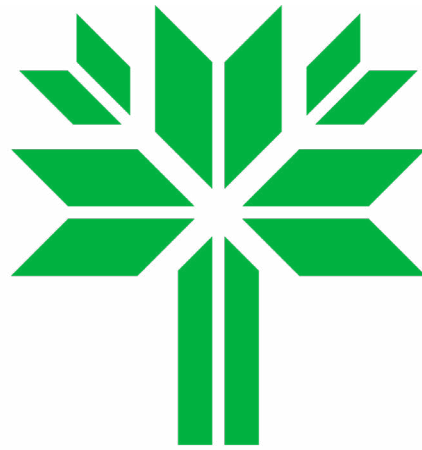




Forest Of Reading[®]

2026 Forest of Reading[®] & Festival Year-End Report

FOR SCHOOL-AGED PROGRAMS

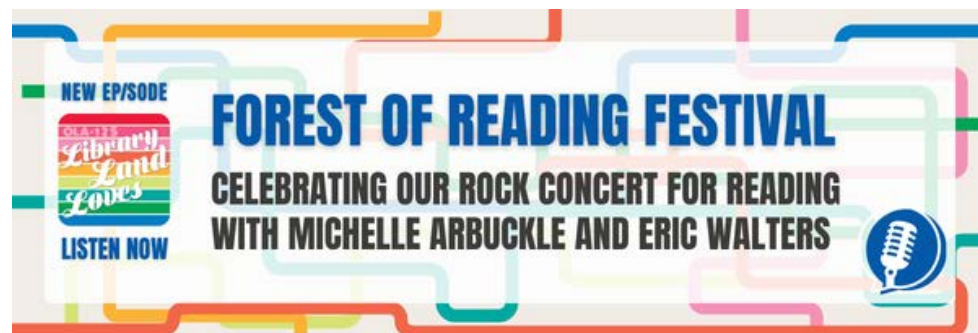
This Year's Highlights

Fête de la Forêt de la lecture: In 2026, the Forest of Reading® held the third annual French language field trip opportunity to celebrate with 615+ young people. Celebrating our French programs as part of the larger Festival provided Le prix Mélèze and Le prix Tamarac a more dynamic, high-energy experience! [Visit forestofreading.com/fete-eng/](https://forestofreading.com/fete-eng/) for more information.



Blue Spruce Read-Alouds: In partnership with CBC Kids, Blue Spruce-nominated titles were read aloud by students across the country! [Watch these read-alouds at bit.ly/49hUVfQ](https://bit.ly/49hUVfQ)

Learn to Draw with Forest Illustrators: This year, registrants were invited to draw with our very own Forest of Reading® illustrators! Readers tuned in to 4 sessions where they learned how to draw their favourite characters! [Check it out at forestofreading.com/virtual-visits/](https://forestofreading.com/virtual-visits/)



Forest of Reading Special Event: On April 28, we released a new Library Land Loves podcast episode featuring Eric Walters, Canadian author and a multi-time Forest of Reading Award winner. The discussion revolved around how literacy programs inspire a love of reading, promote empathy through storytelling, and highlight the vital role of libraries and educators across the country. [Tune in at https://bit.ly/49hUVfQ](https://bit.ly/49hUVfQ)

Digital Ceremonies: We released exciting Digital Award Ceremonies for the English and French programs. These 9 videos allowed readers to celebrate Forest of Reading® nominees from the comfort of wherever they were! [Watch the ceremonies at forestofreading.com/2026-digital-award-ceremonies-eng](https://forestofreading.com/2026-digital-award-ceremonies-eng)



Pen Pals: For the second year, we connected readers with other book-loving kids in different boards and provinces through the Pen Pal program. 25+ classes and 1,202+ readers shared their love of books, learned about other readers' experiences, and built lasting friendships!

Programming

**4 White Pine
Author Visits**

**10 Blue Spruce
Read-Alouds**

**4 Learn to Draw
Illustrator Events**

**4 Forest
Special Events**

**4 French Language
Author Visits**

**20 Forest Friday's
Virtual Author Visits**

**6 In-Person
Award Ceremonies**

**9 Digital
Award Ceremonies**

+ OVER 46,980 CLASSES PARTICIPATED IN THE VIRTUAL CONTENT!

TOTAL VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION BY INDIVIDUALS APPROACHING 1 MILLION

Forest by the Numbers

1,799

SITES PARTICIPATING IN THE FOREST OF READING® PROGRAM, INCLUDING SCHOOL LIBRARIES, PUBLIC LIBRARIES, HOMESCHOOLERS, INDIVIDUALS, LITERACY CENTRES, AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

270,000+

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

77,759

TOTAL BOOKS SOLD BY OUR OFFICIAL WHOLESALER, TINLIDS INC.

