

**CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND
THE ALBERTA SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM
Grades Four to Nine**

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GRADE FOUR

4.1 Alberta: a Sense of the Land

Welykochy, Dawn. *C is for Chinook: An Alberta Alphabet* (2004)

An alphabet book that features significant people and important elements of the province's landscape. It includes information about the items featured to represent the letters of the alphabet.

4.2 The Stories, Histories and People of Alberta

Bellingham, Brenda. *Storm Child* (1985)

A novel that would be a suitable read aloud for this grade level. It is set in the 1830s and tells the story of Isobel, the daughter of a Scottish father and a Peigan mother who tries to come to terms with who she really is. There is an existing teacher guide.

Beveridge, Cathy. *Shadows of Disaster* (2003)

Jolene travels back in time arriving in Frank just before the slide in 1903. She and her grandfather must save their friends from disaster before it's too late. This exciting time travel story provides good contrast between life in Alberta in 1903 and 2003 and some insights into coal mining in this period.

Bouchard, David. *Qu'Appelle* (2002)

A Cree legend in picture book format with lovely illustrations.

Ellis, Deborah. *The Girl from Turtle Mountain* (2004)

One of the *Our Canadian Girl* series, this is the first about Keeley, a girl who lives in Frank in the early part of the 20th century.

Goble, Paul. *Iktomi and the Boulder* (1988)

Iktomi, a Plains Indian trickster, attempts to defeat a boulder with the assistance of some bats, in this story which explains why the Great Plains are covered with small stones.

Goble, Paul. *The Return of the Buffaloes* (1996)

Based on a Lakota myth in which a mysterious woman returns the buffalo and the other animals to the Indian people.

Goble, Paul. *Star Boy* (1978)

Relates the Blackfoot Indian legend in which Star Boy gains the Sun's forgiveness for his mother's disobedience and is allowed to return to the Sky World.

Hudson, Jan. *Sweetgrass* (1984)

A Canadian novel about a young Blackfoot girl, Sweetgrass, who must prove to her father that she is mature enough to marry the man she loves, Eagle Sun. Her courage during a winter of smallpox finally proves that she has come of age. A well-written book that incorporates accurate and interesting information about Blackfoot culture (like the buffalo hunts and sun dances) and life on the prairies in the 1830s.

Hughes, Monica. *The Ghost Dance Caper* (1978)

Tom's parents resent his close relationship with his Blackfoot greatgrandfather. His father has rejected his First Nations background, become a successful lawyer and expects that his son will follow in his footsteps. Tom, however, struggles with his identity. When the opportunity to "acquire" a ghost bundle from a museum arises, he thinks that this will give him the opportunity to find out who he is. A suspenseful coming-of-age story.

Lottridge, Celia Barker. *Ticket to Curlew* (1992; 1994)

Sam and his Pa came out to Alberta from Iowa. He gets a chance to see the new land before they even have neighbours and help Pa build a home. What new adventures are about to unfold for a boy and his family as they make a fresh start at homesteading on the prairie? EPS novel study available.

Lottridge, Celia Barker. *Wings to Fly* (1997)

A sequel to *Ticket to Curlew*, this novel continues the story of the Ferrier family and their experience as settlers on the Alberta prairies. It is 1918 and Josie Ferrier is now eleven years old. She is excited to find out about a girl who has just moved to the area with her family from England. Perhaps she'll finally have a real friend! She will have someone with whom to explore the silver house, the abandoned house built by a local man in anticipation of his bride's arrival but never inhabited. She will have someone who might share her enthusiasm for Katherine Stinson, women aviator, and who might also be wondering what the future will hold for women. The novel deals well with a number of historical issues: immigrants' nostalgia for their homelands; the influenza epidemic of 1919; changing women's roles.

Morck, Irene. *Five Pennies: a Prairie Boy's Story* (1999)

A collection of short stories suitable for reading aloud that recounts the experience of a young Danish immigrant and his family who farmed in the Dickson (Innisfail) area of the province.

Rodanas, Kristina. *Dance of the Sacred Circle* (1994)

A Blackfoot legend about a young boy who goes looking for the Great Chief of the Sky in hopes of finding help for his starving tribe and is rewarded with a special gift, the first horse.

Spalding, Andrea. *Finders Keepers* (1995)

Danny Budzynski finds an object he thinks is an arrowhead when he roams the prairie after running away from school one afternoon. He also meets a boy from the Peigan reserve nearby. His discovery and his friendship set him off on a search for more information about First Nations culture and history. His discoveries are accompanied by some self-discovery. Danny has always been a poor student, but when he is diagnosed with a learning disability, he is allowed to show his strengths and prove to his teacher, his peers and himself just how much he actually knows.

Wiebe, Rudy. *Hidden Buffalo* (2003)

Sky Running searches for the buffalo his people so desperately need if they are to survive the coming winter, but cannot find any sign of them. When he has a vision that the buffalo are to be found in the lands of his tribe's rivals, he must decide whether or not to risk their lives in the search. The story is based on a Cree legend and features paintings by Michael Lonechild.

Yolen, Jane. *Sky Dogs* (1990)

A young motherless boy in a tribe of Blackfeet Indians is present when his people see horses for the first time and are changed forever.

4.3 Alberta: Celebrations and Challenges

Beeler, Cecil Freeman. *The Girl in the Well* (1991)

Corinne Kragh is struggling through the cold winter of 1934. Her father has left, she is doing most of the work around the farm, and she is plagued by the boy next door who seems to enjoy making her life a misery. The novel provides good insights into life in the rural West during the Depression. The Kragh farm is in the bush and wood-haulers come around to clear bush for firewood for their own prairie homesteads. The work she does around the farm is extremely physical and sometimes dangerous. The fact that the father has gone to the city to earn extra money is also historically accurate.

Booth, David. *The Dust Bowl* (1996)

A young boy hears how his grandparents faced the Dirty Thirties on the prairies and saved their farm. Now, facing the same dangers, the family must pull through again.

Fairbridge, Lynn. *Tangled in Time* (1999)

A novel about a young girl's travel in time back to the harsh life of the Depression years. The novel opens in Edmonton with Janna's world being turned upside down when her mother tells her that she plans to remarry. Withdrawing from her family and feeling as though her father's memory has been betrayed, Janna finds herself attracted to a mysterious painting in her grandmother's house. When a beckoning woman in the painting lures Janna into the past, she is convinced that she must be dreaming. However, once she is transported into the past a second time, her predicament becomes frighteningly real when she becomes trapped as a member of a Dutch immigrant family in Neerlandia (north of Edmonton), who had followed the promise of a new land only to

find themselves battling poverty. Janna must adjust to her new situation - being dirt poor and working as a maid, yet with knowledge of what is to come.

Fitz-Gibbon, Sally. *Lizzie's Storm* (2004)

When her parents die in a car accident in 1931, Lizzie comes to live with her aunt's family on the drought-stricken Canadian prairie, where "fields are drying up and blowing away." Lizzie learns about the harsh daily struggle on the farm during the Depression, and also discovers that she can make an important contribution to the family's survival.

