



Forest Of Reading[®]

2022

LIGHT READS,
**GREAT
STORIES**

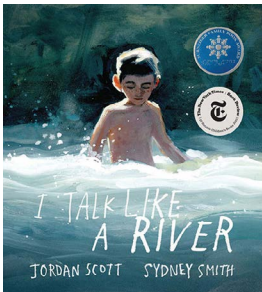
A reading list curated for readers in adult literacy programs, ESL students and readers, and adult learners.

forest@accessola.com | forestofreading.com



LIGHT READS, GREAT STORIES

Beginner Level Choices



I Talk Like a River

Written and Illustrated by Jordan Scott and Sydney Smith

Published by Neal Porter Books

What if words got stuck in the back of your mouth whenever you tried to speak? What if they never came out the way you wanted them to?

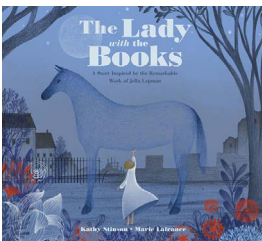
Sometimes it takes a change of perspective to get the words flowing.

I wake up each morning with the sounds of words all around me.

And I can't say them all...

When a boy who stutters feels isolated, alone, and incapable of communicating in the way he'd like, it takes a kindly father and a walk by the river to help him find his voice. Compassionate parents everywhere will instantly recognize a father's ability to reconnect a child with the world around him.

Poet Jordan Scott writes movingly in this powerful and ultimately uplifting book, based on his own experience, and masterfully illustrated by Greenaway Medalist Sydney Smith. A book for any child who feels lost, lonely, or unable to fit in.



The Lady with the Books

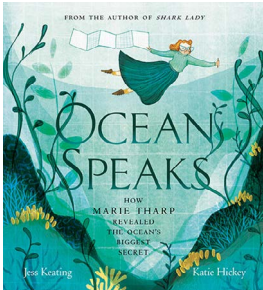
Written and Illustrated by Kathy Stinson and Marie Lafrance

Published by Kids Can Press

Inspired by true events, a fictionalized retelling of how one woman brought a world of books to children in Germany after World War II, and changed their lives forever. Anneliese and Peter will never be the same after the war that took their father's life. One day, while wandering the ruined streets of Munich, the children follow a line of people entering a building, thinking there may be free food inside. Instead, they are delighted to discover a great hall filled with children's books — more books than Anneliese can count. Here, they meet the lady with the books, who encourages the children to read as much as they want. And she invites them to come back the next day. Eventually, she will have a greater impact on the children's lives than they could ever have imagined. This moving picture book, written by beloved and award-winning author Kathy Stinson, is based on the real-life work of Jella Lepman, founder of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) and the International Youth Library. Lepman's collection of children's books from around the world traveled throughout Germany after World War II in the hope of building "bridges of understanding" between countries. Brought to life by highly acclaimed illustrator Marie Lafrance, this book carries an important message about international cooperation that still resonates with world events today. It includes further information about Lepman and her work as well as historical photos. This story of the children who survived the war offers a unique and often unexplored perspective for history lessons. It also makes an excellent choice for character education lessons on resilience. A portion of the author's royalties will be donated to IBBY's Children in Crisis Fund.

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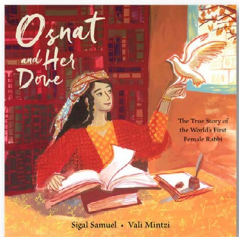
Ocean Speaks: How Marie Tharp Revealed the Ocean's Greatest Secret

Written and Illustrated by Jess Keating and Katie Hickey

Published by Tundra Books

Meet Marie Tharp (1920–2006), the first person to map the Earth's underwater mountain ridge, in this inspiring picture book biography from the author of *Shark Lady*.

