May 3 – 10, 2014
TD Canadian Children’s Book Week
READ TO REMEMBER
Lire pour se souvenir
du 3 au 10 mai 2014
Semaine canadienne TD du livre jeunesse

Canadian War Books for Kids & Teens
This year’s theme guide was inspired by the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I, which takes place in August. But this is not the only monumental military commemoration to occur in 2014. Two months earlier, June will mark the 70th anniversary of the World War II events of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy.

Books can help us to remember WWI and other past conflicts, honour those involved and help us recognize that war is still with us today.

Learn of Canada’s role in the two world wars, discover the major battles of these conflicts, and see both world wars through the eyes of soldiers. Hear stories from the Holocaust and encounter righteous Gentiles who risked their lives to protect their Jewish fellow citizens and those who also took a stand through other forms of resistance against the Nazis. Delve into our nation’s past shameful practice of internment of some of its citizens – first of Ukrainian Canadians during World War I and then of both Japanese Canadians and Italian Canadians during World War II. Step into the worlds of young people whose lives are affected by conflict raging in their countries (Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda, Sierra Leone) in the 21st century.

The books in this guide are listed alphabetically by title and grouped according to category (e.g., picture books, junior fiction, YA fiction, non-fiction, etc.). Thematic links are included at the end of each annotation to help you select appropriate books by subject. Look for the Activities section following the annotations for suggestions on how to make these books come alive in your classroom or library.

War always comes at a high cost. An ancient proverb says “When elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers.” In other words, young people are the ones who are most affected by war that is waged by adults. This is a truth we must always remember.
A Bear in War

Written by Stephanie Innes and Harry Endrulat
Illustrated by Brian Deines
Pajama Press, 2012 ©2009
ISBN: 978-1-927485-12-5 (hc)
Grades 1–3 (Ages 6–8)

This real-life heartwarming story revolves around a father, his daughter, a war and a teddy bear. In 1915, 37-year-old Lawrence Browning Rogers left behind his two children, his wife and their farm in East Farnham, Quebec, when he enlisted in the Fifth Canadian Mounted Rifles. During the next two and a half years, the family corresponded via hundreds of letters, and daughter Aileen sent her adored Teddy abroad to keep her father safe. While Teddy returned home safely, Lieutenant Rogers did not as he died in the battle of Passchendaele. Eighty-five years later, his granddaughter discovered Teddy, the letters and other war memorabilia packed away in a briefcase. His great-granddaughter, author Stephanie Innes, used these documents to craft a moving account of one family’s love and sacrifice. Family photographs and poignant oil paintings round out this touching tale. This title was a finalist for the 2009 Information Book Award and a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009 starred selection.

Thematic Links: Teddy Bears – World War I – Soldiers – Father and Child

A Brave Soldier

Written and illustrated by Nicolas Debon
Groundwood Books, 2002
ISBN: 978-0-88899-481-3 (hc)
Grades 1-3 (Ages 6-8)

Frank knows nothing about war or Germans. He enlists to serve in the army so that others won’t view him as a coward and because of his friend’s enthusiasm for war. The young soldiers are sent to France to fight in World War I. During their first battle, Frank is gravely wounded and his friend is killed. Before returning home at the end of the conflict, Frank visits the grave of his friend. Striking acrylic artwork, muted in colour, supports the powerfully told story. This book is also available in French as Un brave soldat.

Thematic Links: World War I – Soldiers

Forget-Me-Not

Written by Maxine Trottier
Illustrated by Nancy Keating
Tuckamore Books, 2008
ISBN: 978-1-897174-24-1 (pb)
Grades 2–7 (Ages 7–12)

During the summer of 1917, Bridget Keats encounters a soldier named Jake Wiseman in the small Newfoundland outport where she lives. The man is most mysterious – he won’t reveal himself and hides away in the old lighthouse keeper’s cottage on a nearby island. No one knows for sure why he’s appeared. Some folks say he was wounded in the war and returned home terribly scarred, while others say he’s a coward. Casting aside all their speculation, Bridget delivers food to him daily. And she is the one who unearths the truth of what is inside Jake when a terrible storm forces him to make the hardest choice he has ever made. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009 starred selection and was a finalist for the 2009 Atlantic Book Awards.

Thematic Links: World War I – Soldiers – Newfoundland

The Little Yellow Bottle

Written by Angèle Delaunois
Illustrated by Christine Delezenne
Translated by Barbara Creary
Second Story Press, 2011
ISBN: 978-1-926920-34-4 (hc)
Grades 1–5 (Ages 6–10)

Marwa and Ahmad live in a war-afflicted country but don’t think much about war for it seems so far away. But the friends grow afraid when planes fly over their homes and drop grey bombs. Within a few days, they forget the incident and return to laughing and playing. One day, while the boys kick around a soccer ball, Ahmad spies a shiny yellow bottle. When he picks it up to show Marwa, it explodes and seriously injures both boys. Marwa wakes up covered in bandages, while Ahmad has lost two limbs. Time and a special visitor who delivers hope are what give Ahmad the courage to live and walk once more. This book was first published in French as Une petite bouteille, which was an IBBY International Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities 2011 selection and finalist for the 2012 Prix Tamarack.

Thematic Links: Friendship – Disabilities – Soccer
Naomi’s Tree

Written by Joy Kogawa
Illustrated by Ruth Ohi
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2008
Grades 3–6 (Ages 8–11)

A young Japanese couple immigrates to British Columbia, bringing a cherry seed to plant in their new garden. During the following years, the tiny cherry tree watches over the couple as they have children and grandchildren. Young Naomi makes the cherry tree her special friend, and its branches shelter her as she plays. But one day, war erupts between Japan and Canada, and her family is sent to an internment camp in the British Columbia Interior. Though Naomi often dreams of returning home, the dream disappears as the years pass. The little tree is left behind to mourn its loss. For several years the cherry tree emits a song of peace and love that only reaches Naomi in her dreams. But the insects and tiny animals hear the song, and on the wind they send back their own messages to the tree, assuring it that Naomi is safe and that one day she will return. And when she does, the tree will be waiting for her. This book was a finalist for the Ontario Library Association’s 2010 Blue Spruce Award. To learn more about illustrator Ron Lightburn and his work.


A Poppy is to Remember

Written by Heather Patterson
Illustrated by Ron Lightburn
Scholastic Canada, 2004
ISBN: 978-0-439-96786-0 (hc)
ISBN: 978-0-545-99981-6 (pb)
Grades 1–3 (Ages 6–8)

Patterson discusses the significance of Remembrance Day and how it is observed in Canada, and explains how the poppy was adopted as a symbol of remembrance. The author also shares the story of Canadian soldier-doctor-poet John McCrae and his famous poem, “In Flanders Fields.” Lightburn’s tender and dramatic artwork accompanies Patterson’s simple yet moving prose. Visit thelightburns.com to learn more about illustrator Ron Lightburn and his work.


