



Recommended Native Literature for Youth Reading Circles

The following are a few of the many books for young people by Native authors.

For further recommendations, visit the following Web sites:

The American Indian Library Association (www.ailanet.org)

Oyate (www.oyate.org)

American Indians in Children's Literature (americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com)

High School

Alexie, Sherman (Spokane/Coeur d'Alene). *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. Little, Brown, 2007.

A humorous and sometimes poignant story of a young basketball-playing cartoonist who finds meaning by attending high school off his reservation.

Alexie, Sherman (Spokane/Coeur d'Alene). *Smoke Signals*. Hyperion, 1998.

A screenplay based on the short story "This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona," from Alexie's collection of contemporary short stories, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. Also available on film.

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WE SHALL REMAIN

Carlson, Lori Marie (ed.). *Moccasin Thunder: American Indian Stories for Today*. HarperCollins, 2005.

Ten short stories about contemporary Native teens by prominent Native authors, including Sherman Alexie, Joseph Bruchac, Louise Erdrich, Joy Harjo, Linda Hogan, and Cynthia Leitich Smith.

Erdrich, Louise (Ojibwe). *Love Medicine*. Harper Perennial, 2001.

Interrelated stories told in multiple voices about four Anishinabe families on a North Dakota reservation.

Hirschfelder, Arlene B. and Beverly R. Singer (Santa Clara Pueblo) (eds.) *Rising Voices: Writings of Young Native Americans*. Random House, 1993.

Through over 60 poems, songs, stories and short essays, young Native Americans tell about their families, cultures, communities, and hopes for the future.

Seals, David (Huron). *The Powwow Highway*. Penguin, 1990.

Two Cheyenne men take a hilarious road trip from Montana's Lame Deer Reservation to New Mexico. Film adaptation also available.

Silko, Leslie Marmon (Laguna). *Ceremony*. Penguin, 1986.

Deeply scarred by his experience as a prisoner of war during World War II, Tayo finds peace through the healing ceremonies of his Laguna Pueblo community.

Taylor, Drew Hayden (Ojibwe). *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*. Annick Press, 2007.

Sixteen year old Tiffany's life changes when her father rents her room to a mysterious guest who turns out to be an ancient vampire returning to his tribal home.

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Middle School

Bruchac, Joseph (Abenaki). *Heart of a Chief*. Penguin, 2001.

An eleven-year-old Penacook boy becomes a leader when he convinces his school to stop using an Indian name for its sports team and helps resolve a controversy surrounding plans for a casino on a tribal island in his community.

Bruchac, Joseph. (Abenaki). *Hidden Roots*. 2004.

Through a friendship with a school librarian, eleven-year-old Sonny finds the courage to stand up to his abusive father and discovers a chilling secret about his family's heritage.

Erdrich, Louise (Ojibwe). *The Birchbark House*. Hyperion, 2002.

Chronicles the daily life of Omakayas, a seven-year-old Ojibwe girl, and her extended family on an island in Lake Superior in 1847.

Erdrich, Lousie (Ojibwe). *The Game of Silence*. HarperTrophy, 2006.

This sequel to *The Birchbark House* continues the story of Omakayas and her family.

Medicine Crow, Joseph (Crow) and Herman Viola. *Counting Coup: Becoming a Crow Chief on the Reservation and Beyond*. National Geographic, 2006.

This memoir offers an introduction to Crow culture through stories about family, community, and being a soldier.

Smith, Cynthia Leitich (Muscogee). *Rain is Not My Indian Name*. Harper Collins, 2001.

After the death of her best friend, a 14-year-old girl uses her talent as a photographer to cover events at her aunt's Indian camp.

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Tingle, Tim (Choctaw). *Walking the Choctaw Road: Stories from Red People Memory*. Cinco Puntos Press, 2003.

A collection of twelve stories of the Choctaw people, including contemporary stories, traditional tales, and historical accounts.

Tohe, Laura (Navajo). *No Parole Today*. West End Press, 1999.

A memoir in prose and poetry tells about the joys and sorrows of boarding school life.

Elementary School (Picture Books)

Campbell, Nicola I. *Shi-shi-etko*. (Interior Salish/Métis). Groundwood, 2005.

Before leaving her family to attend a boarding school, Shi-shi-etko spends her last few days at home gathering memories from her world.

Lacapa, Kathleen (Mohawk) and Michael Lacapa (Apahe/Hopi/Tewa). *Less Than Half, More than Whole*. Northland, 1994.

A child of mixed heritage learns that, like the corn, ‘he is not less than half; he is more than whole.’

Kusugak, Michal Arvaarluk (Inuit). *Northern Lights: The Soccer Trails*. Annick Press, 2003.

When Kataujaq’s mother dies, her grandmother helps her cope with her grief as they watch the Northern Lights.

Messinger, Carla (Lenape) with Susan Katz. *When the Shadbush Blooms*. Tricycle Press, 2007.

Two Lenape girls—one from the past and one from the present—live through the cycle of the seasons.

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Ortiz, Simon (Acoma). *The Good Rainbow Road*. University of Arizona Press, 2004.

Written in Keresan, Spanish, and English, this epic skit tells the story of how two courageous boys save their village.

Savageau, Cheryl (Abenaki). *Muskrat Will Be Swimming*. Tilbury House, 2006.

When schoolmates tease Jeannie and call her a “Lake Rat,” her grandfather tells her a Seneca story that helps restore Jeannie’s pride in her heritage.

Smith, Cynthia Leitich (Muscogee). *Jingle Dancer*. Morrow Junior Books, 2000.

Jenna borrows jingles from relatives and friends to make a dress so she can dance at the powwow.

Sockabasin, Allen (Passamaquoddy). *Thanks to the Animals*. Tilbury House, 2005.

When little Zoo Sap falls off his family’s sled, the animals and birds keep him safe and warm until his father finds him.