



Forest Of Reading®

2023 Kid Committee List

Silver Birch Fiction Readers

Ages 8–12, Grades 3–6

Official Wholesaler

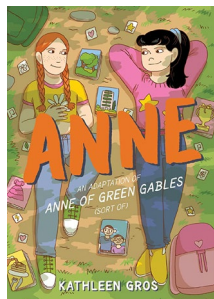
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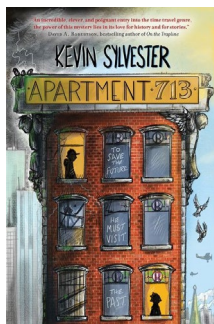
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***Anne: An Adaptation of Anne of Green Gables (Sort of)* by Kathleen Gross (HarperCollins)**

In this modern graphic novel retelling of *Anne of Green Gables* from graphic novelist Kathleen Gros, foster kid Anne Shirley finally lands in a loving home and befriends a girl who she may have more-than-friends feelings for. Anne Shirley has been in foster care her whole life. So when the Cuthberts take her in, she hopes it's for good. They seem to be hitting it off, but how will they react to the trouble that Anne can sometimes find herself in . . . like accidentally dyeing her hair green or taking a dangerous dare that leaves her in a cast? Then Anne meets Diana Barry, a girl who lives in her apartment building, the Avon-Lea. The two become fast friends, as Anne finds she can share anything with Diana. As time goes on, though, Anne starts to develop more-than-friends feelings for Diana. A new foster home, a new school, and a first-time crush—it's a lot all at once. But if anyone can handle life's twists and turns, it's the irrepressible Anne Shirley.



***Apartment 713* by Kevin Sylvester (HarperCollins)**

Secret ballrooms, hidden artwork and unlikely friends—welcome to the Regency, where even time moves in surprising ways! Jake Simmons hates his new home. The Regency is nothing more than floor after floor of peeling wallpaper and faded glory. Jake misses his old life. He misses the time when his mother was employed. He misses living in a house where the wind doesn't make the windows whistle. Loneliness (and a trail of kittens) leads Jake to the apartment of an elderly lady, then to the bowels of the building and then to a part-time job assisting Larry the custodian. With each passing day, the building reveals more of its mysteries to Jake. The occupants grow on him too. Unfortunately, Jake's feeling of belonging is short-lived: the city plans to demolish the Regency. Jake feels powerless. And then fate throws him a curveball. He's summoned to apartment 713. An apartment he's been told is off-limits. But when he opens the door . . . he travels to the past! Alongside Beth, his new friend and guide, Jake begins searching for any clue that might help him save the Regency. As their friendship blooms, the mystery around the building's makers deepens. The Regency's own storied past will give Jake the key to saving his own future—if only he knows where to look.



***Berani* by Michelle Kadarusman (Pajama Press)**

An honest and stirring novel about the choices made by young environmental activists, and the balancing act between consequence and triumph. Malia has had a privileged upbringing in Indonesia, but since her Indonesian father died, her Canadian mother wants to return to her own family on the other side of the world. Malia is determined to stay. Indonesia is her home, and she loves it. Besides, if she leaves, how can she continue to fight for her country's precious rainforests? Ari knows he is lucky to be going to school and competing on the chess team, even if it means an endless round of chores at his uncle's restaurant. Back in his home village, he and his cousin Suni dreamed about getting a chance like this. But now he is here without her, and the guilt is crushing him. As if that weren't enough, he's horribly worried about Ginger Juice, his uncle's orangutan. The too-small cage where she lives is clearly hurting her body and her mind, but where else can she go? The rainforest where she was born is a palm oil plantation now.

