



Forest Of Reading[®]

2021 Kid Committee List

Silver Birch Fiction Readers

Ages 8–12, Grades 3–6

Official Wholesaler

tinlids
best books for schools and libraries

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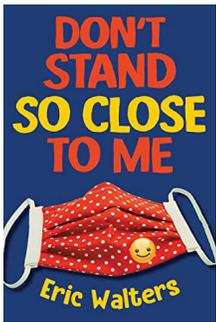
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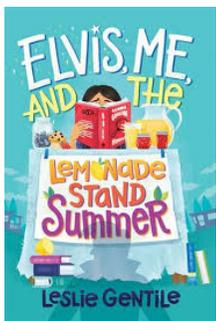
***Aggie Morton, Mystery Queen: The Body Under the Piano* by Marthe Jocelyn, Illustrated by Isabelle Follath (Tundra)**

A smart and charming middle-grade mystery series starring young detective Aggie Morton and her friend Hector, inspired by the imagined life of Agatha Christie as a child and her most popular creation, Hercule Poirot. Aggie Morton lives in a small town on the coast of England in 1902. Adventurous and imaginative but deeply shy, Aggie hasn't got much to do since the death of her beloved father ... until the fateful day when she crosses paths with twelve-year-old Belgian immigrant Hector Perot and discovers a dead body on the floor of the Mermaid Dance Room! As the number of suspects grows and the murder threatens to tear the town apart, Aggie and her new friend will need every tool at their disposal – including their insatiable curiosity, deductive skills and not a little help from their friends – to solve the case before Aggie's beloved dance instructor is charged with a crime Aggie is sure she didn't commit.



***Don't Stand So Close To Me* by Eric Walters (Orca Book Publishers)**

Thirteen-year-old Quinn and her friends can't believe their luck when spring break is extended an extra two weeks—even if it's because of some virus. But when the impact of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic becomes apparent, everyone, not just the students, has to learn to adjust to their new reality. Quinn's father is an ER doctor and has to self-isolate to protect his family from the virus. Isaac's mother is the chief of police and now has to enforce new physical-distancing bylaws. Reese can't visit her grandmother in her care home anymore. And their entire school has moved to online classes. Sacrifices have to be made to keep everyone safe, but there's more to life than rules and scary news reports. In an effort to find some good in all this uncertainty, Quinn comes up with an idea that she hopes will bring the entire community together.

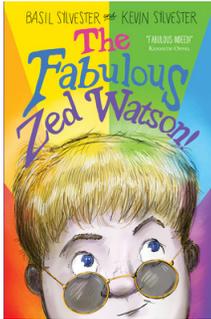


***Elvis, Me, and the Lemonade Stand Summer* by Leslie Gentile (DCB)**

It's the summer of 1978 and most people think Elvis Presley has been dead for a year. But not eleven-year-old Truly Bateman – because she knows Elvis is alive and well and living in the Eagle Shores Trailer Park. Maybe no one ever thought to look for him on an Indigenous reserve on Vancouver Island. It's a busy summer for Truly. Though her mother is less of a mother than she ought to be, and spends her time drinking and smoking and working her way through new boyfriends, Truly is determined to raise as much money for herself as she can through her lemonade stand ... and to prove that her cool new neighbour is the one and only King of Rock 'n' Roll. And when she can't find motherly support in her own home, she finds sanctuary with Andy El, the Salish woman who runs the trailer park.

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***The Fabulous Zed Watson!* by Basil Sylvester and Kevin Sylvester (HarperCollins Canada)**