Proud as a Peacock, Brave as a Lion

Written by Jane Barclay
Illustrated by Renné Benoit
Tundra Books, 2009
ISBN: 978-0-88776-951-1 (hc)
Kindergarten–Grade 2 (Ages 4–7)

This story unfolds against the backdrop of Remembrance Day. A young boy asks his grandfather (“Poppa”) several questions about war. The boy wants to know why his grandfather went to war and what it was like for him to serve in the military among other things. In answering his grandson, the man, a veteran, tells of his experiences and feelings about war. The mood of Poppa and his grandson’s conversation is lighthearted at first. It then grows sombre as the boy helps his grandfather put on his medals and they both pin on their poppies. This poignant tale features artwork rendered in watercolour and gouache. This book was a finalist for the Ontario Library Association’s 2010 Blue Spruce Award. To learn more about the book’s illustrator and her work, visit www.rennebenoit.ca.

Thematic Links: Grandfathers and Grandsons – War Veterans – Remembrance Day – Similes

The Road to Afghanistan

Written by Linda Granfield
Illustrated by Brian Deines
Scholastic Canada, 2013
Grades 2 and up (Ages 7 and up)

A soldier who has recently returned from Afghanistan reflects on her time served there. She remembers the physical beauty of the country, the tragedy that war has brought it, and those who fought there. The soldier describes her great-grandfather’s years spent in the trenches during World War I and her grandfather’s tour of duty served during World War II. She also remembers those soldiers who died in service and journeyed home along the Highway of Heroes, honoured by silent onlookers. Award-winning author and noted war historian Linda Granfield acknowledges that Canadians who served in Afghanistan were often not the first in their families to serve in the military. As a result, she wrote this book to honour generations of families who have fought in wars. Illustrator Brian Deines’ poignant and evocative artwork enhances this moving and honest portrayal of military service. The acclaimed artist is also the creator of the poster image for TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014. This book is also available in French as Sur la route de l’Afghanistan. To learn more about the author and her books visit www.lindagranfield.com.

Thematic Links: Veterans – Family History – Soldiers – Afghanistan

The Secret of the Village Fool

Written by Rebecca Upjohn
Illustrated by Renné Benoit
Second Story Press, 2012
ISBN: 978-1-926920-75-7 (hc)
Grades 2 and up (Ages 7 and up)

Milek and his older brother, Munio, live in Zborów, a sleepy Polish village,
which they find rather unexciting. One person who does stand out, though, is their unusual neighbour, Anton, who refuses to eat meat, feeds flies and talks to animals. People laugh at him because of his odd habits and dub him the Village Fool. But when war strikes Zborów and the Nazis start rounding up the Jewish boys, Anton comes to the rescue. He hatches a plan to hide Milek and Munio, their parents and two orphaned young women, while jeopardizing his own life, without a moment’s hesitation. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2013 selection. It was also nominated for the Ontario Library Association’s 2014 Golden Oak Award and 2014 Silver Birch Express Award. Visit www.rebeccauptohn.com to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** Poland – World War II – Holocaust – Righteous Gentiles

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**A Bear in War**

Military units identified themselves with adopted animal mascots, such as birds, goats and dogs, which lived in the field alongside the soldiers. Canada’s most famous mascot was Winnipeg (“Winnie”), a black bear cub, which travelled abroad from Canada. The unit decided to place the bear in the London Zoo, rather than subject him to the rigours of the front. Winnipeg delighted thousands of visitors and later served as the inspiration for A.A. Milne’s *Winnie-the-Pooh*. Numerous soldiers also had pets, commonly cats and dogs, in and near the frontline trenches. The book *Animals at War* (Usborne, 2006) provides a fascinating entry point into a discussion about how animals have been and continue to be involved in war.

**Naomi’s Tree**

This book’s prequel, *Naomi’s Road*, was adapted into an opera. The Vancouver Opera performed the piece in schools and community centres throughout British Columbia during 2012-2013. A teacher’s study guide for the opera is available online. Vancouver’s Historic Joy Kogawa House offers educational tours that support the BC Social Studies Curricula (Grade 5 and Grade 11) but can be tailored to meet other grades’ learning requirements. Visit www.kogawahouse.com to learn more about this cultural institution.

**A Poppy is to Remember**

The poppy came to be a symbol of remembrance for soldiers who died in war and, therefore, is associated with Remembrance Day. Find out which flowers and plants have become symbols for various holidays, occasions and even charitable organizations. The red rose, white lily, poinsettia, olive branch, laurel wreath and holly are examples of flowers and plants that children could research.

**Proud as a Peacock, Brave as a Lion**

Follow up the reading of this book with an introduction to similes, including those that refer to animals (e.g., mad as a wet hen, sly as a fox). Idioms are another form of speech that could be fun to discuss. Author-illustrator Wallace Edwards has created two titles, *Monkey Business* and *The Cat’s Pajamas*, which offer entertaining and visually attractive texts with which to explore idioms. Children can try their hand at creating their own similes and idioms and then illustrating them.

**The Road to Afghanistan**

Look for opportunities to show Canadian veterans gratitude for their sacrifices and achievements in serving our nation. Young people can bring joy to vets by making cards for them for Valentine’s Day. Each year, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) invites Canadian schools, organizations and individuals to do so for its Valentine’s for Vets program. The VAC then distributes the valentines to veterans in long-term-care facilities across the nation in time for February 14th.
1. Why do you write books about war for young readers? Why is it important for young people to know about war (past and/or present)?

As I write this reply, Russia and Ukraine are threatening war and conflicts are ongoing in South America and Africa. As sheltered readers in North America, we need to inform ourselves of present events and understand that the history of our own families, communities and nation includes such tumultuous times. Armed with knowledge, rather than weapons, we can hope to affect change by other means.

2. Share one story/fact you discovered in your research that you have not been able to forget.

I have been moved by the compassion shown by one soldier for another, during and long after they served in a war. One veteran quietly told me of a burial service on a mountain-top for the head (yes, head) of a pilot killed in the Second World War. With no other option available to them, and with grace and respect, two soldiers there honoured their 'brother.' I shall never forget the importance of that moment he shared, decades after it happened.

3. What was the first book about war that you wrote and why did you write it?

In 1994, I realized there were no non-fiction titles about war available for young Canadians. How were young people supposed to connect with our nation’s veterans if they couldn’t read about the wars in which our veterans had served? Students were reciting “In Flanders Fields” every November 11th and they didn’t know what the poem meant. I began my research into the First World War and John McCrae and in 1995, my book, In Flanders Fields: The Story of the Poem by John McCrae, was published. It has been in print for 20 years, with a new edition out in time for the 100th anniversary of the poem in May 2015.

4. What grade levels do you write for and what are some of your books that are important for teachers to share with their students?