Friedrichs, Elizabeth. *Leah's Pony* (1996)

A young girl's courage and ingenuity saves the family farm and inspires a community during the Great Depression. This is set on the prairies in the U.S., but is an incredibly powerful picture book about experiences that were common across North America.

Taylor, Cora. *Summer of the Mad Monk* (1994)

Twelve-year-old Pip and his family cope with the difficulties of living in the Dust Bowl of rural Alberta. Pip suspects immigrant blacksmith is Rasputin, the infamous figure from the Russian Revolution.

GRADE FIVE

5.1 Physical Geography of Canada

Bannatyne-Cugnet, Jo. *A Prairie Alphabet* (1992)

Rural prairie life is portrayed through the illustrations of Yvette Moore. The text highlights elements of prairie life for each letter of the alphabet.

Bannatyne-Cugnet, Jo. *A Prairie Year* (1994)

There is a special rhythm about life on a farm on the prairies. Every month brings new chores and special community activities. From planting gardens in the spring to hockey games in the winter, there are always things to do in a rural community during a prairie year. See also *Heartland: A Prairie Sampler* (2002).

Butler, Geoff. *The Killick: A Newfoundland Story* (1995)

A beautiful picture book about a grandfather who shares his memories of fishing and sealing with his grandson.

Butler, Geoff. *Ode to Newfoundland* (2003)

This book contains the provincial anthem of Newfoundland by Sir Cavendish Boyle, supplemented by colourful illustrations showing the sights of the province. Explanations of the paintings are provided.

Choyce, Lesley. (2000). *Far Enough Island*.

A beginner novel about the decline of the fishery in Nova Scotia and the impact it has on a young girl and her family.

Dorion, Betty Fitzpatrick. *Bay Girl* (1998)

Shoal Harbour is going to be shut down and everyone is preparing to move away. A way of life is ending, and just as eleven-year-old Patsy is becoming a real Bay girl.

Lawson, Julie. *Cougar Cove* (1996)

11 year-old Sam travels from Toronto to visit her older cousins on Vancouver Island. She has high expectations for summer in BC – perhaps too high. Her cousins tease her constantly. She is awkward and clumsy and seems to do everything wrong. In order to get away from worsening relationships, she begins to explore her surroundings and comes to love the flora and fauna of the island. She even has a close encounter with a cougar and her two cubs.

LeBox, Annette. *Miracle at Willowcreek* (1998)

An excellent book about Tess, a 12 year-old girl who moves from Toronto to her late grandfather's berry farm in the lower mainland of BC with her mother. Tess has to adjust to new friends and a new school, but she feels right at home watching the birds in the marsh. Tess soon learns that her uncle is behind a development project that threatens the marsh and therefore the homes of the sandhill cranes. She and her new friends (including Sally, a First Nations girl) band together with a wonderful old bird woman named Clara

(and her pet sandhill crane Tabi) to save the cranes. A well-written and compelling book that features a convincing environmental message and weaves information about the First Nations people of the region naturally into the text. See the picture book *Wild Bog Tea* (2001) for another description of this physical region.

McNaughton, Janet. *The Saltbox Sweater* (2001)

Nine-year-old Katie Johnson is afraid that she and her mother will have to leave her Newfoundland home community when the fish plant closes. Instead, the community bands together to support each other and learn new ways to make a living.

Pitt, Steve. *Rain Tonight: a story of Hurricane Hazel* (2004)

In October 1954, Hurricane Hazel tore up the eastern seaboard of the United States and into southern Ontario, causing enormous damage and loss of life. In this mixture of fact and fiction, facts about hurricanes are woven into a story that illustrates the best and worst of human and Mother nature.

Russell, Nancy L.M. *Light the Way Home* (2000)

A novel about Toronto teen Christine who is bored with small town life when she moves to Prince Edward Island with her family. Things change, however, when she becomes involved in a project to save an old lighthouse.

Ruurs, Margriet. *Pacific Alphabet* (2001)

Another alphabet book, this time an excellent examination of the unique landscapes of the Pacific region.

Wallace, Ian. *Duncan's Way* (2000)

When the fisheries close and Duncan's father loses his job, Duncan must think of a way for his family to stay in their Newfoundland community. This is a thought-provoking story about the impact of resources and industries on a community's way of life.

Wilson, Budge. *A Fiddle for Angus* (2001)

Set on Cape Breton Island, this book tells the story of Angus, the youngest child in a very musical family who is determined to master the fiddle and take his place in the family orchestra. The illustrations and the identification of the sounds of the fiddle with the sounds of the sea evoke a strong sense of place.

5.2 Histories and Stories of Ways of Life in Canada

Aboriginal People

Bouchard, David. *The Meaning of Respect* (1994)

A Cree boy is sent to the reserve to learn the meaning of respect from his Moshum (grandfather). He is kept busy hunting, fishing and trapping but soon comes to realize that there are powerful lessons to be learned from his Moshum's relationship with the land.

Bruchac, Joseph. *The Earth Under Sky Bear's Feet* (1995)

A collection of poems about the Big Dipper from a variety of North American First Nations.

Buchan, Bryan. *Copper Sunrise* (1972)

A novel that recounts the tragic consequences of contact between European explorers and the Beothuk of Newfoundland.

King, Thomas. *A Coyote Columbus Story* (1992)

This is a retelling of Columbus' "discovery" of America from an aboriginal perspective, but it is a thoroughly modern version characterized by King's literary style and bright, zany illustrations.

Lewis, Paul Owen. *Storm Boy* (1995)

Picture book rich in the myths and lore of the Northwest coast First Nations.

Seattle, Chief. *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky* (1991)

Paintings by Susan Jeffers accompany the powerful environmental message delivered by Chief Seattle in the 19th century. An effective description of the aboriginal understanding of the relationship between people and the earth.

Wiebe, Rudy. *Hidden Buffalo* (2003)

Sky Running searches for the buffalo his people so desperately need if they are to survive the coming winter, but cannot find any sign of them. When he has a vision that the buffalo are to be found in the lands of his tribe's rivals, he must decide whether or not to risk their lives in the search. The story is based on Wiebe's interpretation of a Cree legend and features paintings by Michael Lonechild.

New France

Carrier, Roch. *The Flying Canoe* (2004)

While it is not, strictly speaking, set in New France, it is a retelling of a classic French-Canadian folktale that originates from this time in Canada's history.

Cook, Lyn. *The Hiding Place* (1990)

Living in New France, Denis and Justine escape from the brutal Mr. Gaudin after they lose their parents and home in a fire. Their only escape is into the Quebec wilderness, where new dangers await them.

Trottier, Maxine. *Alone in an Untamed Land* (2003)

One of the *Dear Canada* series of fictional diaries, this one tells the story of H el ene St. Onge who is sent to New France in 1666 as a *filles   marier*.

