

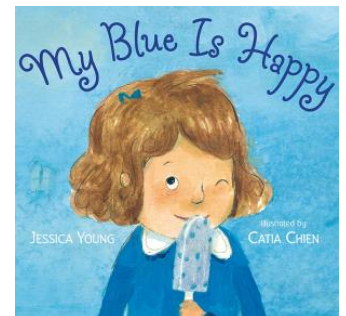
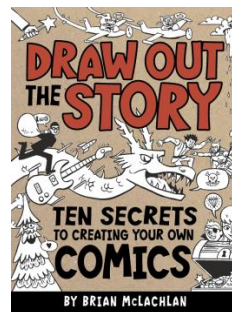
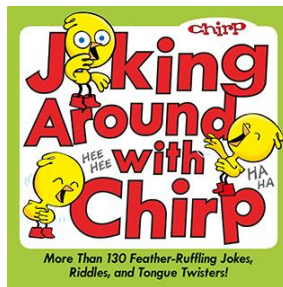
BEST BETS 2013

Reading for Children

The OLA's Canadian Materials Committee, under the umbrella of the OPLA Child and Youth Services Committee, picks this annual list.

Books are selected on the basis of their literary/artistic merit as well as their appeal for children.

Text and illustrations are of equal importance in picture books and information books.



PICTURE BOOKS

Boudreau, Hélène *I Dare You Not to Yawn*

Illustrated by Serge Block. Candlewick

Since yawns lead to bedtime, this useful book tells of all the things to stay away from, such as sleepytime songs, stuffed animals and yawning baby orangutans!

Camp, Richard Van. *Little You.* **Illustrated by Julie Flett. Orca Book Publishers.**

Little You is a board book that celebrates the joy that “little ones” bring to their parents. Tender family moments are captured beautifully with gentle rhyming text and exquisite illustrations.

Gay, Marie-Louise. *Read Me a Story Stella.* **Groundwood.**

Stella and Sam return in a story about the joys of reading and imagination. As Stella and Sam romp through their day, books go right along with them as they read poems to rabbits while they wait for the carrots to grow. At night when Sam can't sleep, naturally he asks Stella to read him a story!

Grant, Joyce. *Gabby.* **Illustrated by Jan Dolby.**

Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

Gabby drops a book and all the letters spring out into her playroom! Gabby creates a new friend by spelling c-a-t and then, as she finds other letters and other words come to life, chaos ensues. Lively spelling fun indeed!

Jocelyn, Marthe and Nell Jocelyn. *Where Do You Look?*

Tundra Books.

Using collage illustrations, Marthe and Nell Jocelyn introduce homonyms to early readers. The clever combinations, including, “Where do you look for a tongue? In a shoe? Or in your mouth?”, will have everyone laughing and reading them again. A definite hit!

MacKay, Elly. *If You Hold a Seed.*

Running Press Kids.

A boy makes a wish when he plants a seed & soon magical things begin to happen over the seasons. Extraordinarily beautiful illustrations highlight the wonders of nature in this must read.

Snicket, Lemony. *The Dark*

Illustrated by Jon Klassen.

Harper Collins Publishers.

In this unique picture book, Laszlo shares his home with the dark. He knows all its hiding places, and hopes it won't visit him at night in his room. But it does – and the simple but effective art reflects the stark, black spread of the night in Laszlo's bedroom. When the night beckons Laszlo into its bedroom (the basement), the two reach an understanding.

Storms, Patricia. *Never Let You Go.*

Scholastic Canada.

A heart-warming storybook about the enduring and unconditional love that parents have for their children. The bright and cheery illustrations, along with the likeable penguin characters make this storybook especially appealing.

Villeaneuve, Anne *Loula is Leaving for Africa.*

Kids Can Press.

With nods to Madeline and Eloise, this charming story follows an imaginative girl as she runs away (to the park) with the aid of her family's chauffeur.

Young, Jessica. *My Blue is Happy.* **Illustrated by Catia Chien. Candlewick.**

When told blue is a sad colour, a girl responds that blue is happy like favourite jeans or the swimming pool. A wonderful debut book that challenges the common interpretations of colours and emotions.

Picture Books (Honourables):

Becker, Helaine. *Little Jack Horner Live From the Corner.*

Illustrated by Mike Boldt. *Scholastic.*

Boldt, Mike. *123 Versus ABC.* Harper Collins.