My books are for readers aged 8 through adult. The combination of artifacts and text makes my books interesting and accessible for all ages. Creative educators use my adult titles (Brass Buttons, for example) with high school students; the album-style books are often used in ESL classes. Without hesitation, I would say all of my history books about Canada’s service in times of war are important for teachers, librarians and parents to share with our young (and adult) readers. That said, Canada’s service members who fought in Afghanistan have just come home — they will be visiting classrooms for decades to come. I wrote The Road to Afghanistan to help educators connect their students with this new generation of veterans.

5. Why is it important for today’s youth to “remember”?

Our growing technology is making it increasingly easy to share ‘selfies,’ send videos of ourselves eating fries and play at war via electronic gaming. The ‘unimportant’ has become valued; meanwhile, we’ve lost connections to family and community heritage that nurture us in important ways. Taking the time to remember what our ancestors believed and died for — yes, gave their lives for, unlike the ‘bodies’ in war games — gives us substance and direction for our own lives.

6. Are you currently working on any war-related books? If so, please share what they are about and when they will be available.

I am writing the first draft of a biography (for adult readers) of a man who helped save many thousands of Chinese during the long attack on Nanking in 1937. I’m also doing research for a young readers’ book about war and doughnuts!

LINDA GRANFIELD has written 30 award-winning history books for young readers and adults. She’s presented history sessions (complete with artifacts from the past) in schools and libraries across Canada and beyond. Linda enjoys doing research for “the next book,” visiting new places, and not eating oatmeal!
Behind Enemy Lines
(I Am Canada)

Written by Carol Matas
Scholastic Canada, 2012
ISBN: 978-0-545-99066-0 (hc)
Grades 4-7 (Ages 9-12)

Prairie teen Sam Frederiksen, 18, has trained to be a gunner in a Lancaster bomber during World War II. After being shot down over France, he is left battered and bruised but he survives. When he then joins forces with the French Resistance, one of its members betrays him. Sam and other airmen from different Allied nations are taken by the Gestapo and held in Fresnes prison near Paris. Though the men are prisoners of war, they are treated as spies and then sent to eastern Germany’s Buchenwald concentration camp. Amidst its wretched conditions, Sam witnesses humanity’s darkest side in the form of starvation, gas chambers and torture. It is also in Buchenwald that he grows to comprehend the unfathomable courage and true resilience of its victims. This book is partially based on a real World War II incident in which 168 Allied airmen (26 of them Canadian) were captured and sent to Buchenwald. It was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2012 selection. Readers will also enjoy Matas’s In My Enemy’s House. To learn more about Carol Matas and her work, visit www.carolmatas.com.

Thematic Links: World War II – Concentration Camps – Prisoners of War

The Breadwinner Trilogy

Written by Deborah Ellis
Groundwood Books, 2009
ISBN: 978-0-88899-959-7 (pb)
Grades 5-9 (Ages 10-14)

This award-winning and best-selling series revolves around an Afghan girl named Parvana. In The Breadwinner, Parvana is forbidden to earn money as a girl and, therefore, disguises herself as a boy to support her family after her father is arrested for the crime of having a foreign education. In Parvana’s Journey, Parvana embarks on a trek to find her mother, sister and brother, who are all attending a faraway wedding, to let them know that her father has died. In Mud City, Shauzia, Parvana’s best friend, escapes her miserable life in Afghanistan only to wind up in a refugee camp in Pakistan. She leaves the camp and is rescued by Americans, but when disaster ensues she ends up at the camp yet again. Royalties from the sale of the first two titles go to Women for Women, an organization that supports health and education projects in Afghanistan, while those from the third go to Street Kids International. Fans of the trilogy will also enjoy My Name is Parvana. To learn more about the author and her books, visit deborahellis.com. Check out Groundwood Books’ website for the teacher’s guides for: The Breadwinner, Parvana’s Journey and Mud City.


Brothers Far From Home: The World War I Diary of Eliza Bates
(Dear Canada)

Written by Jean Little
Scholastic Canada, 2003
ISBN: 978-0-439-96900-0 (hc)
Grades 4-6 (Ages 9-11)

Two long years have passed since Eliza’s beloved older brother, Hugo, left to serve in the war. Wrapped up in his enthusiasm, she couldn’t comprehend her parents’ less-than-enthusiastic reaction. Now that Jack, her other brother, has also enlisted, she longs for the safe return of both siblings. If only she had a confidant with whom she could share her feelings... This book was a CCBC Our Choice 2004 starred selection and was an honour book for the 2004 Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People. Visit www.jeanlittle.ca to learn more about the author and her books. Check out Scholastic Canada’s Dear Canada page for activities inspired by the book.

Thematic Links: World War I

The Diary of Laura’s Twin
(A Holocaust Remembrance Series for Young Readers)

Written by Kathy Kacer
Second Story Press, 2008
Grades 5-8 (Ages 10-13)

Three weeks prior to her Bat Mitzvah, the Jewish coming-of-age ceremony, Laura receives a special assignment. She must read the diary of Sara Gittler, a girl her age whom the Nazis imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto during the Holocaust. Sara didn’t have the opportunity to celebrate her coming of age, so Laura is to research Sara’s life and then share
her Bat Mitzvah with her “twin” by talking about her at the ceremony. Initially hesitant to take on the project, Laura quickly becomes engrossed by Sara’s struggle to survive. Drawing on Sara’s courageous story from the past, Laura musters the courage to confront the possibility of a friend’s current participation in the desecration of a Jewish cemetery. Photographs, biographies of young heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and true accounts of “twinning” ceremonies are included. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009 starred selection. Readers will also enjoy Kacer’s The Secret of Gabi’s Dresser. To learn more about the author and her work, visit www.kathykacer.com. Kathy Kacer will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014. 

Thematic Links: Diaries – World War II – Holocaust –Coming of Age – Ceremonies

Fire in the Sky (I Am Canada)

Written by David Ward
Scholastic Canada, 2013
Grades 4-7 (Ages 9-12)

When the first World War breaks out in Europe, Paul Townend watches as his older brother, Robert, enlists and joins one of Winnipeg’s regiments in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Being too young to enlist himself, Paul waits until he turns nineteen and then joins the Royal Naval Air Service in Ontario. With only a few weeks of training Paul finds himself heading to England to fight the Germans in The Great War. He learns fast as he participates in dogfights over France and the English Channel and even encounters the infamous Red Baron. Paul’s experiences leave him shaken but also proud of what he and his fellow pilots achieve. The book includes photographs, a list of World War I Aircraft and a map of Europe. For more information about the author, visit www.davidward.ca. A discussion guide for the book is available online.