The Fur Trade

Demers, Barbara. *Willa's New World* (1999)

Willa is an English orphan whose grandfather smuggles her aboard a vessel heading for Hudson Bay in the 18th century. Because she is clever and literate, she is taken on at the

fort as a clerk but must masquerade as a boy. The opening chapters of the book strain credibility. But the book picks up as we get to know Willa, learn about the work of the fort, and learn about the life of the aboriginal peoples in the region through Amelia, the cook. The book's strength is its depiction of the life of the HBC fort and its honest portrayal of the lives of aboriginal peoples. The conflict between the two cultures is treated with depth. The love story between Willa and George (her supervisor) is less convincing. At the end of the book Willa travels overland with Amelia's relatives to the site of Fort Edmonton.

Bouchard, David. *The Journal of Etienne Mercier* (1998)

A fictional journal of a Hudson Bay Company employee who tours the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1853. Accompanying CD.

Metikosh, Anne. *Terra Incognita* (2000)

In 1670, Madeleine and Philippe Hébert travel from Montreal to Michilimackinac with the help of a coureur de bois, to find their father. A novel that provides interesting insights into the life of the coureur de bois, the relationship between the French and the aboriginal people of the area, the roles of men and women in New France.

Pendziwol, Jean. *The Red Sash* (2005)

A picture book that describes the annual rendezvous- when voyageurs and North West Company representatives met at Fort William on Lake Superior – from the perspective of a young Métis boy.

United Empire Loyalists

Bradford, Karleen. *With Nothing But Our Courage* (2002)

A fictional diary in the *Dear Canada* series. Mary MacDonald keeps a diary to record her family's experience as they flee from New York to Sorel, Quebec.

Goodman, Joan E. *Hope's Crossing* (1998)

During the Revolutionary War, thirteen-year-old Hope, seized by the band of Tories who attack her Connecticut home, finds herself enslaved in a Tory household on Long Island and uses all her resources to escape from her captors and make her way home.

Lunn, Janet. *Charlotte* (1999)

Charlotte's family lives in New York. Her father supports the revolution, but her uncle is a Tory and is taking his family to the British North American colonies to the north. When she visits them one last time to say goodbye, her father questions her loyalty to her family and to the revolutionary cause. The picture book is based on the true experiences of a woman who was the mother of one of New Brunswick's first premiers.

Lunn, Janet. *The Hollow Tree* (1997)

It is 1775 and Phoebe Olcott learns about the horrors of war when her cousin Gideon is hanged for being a British spy. When she finds the secret message he left behind, she feels she must deliver it. Her journey from New Hampshire over the Appalachian mountains and north to Sorel brings her face to face with Indians, wild animals, and

rebels and Loyalists who both have reason to distrust her. Along the way she meets Jem Morrissay, a young Loyalist escaping to British Canada with his family. While she feels a growing attraction to him, she must complete her mission and learn to trust before she can agree to be his wife and settle with him at Hawthorn Bay in Upper Canada.

Turner, Ann. *Katie's Trunk* (1992)

Katie, whose family is loyal to the British during the American Revolutionary War, finds herself vulnerable to the rebels. Just when she is facing personal danger, however, she recognizes that even one's enemies can exercise compassion. A picture book with lovely illustrations.

The Great Migration

Chan, Gillian. *The Carved Box* (2001)

When orphaned Callum arrives in Upper Canada from Scotland his uncle Rory expects a "whey-faced city boy who won't know one end of a cow from another." And that is what he gets. Callum, who quotes Virgil to himself to pass the time, is confronted with hard labour that is almost unbearable. Nevertheless, he survives and prospers. A very good first novel, notable for its evocation of the period following the American revolutionary war and the experience of migration and settlement.

Little, Jean. *The Belonging Place* (1997)

Elspet Mary is orphaned when she is very young so she is sent to live with her aunt's family in Glen Buchan. When her uncle decides to leave Glen Buchan and take the family to Upper Canada, Elspet fears that she will never find a place where she belongs. The voyage overseas was difficult in the 1840s and so was making a life on a new homestead. But in this new land, Elspet learns a lesson about family and belonging.

The North West Mounted Police

Chinese Immigrants

Chan, Gillian. *An Ocean Apart: the Gold Mountain Diary of Chin Mei-ling* (2004)

One of the *Dear Canada* series, this fictional diary is an account of a young Chinese girl's move to Canada in 1922.

Yee, Paul. *Ghost Train* (1996)

An expanded version of the one of the stories in *Tales from Gold Mountain*. A girl discovers the legacy of her father who came to British Columbia to help build the railway.

Yee, Paul. *Roses Sing on New Snow* (1991)

Despite a greedy father and lazy brothers who try to conceal her identity as the real cook in their restaurant, Maylin manages to receive the recognition she deserves when a governor from China comes to a New World Chinatown.

Yee, Paul. *Tales From Gold Mountain* (1989)

A picture book with eight stories about Chinese immigrants and the struggles they faced in Canada.

The Underground Railroad

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* (1993)

Clara is a slave who risks her life by stitching a map of the underground railroad on a quilt and thereby aids the escape of many slaves.

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Under the Quilt of Night* (2001)

A companion to *Sweet Clara*, a series of poems follows the journey of a slave girl along the Underground Railroad.

McKissack, Patricia C. *A Picture of Freedom: the Diary of Clotee, a Slave Girl* (1997)

One of the *Dear America* series, this is the fictional diary of a young slave girl living on a plantation in Virginia in 1859. Provides terrific insights into the life of those living in slavery and the perspectives of those who became members of the Underground Railroad.

Schwartz, Virginia Frances. *If I Just Had Two Wings* (2001)

Phoebe, 13, yearns for freedom as she works in the cotton fields as a slave on an Alabama plantation. Despite her parents' objections, she befriends Liney, 19, the courageous, strong "troublemaker" whose staunch determination to flee with her two children is undaunted, despite one failed attempt. Phoebe discovers coded messages about the Underground Railroad through African-American songs, and Liney, her children, and Phoebe begin their flight north based on these clues. They encounter sympathetic people at different stations and dodge slavecatchers to reach the boat that will take them to Canada, where they will be free. An author's note provides an explanation of sources consulted.

Winter, Jeanette. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* (1992)

By following the directions in a song, "The Drinking Gourd," taught them by an old sailor named Peg Leg Joe, runaway slaves journey north along the Underground Railroad to freedom in Canada.

Indian Immigrants

Gilmore, Rachna. *A Group of One* (2001)

Tara is fifteen and while she is Indo-Canadian, she has always placed more emphasis on being "Canadian" than Indian. When her grandmother comes to visit, however, she learns a lot about her family's history and its connections to India's history. A family history assignment gives her the opportunity to learn about the struggle for Indian independence and the role her grandmother played in the struggle. Tara eventually comes to terms with her heritage but refuses to label herself by her race or her parents' national heritage. She is "a group of one" who values her family, its history and its future in Canada.