Larsen, Andrew. *In the Tree House.*

Illustrated by Dušan Petričić. Kids Can

Stinson, Kathy. *The Man With the Violin.*

Illustrated by Dušan Petričić. Annick.

Thornhill, Jan. *Is This Panama? A Migration Story.*

Illustrated by Soyeon Kim. Owlkids Books Inc..

FICTION

Armstrong, K. L. and M. A. Marr. *Loki's Wolves*

Illustrated by Vivienne To. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.

In this first installment of the Blackwell Pages series, Matt (a descendant of Thor) joins forces with Fen and Laurie (descendants of Loki) to stop Ragnarok (the world's end). This fast-paced adventure has a great cast of characters who are all descended from Norse gods and will keep readers entertained.

Britt, Fanny. *Jane, the Fox & Me.* **Illustrated by Isabelle Arsenault. Groundwood Books**

Hélène escapes the torments of “mean girls” bullying by retreating to the fictitious world of her favourite book, Jane Eyre. This stunning graphic novel captures the heartbreak of social rejection, and the jubilation of *finally* finding a true friend.

Coates, Jan L. *The Power of Harmony.* **Red Deer Press.**

When Jennifer makes friends with Melody, a Native girl in her class, she discovers that she has the strength to stand up to the bullies in her school and also overcome her fear of singing in public. A touching & inspiring read.

DeLint, Charles *The Cats of Tanglewood Forest*

Little Brown Books for Young Readers.

Lillian believes in magic having never seen any. Until, that is, she is turned into a kitten to save her life. A modern tale with the depth of long ago stories.

Lloyd, Jennifer. *Murilla Gorilla, Jungle Detective.*

Illustrated by Jacqui Lee. Simply Read Books.

In this hilarious “who-dunnit”, we are introduced to Murilla Gorilla, a scatterbrained detective who is investigating the disappearance of Ms. Chimpanzee's muffins. This new easy-read series is a delight!

Mack, W.C. *Athlete vs. Mathlete.* **Scholastic Canada.**

Owen and Russell are NOT identical twins, especially when it comes to sports. But when “brainy” Russell is recruited to the basketball team because of his height, the twins find their worlds flipped upside down. A funny novel that keeps the reader guessing, will it be a full-blown sibling rivalry, or will “brotherly love” prevail?

MacLean, Jill. *The Hidden Agenda of Sigrid Sugden.*
Fitzhenry & Whiteside

In this series entry, the focus is on Sigrid, a tough-girl bully who has decided to change her ways. When Sigrid betrays the mean girls, and tries to make new friends, she realizes how much damage she has done and sets about a plan to repair it. As Sigrid begins to right wrongs, she is tested time and again.

Stevenson, Robin. *Record Breaker.* **Orca Book Publishers.**

12 year-old Jack thinks breaking a world record will make his parents happy. Instead, it's the advice of a kind friend that helps Jack and his parents reconnect after a tragic loss. A well written story for children about the complexities of bereavement, and the role of friendship during times of grief.

Vansickle, Vikki. *Summer Days, Starry Nights.*
Scholastic Canada.

In the summer of 1962, Reenie Starr has a plan to solve everyone's problems and also save the family resort from ruin. Along the way secrets are revealed and Reenie discovers much about herself and her family. Readers will fall in love with the irrepressible Reenie Starr!

Junior Fiction - Honourables:

Leck, James. *The Further Adventures of Jack Lime.* Kids Can Press
Marentette, Meghan. *The Stowaways.* Pajama Press.

NON-FICTION

Birmingham, Maria. *Weirdzone: Sports.* **Illustrated by Jamie Bennett.** **Owlkids Books Inc.**

Readers will be amazed when they read about the weird and wacky world of strange sports, from swamp soccer and cheese racing, to human tower building. Love a challenge? *Weirdzone: Sports* will keep you riveted and asking for more.

Editors of Chirp Magazine. *Joking Around With Chirp: More Than 130 Feather-Ruffling Jokes, Riddles, and Tongue Twisters!* **Illustrated by Bob Kain.** **Owlkids Books Inc.**

What's a frog's favourite food? French-flies! This collection of jokes, riddles and tongue twisters is sure to tickle the funny bones of kids and adults alike. A fun way to introduce the joy of reading to beginning readers!