Thematic Links: World War I – Airplanes – Pilots

The Flight of the Tiger Moth

Written by Mary Woodbury
Coteau Books, 2007
ISBN: 978-1-55050-364-7 (pb)
Grades 6-9 (Ages 11-14)

Teenager Jack Waters is too young to enlist in World War II. He gets an insider’s view into the war, though, when an air base to train British flyers opens near his small Prairie town of Cairn, Saskatchewan. Jack lands a job there, which allows him to surround himself with the airplanes he adores. But best of all, Sandy, who is his sister’s fiancé and an instructor at the base, is teaching him how to fly the Tiger Moth. Jack’s mom is beside herself with worry about his sister heading abroad to be a nurse, so Jack doesn’t let her know when Trevor, a pilot pal, takes him up again in a Tiger Moth. Fortunately, Jack has the opportunity to practise the skills Sandy taught him because soon a friend’s life depends on his putting what he learned into action. When a friend’s plane crashes in a field, Jack has no option but to make his first solo flight. To learn about the late author and her books, visit www.marywoodbury.ca. Visit Coteau Books’ website to obtain a study guide.

Thematic Links: World War II – Flight – Saskatchewan – Tigers (Training Plane)

Fly Boy

Written by Eric Walters
Puffin Canada, 2011
ISBN: 978-0-14-317630-5 (pb)
Grades 4-6 (Ages 9-11)

Robbie, 17, fibs about his identity to join the Royal Canadian Air Force under the pretense of attending boarding school so that his mom doesn’t catch on. He begins training and passes his classes with flying colours but is disappointed when he’s assigned to be a navigator on a Lancaster. He yearned to be a pilot, just like his dad, but the air force commanders have other plans. Robbie soon heads to England, where he finishes his training on missions bombing German targets in enemy territory. During one of these missions, his Lancaster is fired at, and the pilot and several crew members are shot. Robbie must then draw on his limited piloting experience to rescue the crew and himself. To learn more about the author and his books, visit www.ericwalters.net.

Thematic Links: World War II – Flight – Fathers and Sons

A Foreign Field

Written by Gillian Chan
Kids Can Press, 2002
ISBN: 978-1-55337-350-6 (pb)
Grades 5-8 (Ages 10-13)

Ellen Logan, 14, finds life difficult these days. With her nation involved in World War II, her brothers in the service and her parents busily supporting the war effort, Ellen is left to assume several of the family obligations. Life is even harder for Stephen Dearborn, a young British pilot-in-training at the local airfield. Inexperienced and miles from home, his romantic notions of being a flyer are dashed by the stark reality of his training. Even as Ellen and Stephen are forced to grow up before their time, their friendship continues to intensify — and together they learn that sometimes falling apart is only steps away from falling in love. This book was the winner of the Ontario Library Association’s 2003 White Pine Award and was
shortlisted for the 2004 Manitoba Young Readers’ Choice Award. Visit www.gillianchan.com to learn more about the author and her work.

**Thematic Links:** World War II

### Honey Cake

**Written by** Joan Betty Stuchner  
**Illustrated by** Cynthia Nugent  
**Tradewind Books,** 2007  
**ISBN:** 978-1-896580-371 (hc)  
**Grades** 4-6 (Ages 9-11)

This World War II story is set in 1943, and revolves around a Jewish-Danish boy. David thinks Copenhagen is the world’s most beautiful city and that not even the presence of the Nazis can tarnish it. Life has changed, though, since the soldiers arrived. David’s parents are always anxious. And his older sister heads to school early and returns home late. Sometimes she doesn’t even come home! David’s dad is a baker, and since the war started, cream and butter have become quite difficult to acquire. So David is astounded when his father bakes a “special order” of cream-filled chocolate éclairs. But when no one comes to pick up the éclairs, David is asked to run a very special errand. It’s an errand that will transform his life. A historical afterword and a recipe for honey cake accompany the story. This book was the winner of the 2009 Chocolate Lily Award and a finalist for the 2010 Red Cedar Award. To learn more about the author and her books, visit joanbettystuchner.blogspot.ca. Check out www.cynthianugent.com to learn more about the illustrator and her work.

**Thematic Links:** World War II – Courage  
- Resistance – Friendship – Jews –  
- Denmark – Righteous Gentiles

### Making Bombs for Hitler

**Written by** Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch  
**Scholastic Canada,** 2012  
**ISBN:** 978-1-4431-0730-3 (pb)  
**Grades** 4-8 (Ages 9-13)

Ostarbeiter (“eastern worker”) is the German term that refers to the several million civilians from the “conquered eastern territories” who were taken to Germany and used for forced labour during World War II. This story revolves around Lida, a girl whom the Germans kidnapped and forced into slave labour. Her tiny hands make her the ideal candidate to handle delicate munitions work in addition to her other tasks, so she is sent to a factory that builds bombs. The conditions and strenuous work leave her emotionally traumatized and extremely malnourished, but overriding all of this is her worry and resolve to learn what happened to Larissa, her vulnerable younger sister. With rumours of the Allies turning the tide in the war, Lida and her mates conspire to sabotage the bombs in an attempt to block the Nazis’ war effort. When her work camp is freed at last, she is able to embark on her search to learn the fate of her sister. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2012 starred selection, was shortlisted for the 2013 Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People and won the Ontario Library Association’s 2013 Silver Birch Award. Readers will also enjoy Skrypuch’s Stolen Child, a companion title to Making Bombs for Hitler. Visit calla2.com to learn more about the author and her work. Marsha Skrypuch will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014.

**Thematic Links:** World War II – Sisters –  
- Germany – Ostarbeiters (Eastern Workers)

### Keeping Secrets

**Written by** Jean Booker  
**Scholastic Canada,** 2011  
**ISBN:** 978-1-4431-0234-6 (pb)  
**Grades** 5-9 (Ages 10-14)

Ellen’s world changes drastically as the war’s effects reach the British countryside where she resides. Life is horrible, what with dealing with constant air raids and food rationing. Her situation worsens when her adored father is injured and transported to the hospital elsewhere. She is left on her own and must make grown-up decisions when her mother leaves to care for Ellen’s father. When a bomb leaves her trapped under a decaying building, she finds herself alone in the debris with an escaped German airman named Carl. While waiting to be rescued, Ellen is surprised to discover that the enemy isn’t what she thought he’d be. Will Ellen do what she is expected to and blow the whistle on Carl, or remain quiet and give him a shot at freedom? This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2012 selection. Readers will also enjoy Booker’s Still at War.

**Thematic Links:** World War II

### Prisoner of Dieppe

**Written by** Hugh Brewster  
**Scholastic Canada,** 2010  
**ISBN:** 978-0-545-98594-9 (hc)  
**Grades** 4-7 (Ages 9-12)

Though he’s only 18 years old, Alistair “Allie” Morrison lets his pal Mackie talk him into enlisting for World War II. After months of training, Allie is keen to go to war. His first action turns out to be not just any battle but the catastrophic raid on the German-held port of Dieppe. Nearly 1,000 Canadian soldiers perished during the fateful incident. In the resulting tumultuous evacuation, Allie and Mackie are captured as prisoners of war and sent to Germany’s Stalag...
Dear Canada page for activities inspired by the book. Visit calla2.com to learn more about the author and her work. Marsha Skrypuch will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014.