Zed Watson loves a few things: their name (which they chose themselves!), their big rambunctious family, and—oh yeah—monsters. When Zed discovered the mystery surrounding an unpublished novel called *The Monster's Castle*, they were completely hooked. Now Zed is a member of a small but dedicated legion devoted to finding the long-buried text. When a breakthrough discovery leads Zed to the route that they are sure will take them to the treasure, they know it's time for a road trip. And with the help of their shy, flora-loving neighbour, Gabe, and his sister, Sam, a geologist who is driving back to college in Arizona, Zed and company are soon off on a wild adventure following cryptic clues. But it's not all fun and games. Gabe doesn't like Zed's snacks, Sam is a bossy driver with total command of the ancient Impreza's stereo, and Zed is often misgendered. It's a good thing they also encounter kind strangers, potato-themed dance-offs and lots and lots of ice cream along the way. If Zed and Gabe can combine their strengths, survive Sam's wrath and best the greedy historian who's also hot on the book's trail, they just might find the greatest treasure of all. Co-authored by child-parent duo Basil Sylvester and Kevin Sylvester, this is a vibrant and enormous-hearted story about friendship, identity and belonging. It features illustrations by celebrated author and illustrator Kevin Sylvester, and an Own Voices perspective based on Basil's experience.



***Firefly* by Philippa Dowding (DCB Young Readers)**

Firefly lived in the park across from her mother's home. It was safer there. But after the bad night happens, and her baseball-bat-wielding mother is taken away, social services sends Firefly to live with her Aunt Gayle. She hardly knows Gayle, but discovers that she owns a costume shop. Yes, Firefly might be suffering from PTSD, but she can get used to taking baths, sleeping on a bed again, and wearing as many costumes as she can to school. But where is "home"? What is "family"? Who is Firefly, for that matter ... and which costume is the real one?

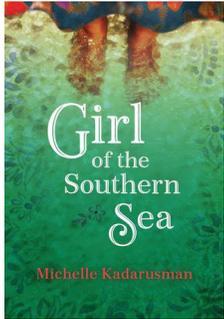


***Genie Meanie* by Mahtab Narsimhan, Illustrated by Michelle Simpson (Orca Book Publishers)**

When eight-year-old Kiara discovers that her recently deceased grandmother left her a genie, trapped in a bottle of garam-masala, she's elated. She'll be a modern-day Aladdin and have someone to do her bidding. And Kiara could really use a little magic. Third grade is just about to start and she's spent the summer worried about being in class with Matt, a bully who seems to have nothing else to do but make Kiara and her best friend Bai's lives miserable. Unfortunately, the genie has decided he's on vacation after working for ten thousand years and is looking for someone to do his bidding. A battle of wills ensues, and Kiara realizes that you don't really need magic to solve your problems.

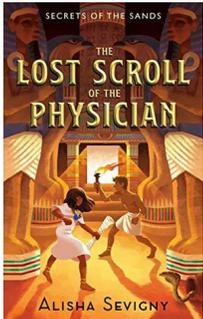
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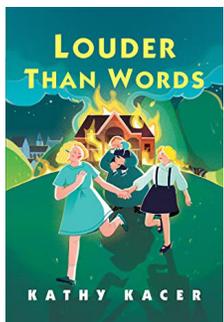
***Girl of the Southern Sea* by Michelle Kadarusman (Pajama Press)**

From the time she was a little girl, Nia has dreamed up adventures about the Javanese mythical princess, Dewi Kadita. Now fourteen, Nia would love nothing more than to continue her education and become a writer. But high school costs too much. Her father sells banana fritters at the train station, but too much of his earnings go toward his drinking habit. Too often Nia is left alone to take over the food cart as well as care for her brother and their home in the Jakarta slums. But Nia is determined to find a way to earn her school fees. After she survives a minibus accident unharmed and the locals say she is blessed with “good luck magic,” Nia exploits the notion for all its worth by charging double for her fried bananas. Selling superstitions can be dangerous, and when the tide turns it becomes clear that Nia’s future is being mapped without her consent. If Nia is to write a new story for herself, she must overcome more obstacles than she could ever have conceived of for her mythical princess, and summon courage she isn’t sure she has.



***The Lost Scroll of the Physician (Secrets of the Sands #1)* by Alisha Sevigny (Dundurn Press)**

Sesha must race to find a priceless scroll before time runs out. After a brutal fire takes their parents’ lives, Sesha and Ky, children of the pharaoh’s royal physician, are left charming snakes and stealing food to survive. Unsure of who to trust, the pair are found and brought back to the palace, where the pharaoh tasks Sesha with finding a rare medical document her father was transcribing. But are the royals hiding something? Befriended by a fellow scribe and a young princess, Sesha navigates palace intrigue and temple treachery while urgently seeking the valuable papyrus. For the scroll doesn’t just have the power to keep the pharaoh’s army alive and reveal the secrets around her parents’ death — it may be the only thing that can save Ky’s life.