Walsh, Ann. *Shabash* (1994)

A novel that details the prejudices facing Sikh children adjusting to life in Canada.

European Immigrants in Western Canada

Alma, Ann. *Skateway to Freedom*, 2nd ed. (1999)

Josie and her family flee East Germany just before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. They settle in Calgary where they have difficulty adjusting to a new life. The novel's characters are drawn well. The father finds learns English easily and is determined to make his new life a success. The mother didn't want to leave her home and is reluctant to learn about life in Canada. Josie is caught in the middle. She finds school a challenge and many of the children make her life more difficult, but she finds escape – and freedom – in figure skating. The book provides good insights into the challenge of adjusting to a new culture and illustrates the kinds of things refugees find unusual about life in Canada.

Ellis, Sarah. *A Prairie as Wide as the Sea* (2002)

A fictional diary in the *Dear Canada* series. In this one, Ivy Weatherall records the events of her family's first year in Milorie, SK in the 1920s.

Jam, Teddy. *The Stoneboat* (1999)

Like many local farmers, Ben's father owes money to the powerful Mr. Richard. Although Mr. Richard has been unfriendly, when Ben sees him clearing a field of stones, the young boy decides to lend a hand. Colorful paintings enhance the mythical quality of the tale. The story illustrates rural life of the 1920s.

Kurelek, William. *They Sought a New World* (1985)

This beautiful history of immigration focuses on 28 paintings drawn from Kurelek's earlier books such as *A Prairie Boy's Winter* (Houghton, 1973) and *Fields* (Tundra, 1976) and from his individual paintings in which he attempted to record the histories of different ethnic groups in North America. Each painting is central to short essays on topics such as "Getting to the new land," "Finding work" and "Holding the family together."

Matas, Carol. *Footsteps in the Snow* (2002)

One in the *Dear Canada* series of fictional diaries, this is the diary of Isobel Scott, a young girl who comes with her family to settle in the new colony of Red River in 1815.

McGugan, Jim. *Josepha* (1994)

An immigrant boy is forced to leave his schooling behind to help the family make ends meet. A lovely picture book.

Reynolds, Marilyn. *The New Land: a first year on the prairie* (1997)

Based on her own family's experience, Reynolds provides an excellent look at the experience of a family who travels from Europe to western Canada to make a new home.

Skrypuch, Martha. *Silver Threads* (1996)

A picture book about Ukrainian-Canadians during World War One, who were branded enemy aliens and interned.

Toten, Teresa. *Onlyhouse* (1995)

Lucy Vakovik and her mother have just moved into their first house, an “onlyhouse” that even has its own backyard. Lucy hopes this is just the first step in fitting in at her new school and making new friends. Unfortunately, things don’t go quite so smoothly for Lucy whose peers don’t have foreign mothers. This is a very funny novel that offers important insights into the adjustments immigrant children make (and don’t make) in order to define themselves.

Trotter, Maxine. *Prairie Willow* (1998)

A well-illustrated picture book that follows the story of a family on the prairies from settlement to World War One.

5.3 Canada: Shaping an Identity Confederation

The Canadian Pacific Railway

Lawson, Julie. *A Ribbon of Shining Steel* (2002)

One in the *Dear Canada* series of fictional diaries, this one by Kate Cameron (whose father is a bridge foreman for the CPR) provides insights into the challenges of building the railway through the Rockies.

Lawson, Julie. *White Jade Tiger* (1993)

Novel set in Victoria and the Fraser Canyon of the 1880s. It tells about the building of the C.P.R. and the lives of Chinese immigrants.

Famous Five

Crook, Connie Brummel. *Nellie L.* (1994)

Ten-year-old Nellie Mooney is constantly frustrated by the limitations of being a girl. As she grows up, she cannot help but hope for a life different than that of a housewife and work toward equal rights for men and women. See also *Nellie’s Quest* (1998) and *Nellie’s Victory* (1999), both of which continue the story of Nellie McClung.

World War One

Little, Jean. *Brothers Far From Home* (2003)

One in the *Dear Canada* series of fictional diaries, this one by Eliza Bates outlines the impact the war had on many families in Canada.

McKay, Sharon E. *Charlie Wilcox* (2000)

An exciting young adult novel about a boy who overcomes his disability and matures when he finds himself overseas with the Newfoundland Regiment during World War One. See also *Charlie Wilcox's Great War* (2003).

McKay, Sharon E. *Penelope: Terror in the Harbour* (2001)

One in the *Our Canadian Girls* series, this is the first book in a series about Penelope who lives in Halifax with her family during World War One. The first book provides some insight into life on the home front during the war and tells the story of the Halifax explosion. Though the reading level will be easy for many students at this level, the series will appeal to many girls.

Skrypuch, Martha. *Silver Threads* (1996)

An interesting picture book that deals with the internment of Ukrainian-Canadians during World War One.

Great Depression

Booth, David. *The Dust Bowl* (1996)

A grandfather reminisces about the Great Depression when the family faces another farm crisis.

Friedrichs, Elizabeth. *Leah's Pony* (1996)

A young girl's courage and ingenuity saves the family farm and inspires a community during the Great Depression. This is set on the prairies in the U.S., but is an incredibly powerful book about experiences that were common across North America.

Harris, Dorothy Joan. *Ellen: Hobo Jungle* (2002)

One of the *Our Canadian Girl* series, this is the first book about Ellen, who lives in Vancouver. The story provides an interesting perspective on life in a large urban center during the Great Depression.

World War II

Kacer, Kathy. *Margit: Home Free* (2003)

One in the *Our Canadian Girl* series, this is the first story about Margit, a Jewish girl from Czechoslovakia, who comes to Canada as a refugee in 1944.

Kawaga, Joy. *Naomi's Road* (1986)

A family is moved from Vancouver to an internment camp near Slocan, B.C. (Based on the adult novel, *Obasan*, by same author.)

Manson, Ainslie. *Just Like New* (1995)

Despite food shortages and her father's battle injury, nothing makes a real impact on Sally until the morning her Sunday School teacher announces "White Gift Sunday." The students are asked to bring in a present that will be sent to a needy child in war-torn England. The gift should be in good condition, but not be newly bought, and it should be something the donor loves. Sally surprises herself by deciding to contribute one of her

three precious dolls. Her difficult choice, and her feelings as she wraps the beloved doll and sends it off with a note so the new owner will know its name, are realistically portrayed.

Matas, Carol. *Turned Away: the World War II Diary of Devorah Bernstein* (2005)

Trottier, Maxine. *Flags* (1999)

A young girl vows to remember the legacy of her Japanese-Canadian neighbour, even though he has been taken to an internment camp.

Wilson, Budge. *Izzie: the Christmas that Almost Wasn't* (2002)

One of the *Our Canadian Girls* series. The year is 1941, and with soldiers, sailors, and ships crowding into nearby Halifax, World War II seems especially close at hand. But this year, despite the war and rationing, Izzie's grandparents, aunt, uncles, and cousins are coming to spend the holiday. When a terrible storm threatens to spoil everything, Izzie is bound and determined to save Christmas for everyone.