Sabotage
Written by Karen Autio
Sono Nis Press, 2013
ISBN: 978-1-55039-208-1 (pb)
Grades 4-8 (Ages 9-13)

It’s 1915, and the Great War is brewing in Europe. What does the conflict have to do with Port Arthur, Ontario? Heaps, thinks John Maki. Sure, he’s a prankster, but he’s also a hard-working newsboy with a secret wish to be a reporter. So he keeps his eyes peeled, searching for the big story. His older sister, Saara, has her own worries — like her aim of becoming a teacher. And like folks not talking to her simply because she befriends a German girl! She makes fun of John’s suspicions. German spies, blown-up bridges... surely not in northwestern Ontario. Yet John knows that all of the country’s grain destined for Europe comes through Port Arthur first. A saboteur could unleash tons of damage to the city, the country and even the Maki family! This is the final instalment in the trilogy about the Makis, a Finnish family living in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Visit www.karenautio.com to learn more about the author and her books.

Thematic Links: Dogs – Death – Peacekeeping Forces – Bosnia and Herzegovina

Shot at Dawn, World War I:
Allan McBride, France 1917
(I Am Canada)

Written by John Wilson
Scholastic Canada, 2011
ISBN: 978-0-545-98595-6 (hc)
Grades 4-7 (Ages 9-12)

Allan McBride is shocked by the reality of trench warfare. He had eagerly seized the chance to join the war effort and participate in the fighting. But now after months in the razed battlefields, witnessing men get blown up by German shelling, something in Allan’s mind snaps and he leaves his unit, thinking he is “walking home to Canada” to get aid for a friend. After drifting for a week, he is taken...
in by a band of true deserters — men who have left their units and live on the brink of survival in the woods of northern France. Once Allan grasps what he’s done, he’s stricken by the reality of his dilemma. If he stays and is discovered, he’ll face uncertain consequences. If he heads back to his unit, though, he will be charged with desertion, which is a crime punishable by death. Photographs, maps and historical documents are included in this fast-paced novel. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2012 selection and shortlisted for both the 2012 Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People and the 2012 Snow Willow Award. Readers will also enjoy Wilson’s book And in the Morning. Visit johnwilsonauthor.com to learn more about the author and his work. Check out Scholastic Canada’s I Am Canada page for a discussion guide.

Thematic Links: World War I

When the Cherry Blossoms Fell

Written by Jennifer Maruno
Dundurn Press, 2009
ISBN: 978-1-89491-783-4 (pb)
Grades 4-7 (Ages 9-12)

In 1941, during World War II, Japan attacked the US’s Pearl Harbor naval base. Following this incident, Canada deemed its Japanese citizens enemy aliens. British Columbia’s Japanese Canadians, numbering more than 20,000, were uprooted and sent to internment camps. Maruno’s powerful and moving story is set during this dark chapter in our nation’s history and told from the perspective of a young Japanese-Canadian girl. Before her birthday celebration, nine-year-old Michiko Minagawa bids her dad farewell. She isn’t aware that the government has instructed all Japanese-born men to leave BC. Ten days later, her family joins hundreds of Japanese Canadians on a train bound for an internment camp in the British Columbia Interior. Even though her Aunt Sadie jokes about it, Michiko’s family have really arrived in the “Land of No.” There are no streetcars, no paved roads and no streetlights. The house where they are forced to live is filthy and chilly. At school, Michiko finds out the truth of her situation. She must endure local prejudice, her first Christmas without her dad and the worst winter in 40 years. A glossary of Japanese words is included. This book was nominated for the 2011 Hackmatack Children’s Choice Book Award. Readers will also want to read the sequel, Cherry Blossom Winter. Visit jennifermaruno.com to learn more about the author and her books.


The Breadwinner Trilogy

The book’s author, Deborah Ellis, founded Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan in 1996. This small solidarity volunteer network strives to empower Afghan women and girls. Students can think up and implement creative ways to raise funds for the organization’s “Libraries for Afghanistan” project. To learn more about the organization and this initiative, visit www.cw4wafghan.ca. Click on the “For Educators” option under “Resources” in the menu bar to access the following: Canadian Students as Global Citizens: Understanding Human Rights in Afghanistan teacher’s resource kit, an interactive game, province-specific curricula and lesson plans and links.

The Diary of Laura’s Twin

Use diaries as a way for students to connect on a personal level with children of the Holocaust. Keep in mind that some of these documents available will be written by young people who died during this period of persecution. Light One Candle: A Child’s Diary of the Holocaust is a teacher’s resource guide available for purchase online from the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum offers online access to children’s diaries from the Holocaust. Though Pieces of the Past: The Holocaust Diary of Rose Rabinowitz (Scholastic Canada, 2013) is a fictitious work created by Carol Matas for the Dear Canada series, it would still make ideal supplemental reading related to the topic.

The Flight of the Tiger Moth and Fly Boy

If you live in or near Mount Hope, Ontario, you can take your class on a field trip to the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum. If it is not possible to do so, students can visit the museum’s website at www.warplane.com to learn about different types of war aircraft. Two of the 49 airplanes presented include the de Havilland Tiger Moth referred to in Mary Woodbury’s novel and the Avro Lancaster referred to in Eric Walters’ story.
Honey Cake

Denmark was the only occupied nation that actively resisted the Nazi regime’s efforts to deport Danish Jews. The country’s effort to rescue its Jewish citizens was unique because it was nationwide. Have children learn about the ways in which Danish Gentiles worked to protect Danish Jews during World War II. With your class, you can also discuss “Righteous Gentiles,” the term used to refer to non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. Students can also turn their hand to baking and use the recipe provided by the author to make their own honey cake.

Prisoners in the Promised Land

An enemy alien is a citizen of a country that is in a state of conflict with the land in which he or she is living. Often, but not always, the countries are in a state of declared war. During World War I, Canada labelled its Ukrainian citizens as enemy aliens. (During World War II, our nation’s Italian and Japanese citizens faced the same treatment). Discuss with students our nation’s motive for how it treated its Ukrainian citizens from 1914 to 1920. Invite children to learn about prominent Ukrainian Canadians. Have students research ways in which Ukrainians have contributed to Canadian society.

When the Cherry Blossoms Fell

In Japan, the flowering cherry tree (“Sakura” in Japanese) is an honoured flowering plant. Explore the symbolism and significance of the cherry tree in Japanese culture. Those who live in or near Vancouver can attend the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival, which runs from April 3-28, 2014. Those who live in or near Toronto can attend the city’s High Park Cherry Blossom Festival, which is reported to take place in late April to early May. Some of the country’s botanical gardens might also offer the opportunity for your students to view cherry blossoms.
1. Why do you write books about war for young readers? Why is it important for young people to know about war (past and/or present)?

The answer to both those questions is that it is young readers who usually go off to war. If they understand something about what other young people went through in past wars, perhaps they’ll think twice.