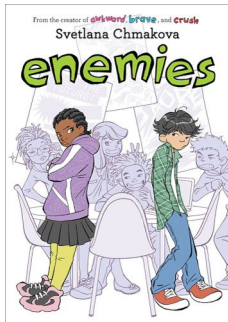
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Clan by Sigmund Brouwer (Tundra Books)

The classic survival story gets a prehistoric twist in this gripping middle-grade adventure featuring a boy and his saber tooth tiger cub, perfect for fans of *Hatchet*. Part survival story, part animal-human friendship story and part redemption story, *Clan* follows the journey of Atlatl and the saber tooth cub he rescues from a dire wolf attack. Injured as a child, Atlatl dreams of one day earning his father's respect as a hunter. But when Atlatl brings the young saber tooth to his Clan, it leads to a devastating moment of torn loyalties between Atlatl and his father—a moment that will change their lives forever. Then an epic disaster strikes, and suddenly Atlatl has to rely on wits, ingenuity and bravery to face his biggest foe yet and try to save what remains of his Clan.



Enemies (Berrybrook Middle School, Book 4) by Svetlana Chmakova (Yen Press)

Felicity's sure she's going to do something big. Exactly what is still a mystery, but she'll figure it out. Her sister, Letty, teases Felicity that she never finishes stuff, but that's just because Letty is so perfect. Still, life is good with plenty of friends—drawing with the art club and playing games with her buddies keep her busy. But when she decides to join a contest to show Letty that she can get things done, Felicity begins to wonder if friends becoming enemies is easier than she thought. Are they really enemies, though...? What does it even mean to be enemies? And...who is it that she needs the most on her side...?

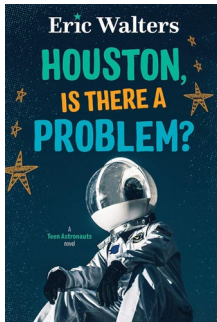


Ghostlight by Kenneth Oppel (Puffin)

Gabe's summer job scaring tourists with ghost stories turns terrifyingly real when he accidentally summons the spirit of a dead girl—and must join forces with her to protect the world of the living. A new story by award-winning author Ken Oppel for ages 10 and up. The story of the tragic death of sixteen-year-old Rebecca Strand and her lighthouse keeper father is just an elaborate tale Gabe tells tourists for his summer job on Toronto Island. Or so he thought. When his ghost tours awaken Rebecca's spirit, Gabe is drawn into a world far darker than any ghost story he's ever heard. Rebecca reveals that she and her father were connected to the Order, a secret society devoted to protecting the world from "the wakeful and wicked dead"—malevolent spirits like Viker, the ghost responsible for their deaths. But now the Order has disappeared and Viker is growing even stronger, and he'll stop at nothing to wreak chaos and destruction on the living. Gabe and his friends—both living and dead—must find a way to stop Viker before they all become lost souls.

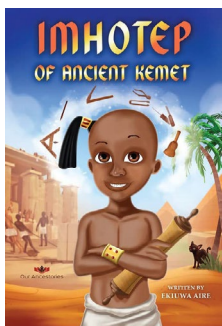
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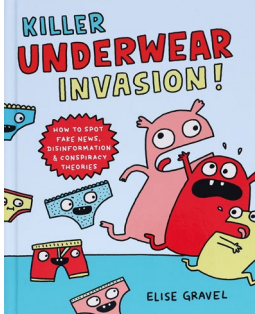
***Houston, Is There a Problem? (Teen Astronauts, Book 1)* by Eric Walters (Orca Book Publishers)**

Thirteen-year-old Houston Williams is smart. Very smart. So no one is surprised when he earns a scholarship to attend a prestigious NASA space camp. At the training facility he immediately bonds with his new team, including a girl named Teal. He also clashes with a girl on a rival team named Ashley, who matches or beats him in every exercise. The three of them impress the directors so much they are invited to join a top-secret research project that studies how space travel affects people of different ages. But only two of them will actually be going into space. Houston will do whatever it takes to make sure he's picked.



***Imhotep of Ancient Kemet* by Ekiuwa Aire, Illustrated by Simbarashe Langton Vera and Anastasia Kyrpenko (Our Ancestories)**

Over 4,000 years ago, in ancient Egypt, a young boy named Imhotep was born. From a young age, he excelled and quickly became known as a genius. Imhotep had the ability to see through difficult problems and was often trying new techniques and experiments. He had many talents, and as an architect, Imhotep designed the step pyramid at Sakkara—one of the most incredible structures in ancient history. The step pyramid still stands strong today. In the pages of this book, you'll discover the Egypt known to Imhotep, as he grows from a curious young man into one of the most successful, intelligent, and well-known men in ancient Egypt.