Post World War II

Alma, Ann. *Skateway to Freedom*, 2nd ed. (1999)

Josie and her family flee East Germany just before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. They settle in Calgary where they have difficulty adjusting to a new life. The novel's characters are drawn well. The father finds learns English easily and is determined to make his new life a success. The mother didn't want to leave her home and is reluctant to learn about life in Canada. Josie is caught in the middle. She finds school a challenge and many of the children make her life more difficult, but she finds escape – and freedom – in figure skating. The book provides good insights into the challenge of adjusting to a new culture and illustrates the kinds of things refugees find unusual about life in Canada.

Toten, Teresa. *Onlyhouse* (1995)

Lucy Vakovik and her mother have just moved into their first house, an “onlyhouse” that even has its own backyard. Lucy hopes this is just the first step in fitting in at her new school and making new friends. Unfortunately, things don't go quite so smoothly for Lucy whose peers don't have foreign mothers. This is a very funny novel that offers important insights into the adjustments immigrant children make (and don't make) in order to define themselves.

GRADE SIX

6.1 Citizens Participating in Decision Making

Democracy

Blos, Joan W. *Old Henry* (1987)

Old Henry buys a ramshackle house and begins to feel right at home in his new neighbourhood. His new neighbours keep waiting for him to fix up the house and try to convince him of the importance of fitting in. Eventually Henry decides to move away if he can't live a life he is happy with. Henry and his neighbours regret his decision and eventually try to reach some kind of compromise. A thought-provoking book that can spark a discussion about the extent to which our property is our own.

Swope Sam. *The Araboolies of Liberty Street* (1989)

In a style reminiscent of Dr. Seuss, this picture book examines the issues of individualism and conformity. The irreverent approach and colourful illustrations only add to its thought-provoking message.

Government

Hughes, Monica. *The Other Place* (1999)

The Other Place is set in a not-too-distant future world, one in which pre-teen Alison and her family have just been charged with crimes of subversion against the all-powerful World Government. Banished to a penal colony in the anonymous Habitat W, they join the shadowy ranks of the “disappeareds.” When Alison’s brother Billy escapes from their prison, Alison begins to discover “the other place”—and a new hope for the future. A terrific way to talk about the purpose of government and the nature of communal decision-making.

The Justice System

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Making a Difference

Fleischman, Paul. *Seedfolks* (1997)

A short novel on the theme of citizenship and making a difference, this book tells the story about the people of an urban community who transform their inner-city trash-filled lot into a garden and in the process are themselves transformed.

6.2 Historical Models of Democracy: Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy

Denenberg, Barry. *The Life and Times: Pandora of Athens, 399 B.C.* (2004)

Pandora is trapped in the roles laid out for Greek women by her narrow-minded father. Much to her despair, she is engaged to marry a man more than twice her age, so that Pandora waits with dread for her fourteenth birthday, when she'll be old enough to marry. But one day, when Pandora goes to fetch water, she meets the Wise One, who is also called Socrates, and what he tells her changes her life. During his famed trial, Pandora finds herself caught up in the intrigue and turbulent politics of ancient Athens.

Galloway, Priscilla. *The Courtesan's Daughter* (2002)

From humble beginnings, Phano rises to become one of ancient Athens' most powerful citizens through her marriage to Theo, but they both have powerful enemies who don't share their political views.

Taylor, C.J. *Peace Walker* (2004)

Mohawk author and illustrator Taylor gathered information from elders to create this version of the legend of Hiawatha and Tekanawita and the creation of the Confederacy of Five Nations.

GRADE SEVEN

7.1 Toward Confederation

Aboriginal Cultures Before European Contact

Aboriginal and European Contact

Buchan, Bryan. *Copper Sunrise* (1972)

A novel that recounts the tragic consequences of contact between European explorers and the Beothuk of Newfoundland.

Clark, Joan. *The Dream Carvers* (1995)

The Dream Carvers tells the story of Thrand, a Norse boy in the 11th century who is captured by the Beothuk. At first he is frightened and struck by the differences between him and the people among whom he must make his home. Slowly he adjusts to life among the Beothuk and comes to feel a sense of belonging.

New France

Cook, Lyn. *The Hiding Place* (1990)

Living in New France, Denis and Justine escape from the brutal Mr. Gaudin after they lose their parents and home in a fire. Their only escape is into the Quebec wilderness, where new dangers await them.

Martel, Suzanne. *The King's Daughter* (1992)

Describes life in New France from the point of view of a recently arrived *filles du roi*.

McKay, Sharon. *Esther* (2004)

Based on fact, this novel tells the story of Esther Brandeau, a young Jewish girl living in France who disguised herself as a boy and fled to New France to escape wrongful punishment for theft. Highly recommended.

Trottier, Maxine. *Alone in an Untamed Land* (2003)

One of the *Dear Canada* series of diaries, this one tells the story of H el ene St. Onge who is sent to New France in 1666 as a *fille   marier*.

Trottier, Maxine. *Sister to the Wolf* (2004)

In the early years of the 18th century, Robert Chesne and his daughter C ecile travel to Cadillac's newly-established fur trade fort at D etroit. Accompanying them is Lesharo, a Pawnee enslaved by the French but purchased and set free by C ecile. The novel includes little information about the fur trade or French settlement, but offers interesting insights into the complex relationships among the French and aboriginals as they interacted in these years.

British Exploration and Settlement in North America

Trottier, Maxine. *A Circle of Silver* (1999)

It is 1760 and Lord McNeil decides to make a man out of his young son John by sending him to be a cartographer in Canada's wilderness. The first in a trilogy, this story provides

some insights into life on the frontier and relationships among the English, French and aboriginal people. The family's story continues in *By the Standing Stone* (2000) and *Under a Shooting Star* (2001).

Fur Trade

Demers, Barbara. *Willa's New World* (1999)

Willa is an English orphan whose grandfather smuggles her aboard a vessel heading for Hudson Bay in the 18th century. Because she is clever and literate, she is taken on at the fort as a clerk but must masquerade as a boy. The opening chapters of the book strain credibility. But the book picks up as we get to know Willa, learn about the work of the fort, and learn about the life of the aboriginal peoples in the region through Amelia, the cook. The book's strength is its depiction of the life of the HBC fort and its honest portrayal of the lives of aboriginal peoples. The conflict between the two cultures is treated with depth. The love story between Willa and George (her supervisor) is less convincing. At the end of the book Willa travels overland with Amelia's relatives to the site of Fort Edmonton.

Bouchard, David. *The Journal of Etienne Mercier* (1998)

A fictional journal of a Hudson Bay Company employee who tours the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1853. Accompanying CD.