2. Share one story/fact you discovered in your research that you have not been able to forget.

On July 1, 1916, while waiting for the Battle of the Somme to begin, a group of young volunteer soldiers were standing in a trench adjusting their equipment. One of them dropped a live hand grenade which, if it explodes, will kill most of the group. A second young soldier threw himself on the grenade. It exploded and killed the soldier, but his action saved everyone else’s life. The soldier, who was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross, haunts me, but so do the men he saved. What happened to them? Did some die in the battle that day? Did some survive the war and produce many grandchildren?

3. What was the first book about war that you wrote and why did you write it?

My first book set in war was And in the Morning, a fictional diary by a 15-year-old boy between 1914 and 1916. I wanted to show the enthusiasm with which these boys greeted the war in 1914, and show the effect if often had on them as the war progressed.

4. What grade levels do you write for and what are some of your books that are important for teachers to share with their students?

I write primarily for middle grades and teens. However, my books, particularly those set in WWI and II, are often used for novel studies by older grades when the curriculum covers 20th century history. The same applies to my illustrated non-fiction books: Desperate Glory: The Story of WWI, Failed Hope: The Story of the Lost Peace, and Bitter Ashes: The Story of WWII.

5. Why is it important for today’s youth to “remember”?

As Georges Santayana said, “Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it.” War is a huge part of human history. If we want to stop it, we have to understand it and its seductive attractions.

6. Are you currently working on any war-related books? If so, please share what they are about and when they will be available.

With this year being the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of WWI, I have a number of different war-related books on the go. Primarily I have a series of novels for Doubleday, the first of which, Wings of War, is scheduled for release in July. Wings of War follows a young Canadian pilot through 1915 and 1916, in the days before the more familiar Billy Bishop and von Richthofen. The sequel, scheduled for 2015, is tentatively titled Dark Terror and is about the miners who dug tunnels and fought a terrifying war underground. I am also working on a WWI diary at the Canadian War Museum with the objective of turning it into an illustrated non-fiction book.

JOHN WILSON is an award-winning author who grew up in Scotland, nearer in time to Passchendaele than to now, and believes that remembering the past is vital for young people to understand the present. Consequently, well-researched history is central to John’s 37 works for kids, teens and adults.

In his fiction, John has visited WWI (And in the Morning, Shot at Dawn) and WWII (Flames of the Tiger, Four Steps to Death), and has a trilogy of history books that cover the years 1914 to 1939 (Desperate Glory, Failed Hope, Bitter Ashes). Wings of War, the first in a new series of WWI novels, will be published in June.

John lives on Vancouver Island and has a website at johnwilsonauthor.com.
Charlie Wilcox
Written by Sharon E. McKay
ISBN: 978-0-14-301470-6 (pb)
Grades 7-10 (Ages 12-15)

All Charlie Wilcox, a Newfoundland boy, wishes for in life is to go to sea like his dad, Captain Sam Wilcox. However, Charlie’s parents think their son seems bound for other, calmer pursuits since he’s not a strong lad to start with and was born with a club foot. Bent on proving them wrong, Charlie stows away on what he believes is a fishing boat, surfacing days later to discover himself far out at sea, headed not for the ice, but for France and World War I’s battlefields. This book won the 2001 Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People and was a CCBC Our Choice 2001 selection. Readers may also wish to read the sequel, Charlie Wilcox’s Great War.

Thematic Links: Newfoundland – World War I

The Darkest Corner of the World
Written by Urve Tamberg
Dancing Cat Books, 2012
Grades 9 and up (Ages 14 and up)

The year is 1941, and Estonia is under the Soviet Union’s iron rule. Madli, 15, is grappling to comprehend why she’s forbidden to fly her country’s flag, why soldiers are stationed at every corner and why her father was whisked away in the dead of night. The one thing she has to look forward to is her yearly vacation to Hiiumaa Island for the Midsummer celebration. But in the midst of the festivities, the Nazis invade the Soviet Union and are on a route that will lead them through Estonia. Madli learns of a band of forest-dwelling freedom fighters resolved to overthrow the Soviets at any price. As a result, she is compelled to choose whether she’d rather live under the evil regime she knows, or help another evil regime in hopes that her dad will be released and her country’s story heard. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2013 selection. Visit utamberg.wordpress.com to learn more about the author.

Thematic Links: Estonia – World War II – Resistance Movement

Daughter of War
Written by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2008
Grades 9 and up (Ages 14 and up)

Teenagers Kevork and his fiancée Marta are the fortunate ones. They have succeeded so far in surviving Turkey’s Armenian genocide, and both are disguised as Muslims. Kevork is living as an Arab in Syria, while Marta, who is pregnant with another man’s child, remains in Turkey. Kevork yearns to return to Turkey and search for Marta, but with the war brewing and the genocide still underway, the trek will be impossibly perilous. Meanwhile, Marta fears that even if Kevork has survived and they are reunited, he might not be able to accept what she has become. And what has happened to her sister Mariam, who was sold as a slave to the highest bidder? This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009 selection. To learn more about the author and her books, visit calla2.com. Marsha Skrypuch will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014.

Thematic Links: World War I – Turkey – Armenian Genocide

Generals Die in Bed
Written by Charles Yale Harrison
Annick Press, 2002 ©1930
ISBN: 978-1-55037-731-6 (hc)
Grades 9 and up (Ages 14 and up)

Harrison’s experiences as a member of the Canadian military in World War I inspired the book’s content. The author tells of the horrors of life in the trenches, as seen through the eyes of a young Montrealer sent to fight on the Western Front. Maps identifying key battle locations, and a useful introduction, place the war in historical and geographical context, while photographs make the Great War vivid for readers. Though Harrison went on to publish several other novels, none of them achieved the same level of success as this great anti-war novel. This work was originally released serially in 1928, and published as a novel in 1930.

Thematic Links: World War I

A Hare in the Elephant’s Trunk
Written by Jan L. Coates
Red Deer Press, 2010
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

This story is inspired by the real-life experiences of a Lost Boy of Sudan. When civil war strikes his Southern Sudanese village, seven-year-old Jacob embarks on a seemingly endless journey that tests his bravery and perseverance. The boy and his young
Young Adult Fiction

**Hunger Journeys**

Written by Maggie de Vries
HarperCollins Canada, 2010
ISBN: 978-1-55468-579-0 (pb)
Grades 7-11 (Ages 12-16)

This story, which unfolds in Amsterdam during World War II, is inspired by real events from the author’s mother-in-law’s life. Lena and Sofie are friends whose families are struggling to survive during the final winter of the war. The teenage girls embark on a hunger journey to Almelo, a town located near the German border, to find work and earn food packages to send home to their starving families. Lena and Sofie, who hold fake documents, are quickly pulled off the train by German soldiers. It’s only by chance that they board the train again — with the help of Albert, one of the other German soldiers. After Lena learns that the train had also been used to carry man soldiers, she worries about Will’s safety. But when her own safety is jeopardized, David places himself directly in harm’s way to protect her. This book was a CCBC Our Choice 2006 selection.