From a young age, Marie Tharp loved watching the world. She loved solving problems. And she loved pushing the limits of what girls and women were expected to do and be. In the mid-twentieth century, women were not welcome in the sciences, but Marie was tenacious. She got a job at a laboratory in New York. But then she faced another barrier: women were not allowed on the research ships (they were considered bad luck on boats). So instead, Marie stayed back and dove deep into the data her colleagues recorded. She mapped point after point and slowly revealed a deep rift valley in the ocean floor. At first the scientific community refused to believe her, but her evidence was irrefutable. She proved to the world that her research was correct. The mid-ocean ridge that Marie discovered is the single largest geographic feature on the planet, and she mapped it all from her small, cramped office.



Osnat and Her Dove

Written and Illustrated by Sigal Samuel and Vali Mintzi

Published by Levine Querido

Osnat was born five hundred years ago – at a time when almost everyone believed in miracles. But very few believed that girls should learn to read.

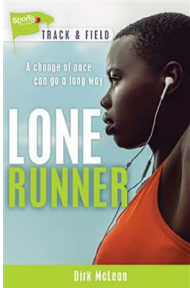
Yet Osnat's father was a great scholar whose house was filled with books. And she convinced him to teach her. Then she in turn grew up to teach others, becoming a wise scholar in her own right, the world's first female rabbi!

Some say Osnat performed miracles – like healing a dove who had been shot by a hunter! Or saving a congregation from fire!

But perhaps her greatest feat was to be a light of inspiration for other girls and boys; to show that any person who can learn might find a path that none have walked before.

LIGHT READS, GREAT STORIES

Intermediate Level Choices



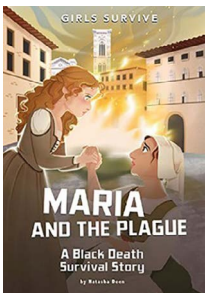
Lone Runner

Written by Dirk McLean

Published by James Lorimer & Company, Ltd.

Michaela promises herself to make the cross-country team, finish every race and never let her teammates down.

Set in a diverse neighbourhood in Scarborough, Ontario, this book follows Michaela as she goes from a solitary runner to an athlete who contributes to the success of her cross-country team. Discouraged by an incident at her mostly-white summer camp, Michaela comes into her own as part of her racially diverse school track team. Focusing on themes of persistence, friendship and overcoming rivalries, this book illuminates traits of connection, empathy and forgiveness.



Maria and the Plague: A Black Death Survival Story

Written and Illustrated by Natasha Deen and Francesca Ficorilli

Published by Stone Arch Books

Years of bad weather and natural disasters have choked Italy's food supply, and the people of Florence are dying of starvation. Breadlines are battlegrounds, and young Maria has to fight for her family's every loaf. Adding to the misery, the Black Plague is rapidly spreading through the country, killing everyone in its path. Maria has already lost her mother and sister. Will she be strong enough to save the rest of her family before it's too late?



Okay, Universe

Written by Valerie Plante and Delphie Côté-Lacroix

Published by Drawn & Quarterly

Valérie Plante stood up to the patriarchal power system of her city, took down an incumbent, and became the first woman elected Mayor of Montreal. Her origin story comes alive in *Okay, Universe*. This captivating graphic novel—created in a true collaboration with Governor-General Award-winner Delphie Côté-Lacroix—follows her journey from community organizer and volunteer to municipal candidate, and the phone call from the local social justice political party that changed her life forever.

Okay, Universe is the first time Plante has told her story, and she has chosen an art form that is not just emblematic of the city of Montreal and its love of the arts and bande dessinée, it's an art form that is accessible to all readers and perfectly suited to her message. With patience, determination, and the strength of will to remain true to her core beliefs, *Okay, Universe* details the inspiring political campaign where slowly but surely she gained the trust of a neighbourhood fighting for affordable housing, environmental protections, and equal opportunities. *Okay, Universe* demystifies the path to success, simultaneously showing the Mayor's inextinguishable commitment to creating positive change in the world and educating about the vitality of political engagement.