Metikosh, Anne. *Terra Incognita* (2000)

In 1670, Madeleine and Philippe Hébert travel from Montreal to Michilimackinac with the help of a coureur de bois, to find their father. A novel that provides interesting insights into the life of the coureur de bois, the relationship between the French and the aboriginal people of the area, the roles of men and women in New France.

Thompson, Margaret. *Eyewitness* (2000)

Thompson offers a powerfully moving and historically accurate account of life in Fort St. James, in northern British Columbia, in the 1820s. Through the character of Peter, a young boy who is orphaned at the Fort, Thompson presents a vivid picture of the difficult life for both the fur traders and the Natives in what was then called the "Siberia" of the fur trade. Lonely and unsure of himself, Peter finds himself an "eyewitness" to a murder which threatens to destroy the good relations between the Company and the Carrier people. Through his friendship with the nephew of Chief Kwah of the Carrier, Peter comes to understand and sympathize with the Carrier culture, learning much about tolerance, compromise and acceptance, but also about the difficulties that divided loyalties can bring. Thompson also offers an innovative view of the role of women in the fur trade, painting a fascinating picture of the young James Douglas and his wife Amelia in the confrontation with Chief Kwah.

British-French Conflict in North America

Carter, Anne. *The Girl on Evangeline Beach* (2000)

Michael Denshaw's life is hanging in the balance. After a severe beating by thugs at school, his body is left broken and bleeding on an abandoned set of railroad tracks. As he slips into a coma, he finds himself in Nova Scotia, in a time just before the deportation of

the Acadians. There, he meets a beautiful girl named Marie, and begins to fall in love with her. Life seems idyllic, but Michael knows that tragedy looms; he has encountered Marie before -- as a ghost on a lonely stretch of beach back in his own time.

Downie, Mary Alice and Downie, John. *Danger in Disguise* (2000)

A father and son flee the Highlands of Scotland for France. They end up on the Plains of Abraham in 1759.

Kositsky, Lynne. *Claire by Moonlight* (2005)

Set in 18th century, Acadia, this novel tells the story of Claire and the members of her family as they struggle with British occupation and their eventual expulsion from their homeland. The romantic subplot and sexual themes may make this novel inappropriate for some readers.

Stewart, Sharon. *Banished from Our Home: the Acadian Diary of Angélique Richard* (2004)

One of the *Dear Canada* series of fictional diaries, this one highlights the perspective of Acadian residents of Grand Pré just before the expulsion.

Trottier, Maxine. *The Death of My Country: the Plains of Abraham Diary of Genevieve Aubuchon* (2005)

One of the *Dear Canada* series of fictional diaries. Genevieve and her older brother, Chegual, were the sole survivors of a raid on their Abenaki village. They were rescued and brought to Quebec, where they were taken in by a childless couple, the apothecary and his wife. Genevieve eventually became more French than Abenaki following her education by the nuns, but her brother never adjusted and eventually left. Now Genevieve is twelve and the year is 1759. A war rages between France and England over control of some of the North American colonies, and Genevieve finds her peaceful life changing in many ways when the city of Quebec is put under siege by the British. Her brother returns to the city with his best friend, only for them to go off to battle to defend Quebec with other Indian allies.

The American Revolutionary War and the Loyalists

Bradford, Karleen. *With Nothing But Our Courage* (2002)

A fictional diary in the *Dear Canada* series. Mary MacDonald keeps a diary to record her family's experience as they flee from New York to Sorel, Quebec.

Collier, James. *My Brother Sam is Dead* (1974)

An American novel that has been reprinted several times, this is the story of Tim who is caught between his brother who has been caught up in the Patriot cause during the American Revolutionary War, and his father who is loyal to the British. It is an interesting look at the war because it illustrates the extent to which this war divided families and communities, and details the impact war has on those civilians who strove to stay neutral.

Crook, Connie Brummel. *The Hungry Year* (2001)

Since her mother's death and the escape to Canada, 12-year-old Kate has kept house and looked after her brothers. Now it is the winter of 1787. The harvest was poor and her father does not return from a trip to find food. Kate must care for her family as they desperately try to survive. The story of the family's life in Upper Canada continues in *The Perilous Year* (2003).

Goodman, Joan E. *Hope's Crossing* (1998)

During the Revolutionary War, thirteen-year-old Hope, seized by the band of Tories who attack her Connecticut home, finds herself enslaved in a Tory household on Long Island and uses all her resources to escape from her captors and make her way home.

Lunn, Janet. *Charlotte* (1999)

Charlotte's family lives in New York. Her father supports the revolution, but her uncle is a Tory and is taking his family to the British North American colonies to the north. When she visits them one last time to say goodbye, her father questions her loyalty to her family and to the revolutionary cause. The picture book is based on the true experiences of a woman who was the mother of one of New Brunswick's first premiers.

Lunn, Janet. *The Hollow Tree* (1997)

It is 1775 and Phoebe Olcott learns about the horrors of war when her cousin Gideon is hanged for being a British spy. When she finds the secret message he left behind, she feels she must deliver it. Her journey from New Hampshire over the Appalachian mountains and north to Sorel brings her face to face with Indians, wild animals, and rebels and Loyalists who both have reason to distrust her. Along the way she meets Jem Morrissay, a young Loyalist escaping to British Canada with his family. While she feels a growing attraction to him, she must complete her mission and learn to trust before she can agree to be his wife and settle with him at Hawthorn Bay in Upper Canada.

Trottier, Maxine. *By the Standing Stone* (2000)

The second in a trilogy about the McNeil family. In this novel, when Mack and Jamie MacNeil are kidnapped by the sinister Ben Sparks, a dangerous adventure is set in motion. Forced to travel through the North American wilderness on the eve of the American Revolution, Mack and Jamie's very lives are on the line. As they try to thwart the evil that stalks them, they meet many brave allies, participate in thrilling political intrigue, and even find love.

Turner, Ann. *Katie's Trunk* (1992)

Katie, whose family is loyal to the British during the American Revolutionary War, finds herself vulnerable to the rebels. Just when she is facing personal danger, however, she recognizes that even one's enemies can exercise compassion. A picture book with lovely illustrations.

War of 1812

Ibbotson, John. *Jeremy's War: 1812* (2000)

A reprint of *1812: Jeremy and the General*. Jeremy Fields is 15 when his mother dies. His father is already dead and his uncle cheats him out of the family farm. He doesn't have much choice but to join the army which at least promises him pay and food to eat. Soon he finds himself at war and he is batman to General Brock. He accompanies Brock during the seizure of Fort Detroit and at the end to the Battle of Queenston Heights. Along the way he learns about life, honesty and character. He learns that war makes even the best of men do bad things. The book's premise is rather far-fetched, but there is good historical detail in the battle scenes and interesting insights about life in the British army.

Pearson, Kit. *Whispers of War: the War of 1812 Diary of Susanna Merritt* (2002)

One of the *Dear Canada* series of fictional diaries, this one details the home front and battle front experiences of Susanna Merritt and the members of her family as they struggle to survive the War of 1812. The diary provides interesting insights into the perspectives of pro-British and pro-American settlers in Upper Canada.