**Thematic Links:** World War I – Conscientious Objectors – Farming – Family

**A Kind of Courage**

Written by Colleen Heffernan
Orca Book Publishers, 2005
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

Everything changes when Hattie T amblyn’s much-loved older brother, Will, enlists in the army and is sent to fight in France. Hattie lives for her sibling’s letters from the front, but her dad despairs of running the family farm without Will’s help. Tension arises when Hattie’s father employs David Ross, a young conscientious objector, to work on the farm. His arrival there angers Hattie, who, like many of the family’s neighbours, believe all “con-chieys” are cowards. As the number of childhood friends getting maimed and killed overseas increases, Hattie worries about Will’s safety. But when her own safety is jeopardized, David places himself directly in harm’s way to protect her. This book was a CCBC Our Choice 2006 selection.

**Thematic Links:** World War I – Conscientious Objectors – Farming – Family

**Meggido’s Shadow**

Written by Arthur Slade
HarperCollins Canada, 2006
ISBN: 978-0-00-639568-3 (pb)
Grades 8-11 (Ages 13-16)

Sixteen-year-old Edward Bathe is desperate to fight the Huns in France and dizzy with romantic notions of war. When he enlists in 1917, he is assigned to a horse-training unit, much to his chagrin. His sole comforts are his companionship with his horse named Buke and his friendship with Emily, an attractive young nurse. When Edward is sent to fight the Turks in Palestine, he discovers that his beliefs about courage and heroism, about wrong and right, and about country and God, no longer ring true. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2013 selection and was nominated for the Ontario Library Association’s 2014 White Pine Award.

**Thematic Links:** Vietnam War – Abandonment – Relationships
**Run Like Jäger**
Written by Karen Bass
Coteau Books, 2008
ISBN: 978-1-55050-377-7 (pb)
Grades 8-12 (Ages 13-17)

Kurt Schreiber has a grandfather who has never been willing to discuss his time as a soldier in World War II. When the Canadian teen heads to Germany to study for a year, he decides to find out about his opa’s participation in the war. Kurt meets his grandfather’s long-time friend, Herr Brandt, the sole person who can tell the teen about his grandfather’s time in the war because he was there also. Kurt learns of his grandfather’s childhood in the Hitler Youth and his time in the German army on the Eastern Front. Through his discovery, he grows to comprehend how as children and young men, his grandfather and Herr Brandt were drawn into involvement in a war founded on lies. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009 starred selection. Visit [www.karenbass.ca](http://www.karenbass.ca) to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** World War II – Germany – Grandfathers

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**Violins of Autumn**
Written by Amy McAuley
ISBN: 978-0-8027-2299-7 (hc)
Grades 9-12 (Ages 14-17)

It’s 1944, and World War II rages on. Though most of London’s 17-year-old girls are collecting scrap metal or running air-raid drills, Betty Sweeney is resolved to effect real change. Fibbing about her age, Betty joins the Special Operations Executive, a top-secret government agency that trains spies and sends them behind enemy lines. Now known by her secret-agent persona, Adele Blanchard, she finds herself parachuting into Nazi German-occupied France under the cover of night. Uniting efforts with the underground Resistance movement, Adele must deliver critical messages in expectation of the Allied invasion on D-Day — and even a tiny error could land her in the hands of the merciless Gestapo. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2013 selection and a finalist for the 2013 Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People. Visit [www.amymcauley.com](http://www.amymcauley.com) to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** Spies – World War II – Resistance Movement – German Occupation

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**War Brothers: The Graphic Novel**
Written by Sharon E. McKay and Daniel Lafrance
Illustrated by Daniel Lafrance
Annick Press, 2013
ISBN: 978-1-55451-489-2 (hc)
Grades 9 and up (Ages 14 and up)

It is estimated that since 1987, Joseph Kony’s Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) has kidnapped roughly 30,000 Ugandan children from their homes and villages for use as slaves and soldiers. Sharon McKay’s story revolves around Jacob and Oteka, whose lives become intertwined as they find themselves in the clutches of the LRA in Uganda. The boys, who have been kidnapped from their boarding school, are now forced to obey the odd and brutal rules of Joseph Kony’s henchmen. Marching through harsh terrain with little food or water, they form a plan to make their escape. This haunting yet sensitive story first appeared as a novel that was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009 starred selection, earned a 2009 Arthur Ellis Best Juvenile Crime Award and was shortlisted for five other awards. Half of the book’s proceeds have been donated to Gulu Walk, an organization that helps war-affected youth in Uganda. To learn more about the author and her work, visit [www.sharonmckay.ca](http://www.sharonmckay.ca). Sharon McKay will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014.

**Thematic Links:** Child Soldiers – Africa – Friendship – Courage

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**Thunder Over Kandahar**
Written by Sharon E. McKay
Illustrated by Rafael Gerszak
Annick Press, 2010
ISBN: 978-1-55451-267-6 (hc)
ISBN: 978-1-55451-266-9 (pb)
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

British-raised Yasmine is displeased when she moves from England to Afghanistan, the native land of her parents. When her mother is seriously hurt, her family must seek refuge in an extremely traditional village where they wind up in even greater danger. After becoming separated from her parents, Yasmine befriends Tamanna, an abused village girl who was her family’s servant. United, the girls embark on a harrowing journey to the border as they attempt to flee the horrors of the Taliban regime. This book was shortlisted for the 2011 Snow Willow Award. Visit [www.sharonmckay.ca](http://www.sharonmckay.ca) to obtain a teacher’s guide for the novel and to learn more about the author and her books. Sharon McKay will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014.

**Thematic Links:** Afghanistan – Terrorism – Afghan War (2001)
What World is Left
Written by Monique Polak
Orca Book Publishers, 2008
Grades 10 and up (Ages 15 and up)

Though Anneke Van Raalte is a Dutch Jew, her religion means little to her. But it’s being Jewish that causes her life to take a dark, drastic and dangerous turn. When the Nazis invade Holland in 1942, Anneke and her family are deported to the Czechoslovakian concentration camp of Theresienstadt. Not only does the camp have dreadful conditions, it is the location of an intricate hoax. The Nazis are bent on convincing the world that Theresienstadt is a bucolic place and that European Jews are flourishing under the Nazi regime. Anneke’s father, being an artist, is forced to aid in Nazi propaganda campaigns, while Anneke finds herself caught between her sense of what is right and her loyalty to her family. This novel was inspired by Monique Polak’s mother, Celien Spier, who was imprisoned in Theresienstadt during World War II. Until the author began conducting the research for this book, her mom had never discussed her experience in the concentration camp. This book won the 2009 Quebec Writers’ Federation Prize for Children’s and YA Literature, was nominated for the Manitoba Young Readers’ Choice Award and has been translated into Dutch. To learn more about the author and her books, visit www.moniquepolak.com. Monique Polak will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014.