Glassbourg, Michael. *Learn to Speak Film: a Guide to Creating, Promoting & Screening Your Movies.* **Designed and Illustrated by Jeff Kulak.** **Owlkids Books Inc.**

Every aspect of filmmaking is featured in this colourful, detailed book. From lighting to scripts to storyboards to working with actors – this book has everything a budding filmmaker needs to know.

Jocelyn, Marthe. *Sneaky Art: Crafty Surprises to Hide in Plain Sight.* **Candlewick Press.**

Not your typical craft book for children, *Sneaky Art* is a kid's how-to guide for creating and sharing art projects in unexpected places. This collection of clever and “crafty” ideas will inspire budding artists to add a little art to everyday life.

McLachlan, Brian. *Draw Out the Story: Ten Secrets to Creating Your Own Comics.* **Owlkids Books Inc.**

Using lots of pictures (of course!) and easy to understand ideas, cartoonist McLachlan makes the work of creating a comic look easy. Many of these ideas can be applied to any creative writing.

Mulder, Michelle. *Pedal It! How Bicycles are Changing the World.* **Orca Book Publishers.**

Did you know about all the amazing uses of bicycles around the world? From ambulances to powering computers, this book celebrates everything about bicycles, their history and their impact on the world.

Suneby, Elizabeth. *Razia's Ray of Hope: One Girl's Dream of an Education.* **Illustrated by Suana Verelst.**

Kids Can Press.

Razia longs to attend the new girls' school in her Afghani village, but her family does not approve. Support comes from some unexpected places, but it is only after she solves a family crisis using her reading skills that her dream comes true. A remarkable story filled with hope.

Sylvester, Kevin. *Showtime: Meet the People Behind the Scenes.* **Annick Press.**

Behind every great performance, there are talented people working behind the scenes. Readers are granted a “backstage pass” to meet the people, from choreographer to promoter, who make a show a success.

Walker, Niki. *Why Do We Fight?: Conflict, War, and Peace.* **Owlkids Books Inc.**

This is a well-balanced book that inspires its readers to really think about how conflict occurs, both in the real world and in their own lives. Using bold graphics, flowcharts, maps and sidebar definition of words, this book is an excellence resource for discussions on world affairs.

Winters, Kari-Lynn. *Buzz About Bees.*

Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

“BEE-lieve it or not, bees are something to buzz about!”

Discover why bees, admired in cave paintings and hieroglyphs, fascinate us and remain so important today. Learn about the different types of bees, their unique habitats and social structure and many other amazing facts.

Junior Non Fiction - Honourables:

.Bergeron, Alain, Quintin, Michel, Sampar. *Do You Know Chameleons?* – Fitzhenry & Whiteside plus other titles in series
Isabella, Jude. *Chitchat: Celebrating the World's Languages.*

Illustrated by Kathy Boake. Kids Can Press.

Shapiro, Sheryl and Shapiro, Simon. *Ladybugs Have Lots of Spots.*
Annick.

Vermond, Kira. *Growing Up, Inside and Out.* Owlkids Books Inc.

Vickers, Roy Henry and Budd, Robert. *Raven Brings the Light.*

Illustrated by Roy Henry Vickers. Harbour Publishing.

OLA'S CANADIAN MATERIALS COMMITTEE

We are a long standing committee with a strong voice in promoting Canadian literature for children and young adults. Our goal is to highlight excellence in literature for children and young adults for the OLA membership and others with an interest.

The OLA's annual Best Bets lists evolved from a list put out by the Canadian Material's Committee of the Children's Services Guild. This Canadian Materials Committee is now under the wing of the OPLA Children and Youth Committee.

The OLA's Canadian Materials Committee selects books on the basis of their literary/artistic merit as well as their appeal for children and young adults. Text and illustrations are of equal importance in picture books and information books. We publish two lists each year, one listing top material for children and the other listing top material for young adults (teens).

Meetings are held a minimum of six times a year. Library Members discuss and evaluate recent publications by Canadian authors and illustrators. The books evaluated are suitable for children and young adults from birth to nineteen years old. From these discussions, the Committee produces "Best Bets" lists, annual annotated lists of recommended titles. These lists are released each year at the OLA Super Conference and can also be found on the OPLA website on the Children and Youth Services Committee page at http://www.accessola.org/OLAWEB/OPLA/Children_and_Youth_Services_Committee/OLAWEB/OPLA/Best_Bets.aspx

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Laura Luopa, Caledon Public Library
Terry Milligan, Retired Librarian
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