dakota's experience at the 250th anniversary of the Treaty of Niagara. She learns about wampum, treaties and the importance of them.

**Title: Fatty Legs**

**Author:** Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokkiak-Fenton. Illustrated by Liz Amini-Holmes.

**Description:** Eight-year-old Margaret Pokiak has set her sights on learning to read, even though it means leaving her village in the high Arctic. Faced with unceasing pressure, her father finally agrees to let her make the five-day journey to attend school, but he warns Margaret of the terrors of residential schools. At school Margaret soon encounters the Raven, a black-cloaked nun with a hooked nose and bony fingers that resemble claws. She immediately dislikes the strong-willed young Margaret. Intending to humiliate her, the heartless Raven gives gray stockings to all the girls — all except Margaret, who gets red ones. In an instant Margaret is the laughingstock of the entire school. In the face of such cruelty, Margaret refuses to be intimidated and bravely gets rid of the stockings. Although a sympathetic nun stands up for Margaret, in the end it is this brave young girl who gives the Raven a lesson in the power of human dignity. (Source: CBC Books)

**Title: Hiawatha and the Peacemaker**

**Author:** Robbie Robertson. Illustrate by David Shannon.

**Description:** Born of Mohawk and Cayuga descent, musical icon Robbie Robertson learned the story of Hiawatha and his spiritual guide, the Peacemaker, as part of the Iroquois oral tradition. Now he shares the same gift of storytelling with a new generation. Hiawatha was a strong and articulate Mohawk who was chosen to translate the Peacemaker's message of unity for the five warring Iroquois nations during the 14th century. This message not only succeeded in uniting the tribes but also forever changed how

the Iroquois governed themselves—a blueprint for democracy that would later inspire the authors of the U.S. Constitution. (Source: Abrams Books for Young Readers)

**Title: Birdsong (ages 5 – 8)**

**Author:** Julie Flett

**Description:** In this picture book, a lonely girl becomes friends with her new neighbour, an elderly woman. Together, they watch the seasons change, but as they both grow older, the young girl learns to cope with her friend's declining health. (Source: Greystone Books)

**Title: Nibi is Water (ages 0 - 3)**

**Author:** Joanne Robertson. Translated by Shirley Williams and Isadore Toulouse.

**Description:** Tells of the importance of Nibi—which means water in Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe) — and our role to thank, respect, love and protect it. Babies and toddlers can follow Nibi as it rains and snows, splashes or flows, drips and sips. The picture book is written from an Anishinaabe water protector's perspective and is in dual language — English and Ojibwe. (Source: Second Story Press)

**Title: The Girl and the Wolf (ages 3 - 5)**

**Author:** Katherena Vermette and Julie Flett.

**Description:** In this picture book, a little girl gets lost in the woods while picking berries. A large grey wolf is able to tell where she is from by smelling her and helps her get home. In the meantime, the girl realizes she had the skills to find her way back all along. (Source: Theytus Books)

**Title: I Lost My Talk (ages 4 - 8)**

**Author:** Rita Joe. Illustrated by Pauline Young.

**Description:** About how Joe, a Mi'kmaw elder and poet, lost her language and culture after she was sent to residential school. (Source: CBC)

**Title: I'm Finding My Talk (ages 4 - 8)**

**Author:** Rebecca Thomas. Illustrated by Pauline Young.

**Description:** Rebecca Thomas's response to Rita Joe's poem "I Lost My Talk" (see above description). Thomas is a poet and a second-generation residential school survivor. This book celebrates reconnecting with her language and culture. (Source: CBC)

**Title: Courage = Aakdehewin**

**Author:** Chad Solomon

**Description:** A Mother Bear and her cub are hungry! Watch Rabbit and Bear Paws learn about courage, and trying new things, as they mimic the bear-- and end up with ants in their pants!

**Title: Mwakwa Talks to the Loon: a Cree Story for children**

**Author:** Dale Auger

**Description:** Kayâs is a young Cree man who is blessed with a gift that makes him a talented hunter. He knows the ways of the animals he hunts and can even talk with them in their own languages. But when he becomes proud and takes his abilities for granted, he loses his gift, and the people grow hungry. With the help of the Elders, Kayâs learns that in order to live a life of fulfillment, he must learn to cherish and respect the talents he has been given. A glossary with a pronunciation guide to Cree words and phrases is included.

**Title: Ava and the Little Folk**

**Author:** Neil Christopher and Alan Neal. Illustrated by Jonathan Wright

**Description:** In the arctic, orphaned Ava stumbles upon a group of magical dwarves who show him how it feels to have a home of his own.

**Title: Blackflies**

**Author:** Robert Munsch. Illustrated by Jay Odjick

**Description:** One day Helen wakes up and it's SPRING! The snow has melted and the sun is shining. But Helen knows that the blackflies will be coming out soon. So she does what any smart kid would do: she sends her little sister outdoors to check! When the blackflies and mosquitoes carry her sister away, Helen tells her dad, who rushes outside and is carried away himself. Now Helen needs to rescue BOTH of them, along with a wolf and a very clever bear...