***Killer Underwear Invasion!: How to Spot Fake News, Disinformation & Conspiracy Theories* by Elise Gravel (Chronicle Books)**

A hilarious and timely tool to help kids learn how to tell what news is true and what isn't. Can peanuts give you super strength? Were unicorns discovered on the moon? Did Martians really invade New Jersey? For anyone who has ever encountered outrageous stories like these and wondered whether they were true, this funny, yet informative book breaks down what fake news is, why people spread it, and how to tell what is true and what isn't. With quirky illustrations and a humorous tone, Elise Gravel brings her kid-accessible wit to the increasingly important subject of media literacy and equips younger readers with the skills needed to interact with global news.

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***Rabbit Chase* by Elizabeth LaPensée, Illustrated by KC Oster (Annick Press)**

Anishinaabe culture and storytelling meet *Alice in Wonderland* in this coming-of-age graphic novel that explores Indigenous and gender issues through a fresh yet familiar looking glass. Aimée, a non-binary Anishinaabe middle-schooler, is on a class trip to offer gifts to Paayehnsag, the water spirits known to protect the land. While stories are told about the water spirits and the threat of the land being taken over for development, Aimée zones out, distracting themselves from the bullying and isolation they've experienced since expressing their non-binary identity. When Aimée accidentally wanders off, they are transported to an alternate dimension populated by traditional Anishinaabe figures in a story inspired by *Alice in Wonderland*. To gain the way back home, Aimée is called on to help Trickster by hunting down dark water spirits with guidance from Paayehnsag. On their journey, Aimée faces off with the land-grabbing Queen and her robotic guards and fights the dark water spirits against increasingly stacked odds. Illustrated by KC Oster with a modern take on their own Ojibwe style and cultural representation, *Rabbit Chase* is a story of self-discovery, community, and finding one's place in the world.



***Seekers of the Fox (Thieves of Shadows, Book 2)* by Kevin Sands (Puffin Canada)**

A dying friend, a terrible bargain, an underwater quest, and dangerous magic . . . this thrilling adventure picks up right where *Children of the Fox* leaves off. Fans of twisty, clever stories like *The False Prince* and *Ocean's Eleven* will love this newest middle-grade series from Kevin Sands, author of the bestselling *Blackthorn Key*. Rule number one: Never mess with magic. Even so, a life-or-death situation calls for Callan and his criminal friends to make a deal with the Eye—the sinister, sentient artifact they stole from a sorcerer. It's Lachlan's life in exchange for a future task, and the gang has no choice but to agree. But even as Lachlan is resurrected, it's not without cost. Through the Eye, Callan can see a tiny purple stain inside Lachlan's soul, which will eventually consume him. The cure—and their part of the deal—lies with the Dragon's Teeth, a pair of swords with extraordinary powers, and the search for them leads the thieves on a quest that will unravel the mystery of the Eye. Old friends, new betrayals, and an even more daring break-in than the last culminate in a confrontation that will take all the gang's skill and power to resist—or they'll die trying.

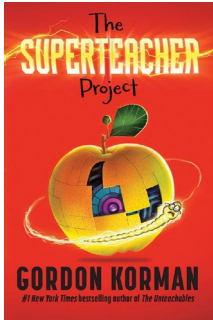


***Spell Sweeper* by Lee Edward Fodi (HarperCollins)**

Featuring a failed young wizard and her cleanup crew, this delightfully dysfunctional middle grade fantasy is an imaginative twist on magic school that's perfect for fans of *Nevermoor* and *The School for Good and Evil*. Cara Moone is a wizard—but she's basically flunked out of wizard school. Now she's in training to be a MOP, also known as Magical Occurrence Purger, also known as it's Cara's job to sweep up the hazardous dust a real wizard's spells leave behind. A real wizard, that is, like Harlee Wu, the so-called Chosen One destined to save the magical world. But when one of Harlee's spells goes awry and leaves behind a rift in the fabric of magic itself, it'll take more than magic to clean up the mess. Luckily, messes are kind of Cara's thing. Magic is messy—and fantastically fun—in this underdog story packed with humor, adventure, and attitude.