Okay, Universe was translated by Helge Dascher. Dascher has been translating graphic novels from French and German to English for over twenty years. A contributor to Drawn & Quarterly since the early days, her translations include acclaimed titles such as the Aya series by Marguerite Abouet and Clément Oubrerie, *Hostage* by Guy Delisle, and *Beautiful Darkness* by Fabien Vehlmann and Kerascoët. With a background in art history and history, she also translates books and exhibitions for museums in North America and Europe. She lives in Montreal.

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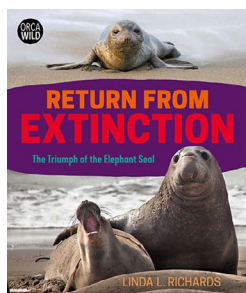
Open Secrets

Written by Jennifer Manuel

Published by James Lorimer & Company Ltd.

Ana wants her band to make it big, but how far does she have to go to make it happen?

The #MeToo movement has revealed the prevalence of sexual assault in society, especially as committed by powerful men. But it is an issue that also affects the lives of teen girls. This book tells the story of seventeen-year-old Ana Santos, who has ambitions to make it big in music and signs a contract with the owner of a music café without knowing there are sexual strings attached. It looks at the darker side of the music industry, including sexual harassment, lyrics that degrade and demean women and social media trolling as backlash for speaking up, all while presenting a strong, realistic main character who overcomes her feelings of shame to find a voice for herself and her music.



Return From Extinction: The Triumph of the Elephant Seal

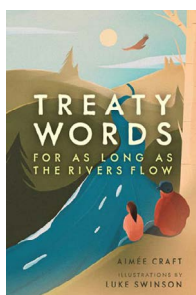
Written by Linda L. Richards

Published by Orca Book Publishers

Back from the brink.

Less than 100 years ago, the northern elephant seal was thought to be extinct. Today more than 250,000 elephant seals swim in the Pacific Ocean from Alaska to Mexico. In *Return from Extinction: The Triumph of the Elephant Seal* Linda L. Richards tells the story of their dramatic recovery.

Elephant seals were hunted to near extinction for their precious oil before the Mexican government stepped in to protect them. Many people thought it was too late. Even though the life of the elephant seal is difficult and only 20 percent of pups born will make it to adulthood, the species adapted and came back from the brink. They are a true conservation success story.



Treaty Words

Written and Illustrated by Aimée Craft and Luke Swinson

Published by Annick Press

The first treaty that was made was between the earth and the sky. It was an agreement to work together. We build all of our treaties on that original treaty.

On the banks of the river that have been Mishomis's home his whole life, he teaches his granddaughter to listen—to hear both the sounds and the silences, and so to learn her place in Creation. Most importantly, he teaches her about treaties—the bonds of reciprocity and renewal that endure for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the rivers flow.

Accompanied by beautiful illustrations by Luke Swinson and an author's note at the end, Aimée Craft affirms the importance of understanding an Indigenous perspective on treaties in this evocative book that is essential for readers of all ages.

LIGHT READS, GREAT STORIES

Advanced Level Choices



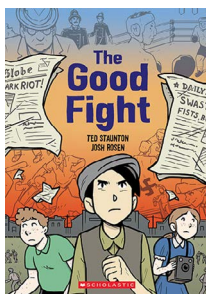
The Disability Experience: Working Toward Belonging

Written and Illustrated by Hannalora Leavitt and Belle Wuthrich

Published by Orca Book Publishers

You see disability, I see diversity.

People with disabilities (PWDs) have the same aspirations for their lives as you do for yours. The difference is that PWDs don't have the same access to education, employment, housing, transportation and healthcare in order to achieve their goals. In *The Disability Experience* you'll meet people with different kinds of disabilities, and you'll begin to understand the ways PWDs have been ignored, reviled and marginalized throughout history. The book also celebrates the triumphs and achievements of PWDs and shares the powerful stories of those who have fought for change.



The Good Fight

Written and Illustrated by Ted Staunton and Josh Rosen

Published by Scholastic Canada Ltd.