1,070

CANADIAN TITLES SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE PROGRAM

100

NOMINATED TITLES FOR 2026

117

SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

56

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Forest by the Numbers

378,369

HITS TO THE [FORESTOFREADING.COM](https://forestofreading.com) WEBSITE DURING THE 2026 PROGRAM YEAR

2:49

TOTAL TIME SPENT ON [FORESTOFREADING.COM](https://forestofreading.com)

49,690

VIRTUAL VISIT VIEWS AFTER RECORDING

29

FOREST OF READING® AND FESTIVAL PARTNERSHIPS

NEW!

1,021

INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS
[@FORESTOFREADINGPROGRAM](https://www.instagram.com/forestofreadingprogram)

3,894

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS
[@FORESTOFREADING](https://www.facebook.com/forestofreading)

Kid & Teen Committees

21 kids were part of three committees and spent multiple meetings deliberating about the best Canadian books kids in the country should read this summer.

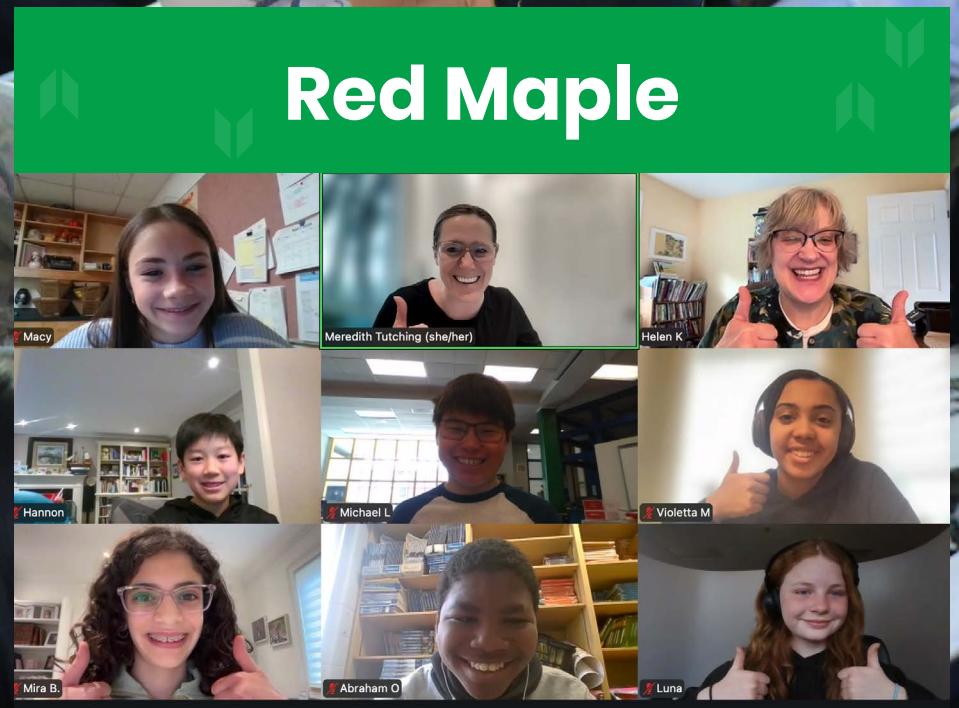
This year the committees picked 13 books for grades 3-6, 14 books for grades 7-8, and 12 books for grades 9-12. These books have not previously been on a Forest program but are a curated list that could be in future and must-reads for the summer. Kids picking for kids!

39

Books
Selected



Silver Birch Fiction



Red Maple

Forest of Reading® Festival



At this year's Forest of Reading® Festival, the OLA welcomed 4,945+ attendees to Harbourfront Centre on May 12-13, as well as volunteers, featured authors, publishing partners, and guests who joined to deliver this fantastic event. Recognition was shared in person for the Silver Birch Express, Silver Birch Fiction, Red Maple, and White Pine. Ainara Alleyne hosted the in-person ceremonies.

Making as much noise for books as we did was such a highlight, and it was so exciting to be able to reach our readers from far away through our Digital Award Ceremonies for each program.

The Library Marketplace (TLM) brought popular merchandise back for 2026, including the Forest of Reading Buddies and released new merchandise including the I Read Canadian Sloth Buddies. [Visit The Library Marketplace to see more!](#)

This year's Festival was a true rock concert for books! We encourage you to watch what it's like to attend at bit.ly/2024FestivalVideo.



Photo: Mayor of Toronto, Olivia Chow, at the Forest of Reading Festival.

Forest of Reading® Festival



Fête de la Forêt de la lecture

This year, the Forest of Reading® held our second annual Fête de la Forêt de la lecture on May 14 at the Harbourfront Centre! We were so excited to have 530+ young readers join us to celebrate the 2026 Le prix Mélèze and Le prix Tamarac awards hosted by Josée LeBlanc, actress, puppeteer, and screenwriter. [Visit forestofreading.com/fete-fr/](https://forestofreading.com/fete-fr/) to learn more.