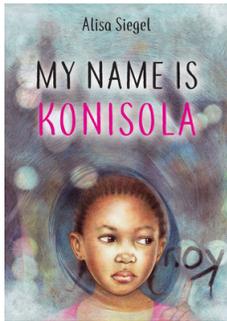


***Louder Than Words (Heroes Quartet #3)* by Kathy Kacer (Annick Press)**

Heroic actions speak volumes in a powerful middle grade novel based on real World War II events. Life is becoming ever more terrifying for the Jewish community as the Second World War envelops their lives. For twelve-year-old Dina and her sisters, things get even harder when their father dies. Their mother must go back to work and despite many objections, the family adjusts to the arrival of their new housekeeper, Nina, who is not Jewish. But Nina’s role changes dramatically when the Nazis invade their small Ukrainian town. Nina sacrifices her own safety to make sure the children she has come to love are kept from the clutches of the Nazis, and Dina comes to depend on her in a way she never imagined she would. The third novel in Kathy Kacer’s acclaimed Heroes Quartet series, *Louder Than Words* is based on the true story of one woman’s incredible heroism in the most dangerous of circumstances. It is another affecting testament to the unsung heroes of World War II who, at great personal risk, saved the lives of strangers.

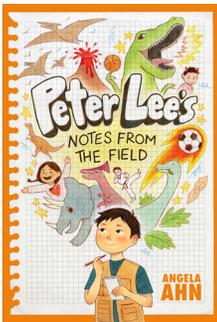
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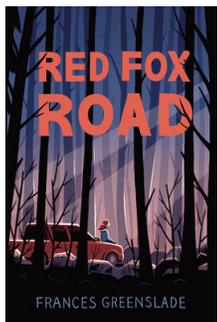
***My Name is Konisola* by Alisa Siegel (Second Story Press)**

In a land of strangers, a new family can be found. On a freezing cold winter night, nine-year-old Konisola and her mother step off a plane in North America. Their home in Nigeria is no longer safe for them, and they are taking the biggest chance of their lives to travel across the world in search of refuge. Soon after they land, disaster strikes, Konisola's mother falls ill and they become separated. Konisola is forced to fend for herself in a strange country, with no family and no friends. Then she meets a remarkable nurse and things begin to change for the better. Will she be allowed to stay in Canada as a refugee, or will she be sent back across the ocean? This is a story of bravery and determination, of loss, and of generosity and good will that paved the way for a new family.



***Peter Lee's Notes from the Field* by Angela Ahn (Tundra)**

Eleven year-old Peter Lee has one goal in life: to become a paleontologist. Okay, maybe two: to get his genius kid-sister, L.B., to leave him alone. But his summer falls apart when his real-life dinosaur expedition turns out to be a bust, and he watches his dreams go up in a cloud of asthma-inducing dust. Even worse, his grandmother, Hammy, is sick, and no one will talk to Peter or L.B. about it. Perhaps his days as a scientist aren't quite behind him yet. Armed with notebooks and pens, Peter puts his observation and experimental skills to the test to see what he can do for Hammy. If only he can get his sister to be quiet for once – he needs time to sketch out a plan. Told in short, accessible journal entries and combining the humor of *Timmy Failure* with the poignant family dynamics of Lynda Mullaly Hunt's stories, Peter Lee will win readers' hearts.



***Red Fox Road* by Frances Greenlade (Puffin Canada)**

A thirteen-year-old girl on a family vacation becomes stranded alone in the wilderness when the family's GPS leads them astray. A compelling survival story for ages 10 to 14, for fans of *Hatchet* and *The Skeleton Tree*. Francie and her parents are on a spring road trip, driving from British Columbia, Canada, to hike in the Grand Canyon. When a shortcut leads them down an old logging road, disaster strikes. Their truck hits a rock and wipes out the oil pan. They are stuck in the middle of nowhere. Francie can't help feeling a little excited – she'd often imagined how she'd survive if she got stranded in the bush, and now here they are. But will her survival skills – building fires, gathering dandelion leaves and fir needles for tea – be enough when hours stretch into days?