**Title: The Case of the Missing Auntie**

**Author:** Michael Hutchinson

**Description:** The latest instalment of the Mighty Muskrats Mystery series, the four cousins from the Windy Lake First Nation head to the city to visit the Exhibition Fair. There, they learn about their grandfather's little sister, who was scooped up by the government and adopted out to strangers without her parent's permission many years ago. They launch a search for their auntie, and along the way, they learn about the treatment of First Nations people in Canada.

**Title: Cloudwalker**

**Author:** Roy Henry Vickers

**Description:** On British Columbia's northwest coast lies the Sacred Headwaters – the source of three of British Columbia's largest salmon-bearing rivers. These rivers are the source of life for all creatures in the area. But what gave life to the rivers themselves? Astace, a young Gitksan hunter, is intent on catching a group of swans with his bare hands, but is carried away by the birds' powerful wings and dropped in the clouds. With only a cedar box of water, Astace wanders the clouds, growing weaker, stumbling and spilling the contents. When he finally returns to earth he discovers lakes, creeks, and rivers where there were none before. The Gitksan rejoice at having him home, and name the new river they live alongside Ksien – "juice from the clouds."

**Title: The Ghost and the Lone Warrior: an Arapaho legend**

**Author:** C.J. Taylor

**Description:** This Arapaho Indian legend tells the story of Lone Warrior who courageously leads a hunting expedition, but is hurt by an accident that occurs during the expedition. Lone Warrior is left behind by the hunting party and must overcome many different obstacles to survive.

**Title: Go Show the World: a celebration of Indigenous heroes**

**Author:** Wab Kinew

**Description:** The book spotlights 14 indigenous Americans and Canadians.

**Title: Honesty**

**Author:** Chad Solomon

**Description:** A Rabbit and Bear Paws story based on the Seven Grandfathers teaching of Honesty: Big Foot-Kitchi-Sabe.

**Title: The Honor Drum: sharing the beauty of Canada's Indigenous people with children, families and classroom**

**Author:** Cheryl Bear and Tim Huff

**Description:** The Honour Drum is a uniquely envisioned and crafted project shared between two Canadian friends--an Indigenous woman from the West Coast and a non-Indigenous man from Ontario--to reach children, families and classrooms across Canada and around the world with a message of great beauty and truth that should not be ignored. This vibrant book is an important starting place for learning

and insight that is vital and, for many people of all ages, overdue. The Honour Drum is a love letter to the Indigenous people of Canada and a humble bow to Indigenous cultures around the world.

**Title: How Two-Feather was Saved from Loneliness**

**Author:** C.J. Taylor

**Description:** An Abenaki legend of how both fire and corn came into the world.

**Title: In My Anaana's Amautik**

**Author:** Nadia Sammurtok. Illustrate by Lenny Lishchenko

**Description:** An Amautik is a pouch inside a parka where you carry children. This picture book is told from the perspective of a baby safely nestled in their mother's amautik.

**Title: The Legend of Lightning and Thunder**

**Author:** Paula Ikuutzq Rumbolt

**Description:** A traditional legend told in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut for centuries. Two siblings resort to stealing from their fellow villagers, and inadvertently introduce lightning and thunder into the world.

**Title: Life Cycles of a Caribou**

**Author:** Monica Lttusardjuat

**Description:** A bilingual book, featuring text in Inuktitut syllabics, Inuktitut Roman orthography and English. It shares six Inuktitut terms for caribou through their life cycles, giving the young readers an understanding of the rich Inuktitut terminology for these important animals.

**Title: Missing Nimâmâ**

**Author:** Melanie Floerence

**Description:** Kateri is a young girl growing up in the care of her grandmother. We see her reaching important milestones: her first day of school, first dance, first date, wedding, first child, along with her mother, who is always there, watching her child growing up without her. Told in alternating voices, this is a story of love, loss, and acceptance, showing the human side of a national tragedy. An afterword by the author provides a simple, age appropriate context for young readers.

**Title: Muin aqq l'uiknek te'sijik ntuksuinu'k : Mi'kmawey tepkikewey musikiskey a'tukwaqn = Muin and the seven bird hunters : a Mi'kmaw night sky story**

**Author:** Lillian Marshall

**Description:** The story of Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters is a very old Mi'kaw legend. It happens in the North Sky as the stars that show the story of Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters move around Tatapn, the North Star. In pictures in this book you can see how these stars, shown as they appear two hours before dawn, move through the night sky. They are in a different position each of the seasons because they are the time-keepers, they are the calendar. All through the year, as the stars and planets travel through the sky, the Mi'Kmaq watch the story of Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters as it unfolds before their eyes.

**Title: The Origin of Day and Night**

**Author:** Paula Ikuutaq Rumbolt

**Description:** In this Inuit tale, the actions of a hare and a fox change the Arctic forever by creating day and night. In very early times, there was no night or day and words spoken by chance could become real. When a hare and a fox meet and express their longing for light and darkness, their words are too powerful to be denied. Passed orally from storyteller to storyteller for hundreds of years, this beautifully illustrated story weaves together elements of an origin story and a traditional animal tale, giving young readers a window into Inuit mythology.