**6 Author
Workshops**

**6 Authors
in Attendance**

**16 Stage
Performances**

**234 Digital
Ceremony Views**

**530+
Attendees**

In the Media

« BACK TO OMNI
ARTICLES

2026 Forest of Reading winners announced



By: Inderjit
Deogun
May 14th, 2026
12:01 pm
Category:
Awards,
Children's
publishing
Issue Date: May
2026
Tags: Ainara
Alleyne, Forest
of Reading,
Forest of
Reading Awards,
Ontario Library
Association



2026 Forest of Reading winners

The Ontario Library Association (OLA) and the Forest of Reading have announced the winners of the 2026 Forest of Reading Awards.

The two-day event, which had an in-person event at Harbourfront in Toronto and a digital component, was hosted by Hamilton teen and book-club host Ainara Alleyne.

Books

Linda Bailey and Nicki Pau Preto among winners of 2026 Forest of Reading Awards

The program is the country's largest recreational reading initiative for kids

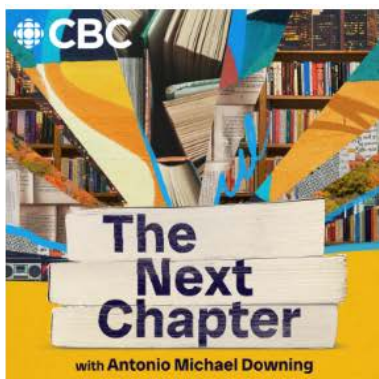
CBC Books - Posted: May 14, 2026 12:06 PM EDT | Last Updated: May 14



Listen to this article ⓘ
Estimated 5 minutes



Linda Bailey, left, and Nicki Pau Preto are among the winners of the 2026 Forest of Reading Awards. (Maurice Verkaar, nickipaupreto.com)



May 11, 2026

Her uncles for worked for MI6, now she writes spy novels

The Next Chapter with Antonio Michael Downing

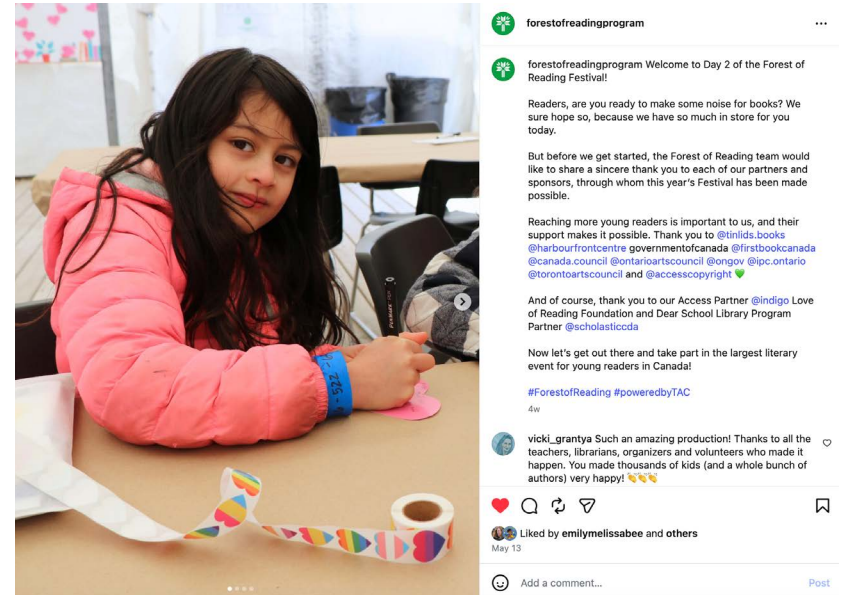
Listen on



Iona Wishaw dreamed of being a writer since she was a child. It may have taken longer than she had expected, but by her mid sixties she had fulfilled that childhood dream. Inspired by the true stories of her family's connection to secret intelligence services such as MI6, she's written a fan favourite mystery series set in B.C. just after the Second World War. Plus, book content creator Ainara Alleyne drops by to talk about her journey as a youth reading advocate, and talk about the upcoming Forest of Reading Festival.

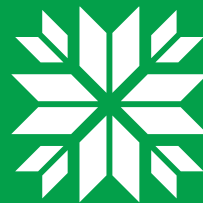
Thank You

We recognize the major support from our Festival sponsors and partners: Tinlids Inc., Harbourfront Centre, Government of Canada, First Book Canada, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Government of Ontario, Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, Toronto Arts Council and Access Copyright Foundation. The 2026 Festival is also made possible through the support of Indigo Love of Reading Foundation (Access Partner) and Scholastic Canada (Dear School Library Program Partner).





Thank you for
another great year!



**Forest Of Reading®
Festival**

forest@accessola.com | 1-877-340-1730

forestofreading.com

*2026 Forest of Reading® Festival photos courtesy of
Yvonne Bambrick and Laurel McLeod.*