A fast-paced story set amidst Toronto's turbulent summer of 1933, this graphic novel sheds light on prejudice and social injustice.

It's Toronto in the 1930s. The city is small, often xenophobic, and the summer is stiflingly hot. Everyone flocks to the lakeshore. In one area of the beach, a neighbourhood protective association has formed to keep out "undesirables," and members patrol wearing silver swastika pins. Meanwhile, the police chief believes the immigrant Jewish community is at the root of a communist threat, as the world witnesses an alarming rise of anti-Semitism overseas.

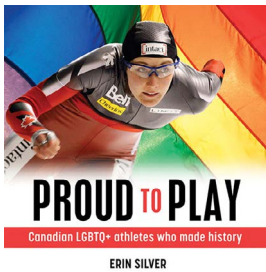
Sid and his Pop live at the edge of the Ward, Toronto's immigrant slum, where they have rented a room from the Vendetellis since Sid's mom and baby sister died from influenza. Times are tough, and Sid faces impossible choices as he wrestles with honesty, bigotry, poverty, and expectations as a member of a "whiz mob," slang for a gang of pickpockets.

But when Sid and his friends get coerced into working for the police after they're caught lifting a wallet at a baseball game, they become caught up in something much bigger than themselves, and must decide how far they will go to do what's right and to protect those they love. The story climaxes at the infamous Christie Pits Riot, Canada's largest race riot and a historic event that was a symbolic victory for Jewish and immigrant citizens

With extraordinarily cinematic artwork that immediately transports readers to the Toronto of 1933, this incredible graphic novel shines a striking lens on many contemporary issues: the immigrant experience, the roots of prejudice, and taking a stand against injustice.

LIGHT READS, GREAT STORIES

Advanced Level Choices



Proud to Play: Canadian LGBTQ+ Athletes Who Made History

Written by Erin Silver

Published by James Lorimer & Company Ltd.

The 2018 Winter Olympics marked a milestone for LGBTQ+ athletes. Thirteen athletes out of 3,000 competitors were out and proud — nearly double the number who felt comfortable sharing their sexuality four years earlier at the Sochi Games. Many athletes stay closeted for their entire sports careers, often unable to compete at their highest ability because of the shame and self-doubt they feel in not being true to their orientation or identity. But coming out still means facing harassment from fans, teammates, opponents, and the media, and a lack of sponsorship opportunities. While organizations like You Can Play, the Canadian Olympic Committee and Egale Canada have made progress in recent years in promoting inclusivity at the grassroots and elite sporting levels, there is still much work to be done to ensure all athletes feel safe being their authentic selves.

Athletes profiled include swimmer Mark Tewksbury, rhythmic gymnast Rose Cossar, professional hockey player Brock McGillis, speed skater Anastasia Bucsis, pairs figure skater Eric Radford, volleyball players Betty Baxter and Christopher Voth and hockey player Angela James.

Generously illustrated with photographs and given context by an overview of the history of LGBTQ+ athletes in Canada, this book will make all young sports enthusiasts and competitors proud to play.



Under Amelia's Wing (Ginny Ross #2)

Written by Heather Stemp

Published by Nimbus Publishing Limited

It's 1936, and against all odds—but not without a few stumbles—Ginny Ross has made it to Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. (Otherwise known as the academic home of her friend and mentor, Amelia Earhart.) For Ginny, this is the next step toward her dream of becoming a pilot, but it's harder than she expected: as the only girl in her mechanical engineering program, she constantly has to prove she deserves to be there. Ginny is determined not to let the jeers of her classmates and the opinions of some backwards-thinking professors hold her back, but she is a world away from her home in Harbour Grace, Newfoundland.

When Amelia takes off in 1937 to fly around the globe, Ginny can't shake a feeling of foreboding. Aviation is still relatively new and communication between air and ground is patchy at best. Then Amelia disappears without a trace, and Ginny must figure out if she has what it takes to forge ahead without her mentor. With the threat of the Second World War looming large, Ginny will need every bit of salty east coast grit she can muster.