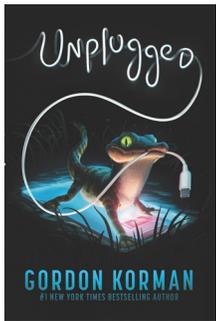
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***The Sun Will Come Out* by Joanne Levy (Orca Book Publishers)**

Twelve-year-old Bea Gelman and her best friend Frankie are planning the BEST SUMMER EVER at Camp Shalom—a sleep-away camp. But at the last minute, Frankie bows out, leaving painfully shy Bea on her own. Just talking to strangers causes Bea to break out into ugly, blotchy hives. As if the hives weren't bad enough, Bea gets pranked by a couple of girls in her cabin and is betrayed by someone she thought was a new friend. Bea has had enough! She decides to spend her summer in the infirmary far away from everything that's stressing her out. No more boys (including her crush, Jeremy), no more horrible mean girls, and no more fake friends! At the infirmary, Bea meets Harry, a boy facing challenges way more intense than stress breakouts. Inspired by Harry's strength and positive outlook, Bea decides to face her fears—in a big way. *The Sun Will Come Out* is a funny and heartwarming account of a shy girl's first summer away from home, where she learns she really can do anything and that silver linings can be found just about anywhere.



***Unplugged* by Gordon Korman (Scholastic Canada)**

Jett Baranov is Silicon Valley's number one spoiled brat. The son of a billionaire tech genius, he has everything money can buy, which means he's in the habit of getting into a lot of trouble. When one of his stunts brings in the US Air Force, Jett's father sends him off to Oasis Mind and Body Wellness Center where he'll be unplugged and disconnected from the outside world. Of course Jett hates it instantly and does his best to get himself kicked out. But it's not as easy as he thinks. When Grace Atwater rescues a defenseless lizard, Jett is drawn into caring for the little guy with the help of Grace, Tyrell Karrigan and Brooklyne Feldman. But things aren't as they seem at Oasis. There's something going on with the head meditation pathfinder, Ivory — something dangerous that threatens the future of all the guests at Oasis. And Jett is the only one who can put a stop to it. Told in Gordon Korman's now classic multi-voice style, *Unplugged* combines mystery, comedy, friendship ... and don't forget about the crocodiles!