Sutherland, Robert. *A River Apart* (2000)

Jamie Shaw comes from a Loyalist family that settled on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence River after the American War of Independence. His best friends, Jared and Leah Jackson, live near Ogdensburg, New York. They have always traveled across the river freely and visited each other often, but now the onset of the War of 1812 makes enemies of former friends. Jared joins the militia as a drummer at the urging of his father. Jamie and his father join the Canadian militia when it becomes a matter of defending their home from American invasion.

Trottier, Maxine. *Under a Shooting Star* (2001)

The third in a trilogy about the McNeil family, this is an adventure novel set during the War of 1812. Fifteen-year-old Edward MacNeil, half English, half Oneida Indian, is charged with escorting two American girls, ages 12 and 15, from Fort George to their home in Sandusky, OH. When their ship sinks during a storm on Lake Erie, they make it to an island, where they meet a Native American who is at first reluctant to associate with the three survivors but later befriends them. The war interferes with the journey home several times. Compounding matters are Edward's conflicted feelings; he is torn between his British and Native heritages and his affection for his American friends.

Walters, Eric. *The Bully Boys* (2000)

Tom Roberts is 14, too young to join his father in the militia during the War of 1812. However, when he stumbles across some American soldiers trying to rob a local general store, his quick-thinking save the day and the life of Lieutenant James FitzGibbon (leader of the unit called the Green Tigers or the Bully Boys). FitzGibbon takes Tom under his wing in order to protect him, but he soon takes advantage of Tom's knowledge of the local countryside and gets him involved in a number of adventures. Tom is impressed by

FitzGibbon's heroics, but also learns just how horrifying war can be. The novel ends with the Battle of Beaver Dams.

Great Migration

Chan, Gillian. *The Carved Box* (2001)

When orphaned Callum arrives in Upper Canada from Scotland his uncle Rory expects a "whey-faced city boy who won't know one end of a cow from another." And that is what he gets. Callum, who quotes Virgil to himself to pass the time, is confronted with hard labour that is almost unbearable. Nevertheless, he survives and prospers. A very good first novel, notable for its evocation of the period following the American revolutionary war and the experience of migration and settlement.

Johnston, Julie. *Susanna's Quill* (2004)

This is a fictionalized account of the life of Susanna Moodie, focusing on the beginning of her career as a writer and the challenges of her adjustment to life in Upper Canada.

Lunn, Janet. *Shadow in Hawthorn Bay* (1986)

Born in the same week in the Highlands of Scotland, Mary Urquhart and her cousin Duncan had always had a unique bond. It was difficult to adjust when Duncan and his family left the Highlands for Upper Canada. But after four years, Mary (with her gift of "second sight") hears Duncan calling for her. She makes the dangerous journey overseas and arrives in Upper Canada (Hawthorn Bay) only to discover that Duncan has died and the rest of the family returned to Scotland. She is taken in by the settlers in the area who like her spirit but mistrust her special gift. Mary herself is haunted by Duncan's voice that seems to be calling her from the other side. Only when she discovers that he drowned himself and calls on his spirit to live in peace does she come to terms with her loss and recognize the possibilities a new land offers her.

Confederation

7.2 Following Confederation: Canadian Expansions

Red River Resistance

Bayle, B.J. *Battle Cry at Batoche* (2000)

Set during the 1885 North West Rebellion rather than in Red River, this novel is valuable nonetheless for providing a fictional account of those involved in this conflict.

Canadian Pacific Railway

Lawson, Julie. *A Ribbon of Shining Steel* (2002)

One in the *Dear Canada* series of fictional diaries, this one by Kate Cameron (whose father is a bridge foreman for the CPR) provides insights into the challenges of building the railway through the Rockies.

Lawson, Julie. *White Jade Tiger* (1993)

Novel set in Victoria and the Fraser Canyon of the 1880s. It tells about the building of the C.P.R. and the lives of Chinese immigrants.

North West Mounted Police

Immigration and the Growth of the West

Bright, Elizabeth. *Lambs of Hell's Gate* (2001)

Mui travels from China and then up the Fraser Canyon in search of her brother.

Chan, Gillian. *An Ocean Apart: the Gold Mountain Diary of Chin Mei-ling* (2004)

One of the *Dear Canada* series, this fictional diary is an account of a young Chinese girl's move to Canada in 1922.

Ellis, Sarah. *A Prairie as Wide as the Sea* (2002)

A fictional diary in the *Dear Canada* series. In this one, Ivy Weatherall records the events of her family's first year in Milorie, SK.

Valgardson, W.D. *Frances* (2000)

Frances finds an old journal at the family homestead in Manitoba. Much to her disappointment, it is written in Icelandic. Despite warnings from her mother and grandmother not to pry into the past, Frances finds an old man in the local old folks' home to translate it into English. Slowly the (partial) story of her great-great grandmother Ingibjorg comes out. Along the way Frances begins to discover her own gift of "second sight," or as Icelanders refer to it, "being born under the glacier." There may be too much about Icelandic superstitions and folklore that has to be explained but it is an entertaining novel with a good message about the importance of learning about our families' histories.

Yee, Paul. *Ghost Train* (1996)

An expanded version of the one of the stories in *Tales from Gold Mountain*. A girl discovers the legacy of her father who came to British Columbia to help build the railway.

Yee, Paul. *Tales From Gold Mountain* (1989)

A picture book with eight stories about Chinese immigrants and the struggles they faced in Canada.

Newfoundland and Confederation

Changing Roles of Women

Carter, Anne Laurel. *Last Chance Bay* (2004)

Thirteen-year-old Meg wants to become a pilot more than anything in the world, except that in Cape Breton in the 1940s, this was not a realistic ambition. This novel explores traditional and changing attitudes toward women and courage of those who sought change.

Vasquez, Diana. *Hannah* (1999)

Life is hard for everyone in the coal mining towns around Pictou, Nova Scotia in the 1850s. Eleven-year-old Hannah's father was killed in the mine and her mother is very ill. She is determined to help her family survive, so masquerades as a boy in order to get a job in the mine. But how long can she deceive her friends and coworkers?

Urbanization and Industrialization in Canada

Barkhouse, Joyce. *Pit Pony* (1990)

Gives a portrayal of life in a company mining town in Cape Breton.

Doyle, Brian. *Mary Ann Alice* (2001)

Describes loss of farmland on Gatineau River due to damming for hydro-electric power.

Freeman, Bill. *Trouble at Lachine Mill* (1983)

Child labour replaces striking workers in a Montreal shirt factory in the 1870s. Historical photographs.

Gaetz, Dayle Campbell. *Living Freight* (1998)

Orphaned girl leaves 60-hour work week in English mill to move to colony of British Columbia, where she works for the family of James Douglas.