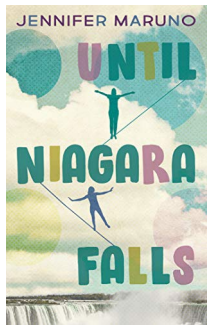
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***The Superteacher Project* by Gordon Korman (Scholastic Canada)**

Oliver Zahn, spitball champion and self-declared rule-wrecker of Brightling Middle School, is not a fan of his new homeroom teacher, Mr. Aidact. The guy is sort of stiff, never cracks a smile, and refers to them as “pupils.” The worst part is he catches Oliver before he can pull any of his signature pranks! It’s time for Oliver and his best friend, Nathan, to show the new teacher who’s boss. But as the weeks go by, they start to realize that Mr. Aidact is not what they expected. He has an uncanny ability to remember song lyrics or trivia. When the girls’ field hockey team needs a new coach, he suddenly turns out to be an expert. He never complains when other teachers unload work on him — even when it’s lunchroom duty and overseeing detention. Against all odds, Mr. Aidact starts to become the most popular teacher at Brightling. Still, Oliver and Nathan know that something is fishy. They’re determined to get to the bottom of the mystery: What’s the deal with Mr. Aidact?



***Until Niagara Falls* by Jennifer Maruno (Dundurn)**

Finalist, Hamilton Literary Award Is friendship supposed to feel like walking over the falls? Brenda is afraid of heights, being in the dark, and dog poop. Then she meets daring, rule-breaking Maureen and realizes their friendship is a bit like walking a tightrope — exciting but dangerous. Maureen encourages Brenda to use fire escapes, sleep outside in a tent, and walk through strange backyards. Their friendship strains when Maureen makes fun of Harvey, Brenda’s special needs neighbour. It strains even further when Maureen borrows Gran’s bracelet and lies about returning it. Suddenly, Brenda realizes she has to be as brave as The Great Blondin, the man who walked across the falls, to get it back.



***Weird Rules to Follow* by Kim Spencer (Orca Book Publishers)**

Mia knows her family is very different than her best friend’s. In the 1980s, the coastal fishing town of Prince Rupert is booming. There is plenty of sockeye salmon in the nearby ocean, which means the fishermen are happy and there is plenty of work at the cannery. Eleven-year-old Mia and her best friend, Lara, have known each other since kindergarten. Like most tweens, they like to hang out and compare notes on their crushes and dream about their futures. But even though they both live in the same cul-de-sac, Mia’s life is very different from her non-Indigenous, middle-class neighbor. Lara lives with her mom, her dad and her little brother in a big house, with two cars in the drive and a view of the ocean. Mia lives in a shabby wartime house that is full of relatives—her churchgoing grandmother, binge-drinking mother and a rotating number of aunts, uncles and cousins. Even though their differences never seemed to matter to the two friends, Mia begins to notice how adults treat her differently, just because she is Indigenous. Teachers, shopkeepers, even Lara’s parents—they all seem to have decided who Mia is without getting to know her first.

The 2023 Committee

Met Virtually in May 2023



Silver Birch



Denise — Toronto District School Board, **Edward** — Trinity College School, **Eleanor** — York Region District School Board, **Hrithika** — Nanaimo Ladysmith School District, **Hudson** — Halton District School Board, **Lima** — Toronto District School Board, **Rachel** — Thames Valley District School Board, **Rebecca** — Toronto District School Board, **Roseanna** — St. Mildred's–Lightbourn School, **Roslynn** — St. Mildred's–Lightbourn School, **Ryan** — Peel District School Board, **Zoe** — Upper Grand District School Board

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