***War at the Snow White Motel and Other Stories* by Tim Wynne-Jones (Groundwood Books)**

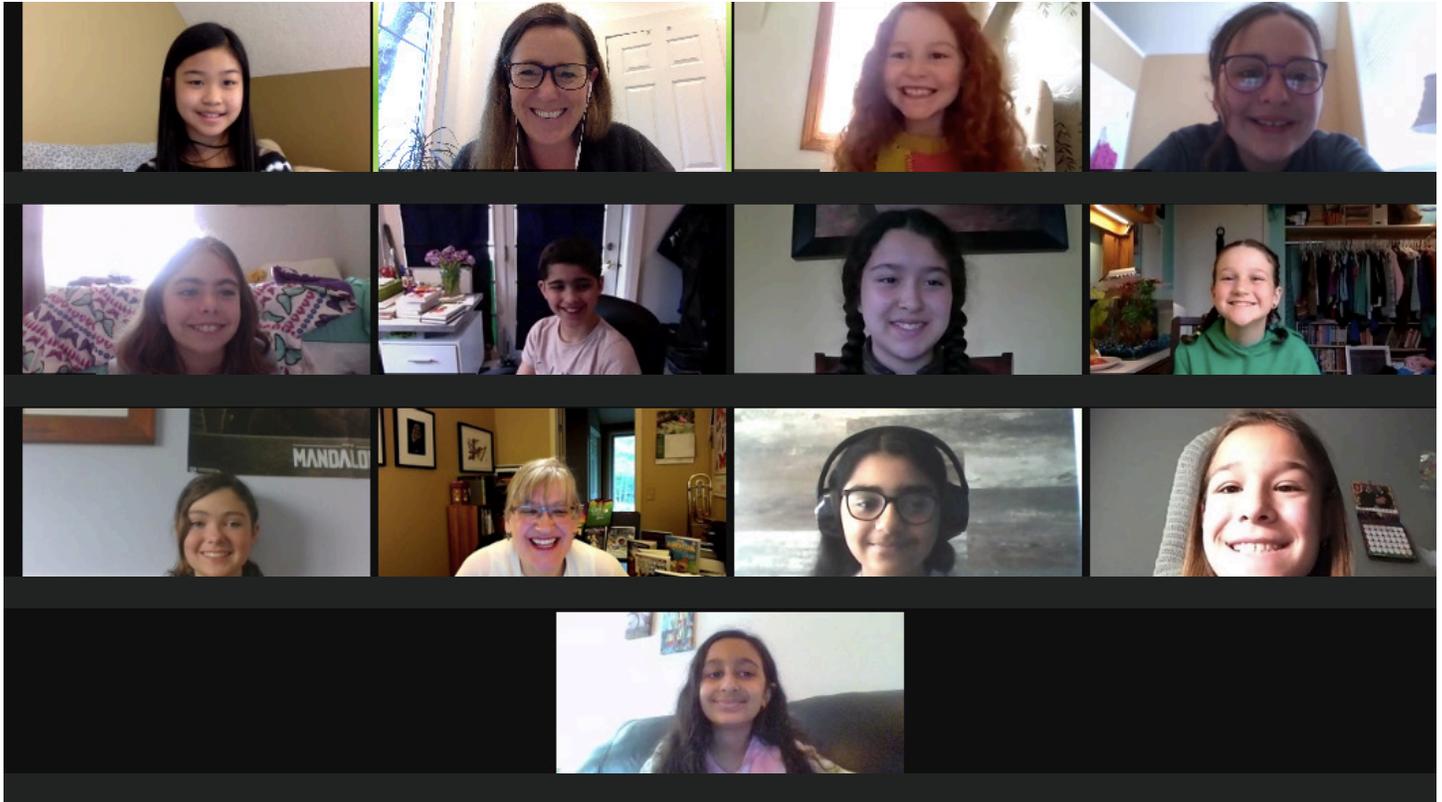
In "War at the Snow White Motel," Rex and his family are vacationing in Vermont. A thoughtless act launches him into war with an older teenager at their motel, but a much bigger conflict — the Vietnam War — looms large on the horizon. Ant wants to join the #FridaysForFuture movement — and impressing the new girl at school is only one good reason why. Joseph and Danny are determined to right an old wrong, no matter the consequences. Michel takes a road trip to spot a rare bird, and along the way learns what his father is really afraid of. Robin has to battle her anxiety when her great-grandfather sends her in search of an old stuffed toy with a storied past. Walker is home for the summer, in time to help his little sister expose a local company's dubious environmental practices. A boy can't figure out why the class bully won't leave him alone — it's not anything he could have foreseen. Tim Wynne-Jones brilliantly captures pivotal moments small and large as these characters fight for understanding, courage and a better future. This new collection features six brand-new stories and three that have been previously published.

The 2021 Committee

Met Virtually on May 4, 2021



Silver Birch



First Row (L-R): Rebekah – Upper Grand District School Board (Guelph), **Meredith Tutching** – Director of the Forest of Reading, **Sophie** – Private School (Toronto), **Ava** – Simcoe County District School Board (Collingwood)

Second Row (L-R): Clara – Thames Valley District School Board (London), **Waseem** – Homeschool (Toronto), **Margaret** – Thames Valley District School Board (Woodstock), **Riley** – Upper Grand District School Board (Fergus)

Third Row (L-R): Brooke – Upper Grand District School Board (Shelburne), **Helen Kubiw** – Facilitator of the Kid Committee – Silver Birch, **Gureet** – Thames Valley District School Board (London), **Caity** – Thames Valley District School Board (Woodstock)

Fourth Row: Myra – Peel District School Board (Brampton)

**About Helen Kubiw, the Kid Committee – Silver Birch Facilitator:
Retired Teacher-Librarian, Former Forest of Reading Chair**