GRADE EIGHT

8.1 From Isolation to Adaptation: Japan

Before Edo

Haugaard, Erik. *The Boy and the Samurai* (1991)

Set during the civil wars of the 16th century (the period immediately preceding the Tokugawa Shogunate), this novel recounts the experiences of Saru, an orphaned boy trying to survive difficult and dangerous circumstances. The plot moves slowly, but the time and location are described thoroughly. This is a sequel to *The Samurai's Tale* (1984).

Namioka, Lensey. *The Samurai and the Long-Nosed Devils* (1975; 2004)

In 16th century Japan, two samurai who are out of work agree to act as bodyguards for a Portuguese monk and his companion. They are drawn into a mystery when one of the Portuguese is suspected of murdering a hostile Japanese warlord. Other mysteries featuring Zenta and Matsuko include *Village of the Vampire Cat*, *Valley of the Broken Cherry Trees*, *Den of the White Fox* and *Island of Ogres*. Written in the 1970s, the books in the series have recently been reprinted.

Edo Japan: the Tokugawa Shogunate

Hoobler, D. & Hoobler, T. *The Ghost in the Tokaido Inn* (1999)

A mystery novel set in early 18th century Japan. Fourteen year-old Seikei is the son of a tea merchant but wants nothing more than to be a samurai. When he witnesses a robbery in an inn on the road between Kyoto and Edo, he becomes the helpful servant of the famous samurai magistrate Judge Ooka and is given the chance to prove his bravery and loyalty. *Demon in the Teahouse* (2002) and *In Darkness, Death* (2004) continue the adventures of Seikei and Judge Ooka.

Paterson, Katherine. *The Master Puppeteer* (1975; 1989)

Young Jiro has decided to become an apprentice puppeteer in order to help feed his parents during a famine in 18th century Osaka. He soon discovers a mysterious connection between his master and Saburo, a bandit who robs the rich to feed the poor. An interesting mystery with a fascinating inside look at the ancient art of puppetry.

Meiji Japan

Lasky, Kathryn. *Kazunomiya: Prisoner of Heaven* (2004)

This is one in Scholastic's series of fictional *Royal Diaries*. Though set in 1858 (before the Meiji period), this diary of the Princess Kazunomiya discusses the impact of contact with the United States on Japan and its royal court.

8.2 Origins of a Western Worldview: Renaissance Europe

Avi. *Midnight Magic* (1999)

A fast-paced mystery novel that features a clever young servant and his magician master who must discover whether a ghost is really haunting the princess of a fictional Italian kingdom called Pergamontio in 1491.

Blackwood, Gary. *The Shakespeare Stealer* (2001)

Probably a little easy for Grade Eight readers, the strong mystery and adventure story will convince reluctant readers that Elizabethan England was interesting. The novel tells the story of a fourteen year-old orphan from Yorkshire who is sent to London to steal the manuscript for Shakespeare's Hamlet. There are more in the series.

Cheaney, J.B. *The Playmaker* (2000)

Young Richard Malory has come to London in search of his father. He is convinced to audition for the Lord Chamberlain's Men, a theatre troupe that includes Will Shakespeare. An engaging mystery story with excellent period detail. See also *The True Prince* (2002).

Cooper, Susan. *King of Shadows* (1999)

A young American actor is traveling to perform in the rebuilt Globe Theater in London when he wakes up in the middle of Elizabethan London at rehearsals at the original Shakespeare's Globe. An interesting time travel novel that allows the modern character to comment on interesting elements of 17th century life. Highly recommended.

Kernaghan, Eileen. *The Alchemist's Daughter* (2004)

The enchantment and mystery of Renaissance Elizabethan England and the threat of the Spanish Armada serve as the backdrop for this tale of natural magic, alchemy and scrying (ie. crystal-gazing).

Konigsburg, E.L. *The Second Mrs. Giaconda* (1975; 1998)

In 1490, Leonardo da Vinci takes on an apprentice called Salai. This novel, narrated by Salai, describes Leonardo's work, his thought, and his relationship with Beatrice d'Este, the Duchess of Milan. It explains the mystery behind the Mona Lisa.

Meyer, Carolyn. *Isabel: Jewel of Castilla* (2000)

One in the *Royal Diaries* series, this is the fictional diary of Princess Isabel, the fourteen-year-old daughter of King Enrique of Spain. It provides some insight into the perspective of 15th century Spanish nobility and the use of royal daughters as political pawns.

Meyer, Carolyn. *Mary, Bloody Mary* (2001)

The first in the *Young Royals* series, this novel tells the story of the teen years of Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and sister to Elizabeth. The others in the series include *Beware Princess Elizabeth* (2002), *Doomed Queen Anne* (2004) and *Patience, Princess Catherine* (2004). Each brings an interesting perspective on Tudor England.

Shoup, Barbara. *Vermeer's Daughter* (2003)

Vermeer and his ever-increasing family live in his mother-in-law's house in the Papist corner of Delft. Tanneke, the cook, prepares broodjes and hutsepot, and poses for her master. His patron, Van Ruijven, eagerly awaits each commissioned work. Verifiable information about the artist's home life is sketchy, so Shoup has fleshed it out into a warm, compelling story, creating a loving, but chaotic household for her narrator, a

fictional middle daughter, Carelina. Aware of her stern grandmother's preference for her sisters, lovely Maria and pious Elizabeth, Carelina slips out of the house to visit her adored father in his studio. As she learns to grind pigments and peers through his magical camera obscura, she listens to him discussing philosophy and religion with the great men of his time. She puzzles over the ideas, but is more concerned with the people who make up her world. When she has a surprise encounter with an old friend of her father's, she discovers the artist within herself. In this book, the smells and tastes of delicious Dutch food, the bustle and excitement of the Grand Market Square, and the luminous glory of Vermeer's masterpieces are brought vividly to life.

Trottier, Maxine. *The Paint Box* (2003)

A picture book that tells the story of the daughter of the Venetian painter Tintoretto who dresses as a boy in order to roam the city and sketch.

8.3 Worldviews in Conflict: The Spanish and the Aztecs

Burr, Claudia. *Broken Shields* (1997)

This unusual book relates the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs, using centuries old words and illustrations. The text is adapted from Friar de Sahagun's 16th-century history of New Spain. In simple, elegant language, it tells how the Spaniards appeared one year "where the sky joins the sea." The straightforward narrative, derived from accounts of Aztec witnesses, has a subtly lamenting tone, effectively set off by blunt descriptions of tragic events. The illustrations are drawn from another historical volume, presumably painted by natives, and inventively adapted for this book.

Mathews, Sally. *The Sad Night* (1994)

Mathews neatly distills the intricate details of the last battle in which the Aztecs defeated the Spanish, observing that there were many casualties on both sides, and that the victors "did not know that this was the last battle they would win." Inspired by the few Aztec codices that survived the Spanish conquest, Mathews's dynamic ink and electric-hued watercolor art plays a strong role in the telling of this intriguing story. Endnotes succinctly encapsulate the rise and fall of the Aztec empire, and a brief discussion of Aztec symbols and calendars includes striking examples.