Thematic Links: Jews – Holocaust – World War II – Czechoslovakia

Wounded
Written by Eric Walters
Puffin Canada, 2009
ISBN: 978-0-14-317177-5 (pb)
Grades 7-10 (Ages 12-15)

Marcus and his sister and mother are counting the days until Marcus’s dad heads home from Afghanistan. Waiting weeks for a phone call, and with only the occasional email message, has been tough for the family, but they’re ready to celebrate his return. When the momentous day arrives, they are overwhelmed by joy and relief that he’s safe. But as the days pass, Marcus starts to sense that there’s something different about his dad. His father hardly sleeps, is fixated on the news from Afghanistan, seems almost too happy at times, and is aggressive and erratic at other times. Marcus understands that post-traumatic stress disorder affects plenty of soldiers. He initially finds it difficult to accept that his dad requires help. But when Marcus does realize that his father needs counselling, he just can’t seem to convince him of this. Visit www.ericwalters.net to learn more about the author and his books.

Thematic Links: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – Fathers and Sons – Afghanistan

The Darkest Corner of the World
Around the time of World War II, there were different resistance efforts underway in Estonia. The Forest Brothers (known as metsavennad in Estonian) were partisans who launched a guerrilla war against Soviet rule during the Soviet invasion and occupation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania during and following World War II. The Estonian resistance movement (known as Eesti vastupanuliikumine in Estonian) was an underground movement to resist Nazi Germany’s occupation of Estonia during World War II. Students can investigate the ways in which Estonians worked to resist Soviet and Nazi occupation of their country.

A Hare in the Elephant’s Trunk
The “Lost Boys of Sudan” are some 25,000 young men who have fled the wars in Sudan since the 1980s. Jacob Deng is one of these men and his real-life ordeal inspired this book. He escaped the war-torn nation when he was seven years old and came to Nova Scotia as a refugee in 2003. Jacob is the founder and director of Wadeng Wings of Hope, a Canadian registered charitable society dedicated to raising funds and implementing projects in support of children’s education and well-being in South Sudan. Students can visit wadeng.org to learn how they can lend a hand in supporting the organization’s work. Perhaps they can even earn community-service credits for any projects they undertake related to this initiative. The 2006 documentary film, God Grew Tired of Us, chronicles the difficult journey of three “Lost Boys of Sudan” to the United States where they seek a...
promising future. If possible, you can show the movie to your class. (If you choose to do so, don’t forget to check about public performance rights).

**Hunger Journeys**

The winter of starvation, called *Hon-gerwinter* in Dutch, was a famine that occurred in the German-occupied region of the Netherlands, particularly in the densely populated western provinces above the great rivers, during the winter of 1944-1945, near the end of World War II. The Germans blocked fuel and food shipments from farm areas to punish the Dutch for their reluctance to help the Nazi war effort. Thousands of people perished during the famine, while millions of others survived because of soup kitchens. Teens can discover more about this period by visiting the Dutch Resistance Museum’s website.

**Thunder Over Kandahar**

In January 2008, Sharon E. McKay was accepted into the Canadian Forces Artists Program (CFAP). She is the first children’s writer to participate in this initiative. The CFAP provides our nation’s artists, from various disciplines, the opportunity to document Canada’s soldiers at home and abroad. In March 2009, McKay travelled to Afghanistan to, in the words of the program description, “capture the daily operations, personnel, and spirit of the Canadian Forces.” As of 2011, there have been 50 artists who have participated in the CFAP. Have individuals, pairs or groups of students conduct research on one of these creators and present their findings to the class. Teens can also listen to a podcast of McKay discussing the inspiration and research for the book and more at [www.annickpress.com](http://www.annickpress.com).

**Violins of Autumn**

This story revolves around a British teenage girl who works as a spy during the Second World War. Have students learn about women who worked in secret intelligence during World War II. Some of these individuals include Canadians Sally Carling and Evelyn Davis, Andrée Borrel (France), Nancy Grace Augusta Wake (New Zealand) and Virginia Hall (United States). There are several online sources available to get the research rolling. Read the article “The Secret Life of Women Spies” published in *The Toronto Star* or consult the The National Women’s History Museum’s exhibit, “Clandestine Women: Spies in American History.”

Artist Nina Levitt’s *Little Breeze, Thin Air* and *Relay* are a trilogy of instalments that explore women’s intelligence activities during World War II. Find out more about these works on her website at [www.ninalevitt.com](http://www.ninalevitt.com).

**War Brothers: The Graphic Novel**

Like the book’s main characters, Jacob and Oteka, child soldiers who escape or are freed from their captors can face blame, anger and ostracism when they return home. Ishmael Beah wrote about his experiences as a former child soldier in his bestselling American book, *A Long Way Gone*. His interview on *The Hour* with George Stroumboulopoulos can be found on YouTube. Child soldiers are forced to commit horrifying acts or risk being brutalized or even killed themselves. Discuss why these youth are often overlooked and in what ways they are also victims of war. Sharon E. McKay donates 50 per cent of her royalties from the first version of this book to Gulu Walk, an organization that helps war-affected youth in Uganda. Visit [www.guluwalk.com](http://www.guluwalk.com) to find out how your students can support or participate in this charity’s work.

**What World is Left**

Terezin, (also known as *Theresienstadt*), is located in what is now the Czech Republic. During World War II, the Nazis used this town as a concentration camp. Despite its harsh conditions, the camp had a rich cultural life due to the artists, writers, musicians and other creative individuals imprisoned there. Monique Polak’s relative, Dutch illustrator Jo Spier (1900-1978), was an inmate at Terezin. Have students find out the identities of some of the prominent people who were imprisoned there and learn ways in which they used arts and culture to keep hope alive among inmates. In 1991, *Terezin: The Music 1941-44* was released. This two-CD collection features music written by this concentration camp’s inmates. The first CD features chamber music written by Gideon Klein, Viktor Ullmann and Hans Krasa. The second CD features Krasa’s well-known children’s opera, *Brundibar*, and songs by Ullmann and Pavel Haas. Teens can listen to the collection and share their thoughts about its music, as well.
1. Why do you write books about war for young readers? Why is it important for young people to know about war (past and/or present)?

I suppose the usual answer is, “Those who don’t know history are doomed to repeat it.” Edmund Burke

There is value in those iconic words, but we only have to look at the repeated, current-day genocides to know that repetition is the order of the day, and despite knowing our history we mostly stand on the sidelines, watch and document. Chilling. So what are we doing wrong?

Typically, history class focuses on the battles, the politics, the economics, but real education happens when we have an understanding of what leads up to conflict. Example, the Holocaust. The facts, figures, the scope is important but what is critical, and the lesson that should be applied to today, is to understand deeply how the Holocaust was built, phrase-by-phrase, poster-by-poster, law-by-law. The lessons of the Holocaust begin with understanding, really understanding, bullying.

Germany produced Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse — to name a few of the thousands of great artists that changed the world. The lesson here is, if Germany can fall into madness, so might we all.

If we can get that, then we are not learning ‘history.’ We become vigilant and learn how to live today.

2. Share one story/fact you discovered in your research that you have not been able to forget.

Battle of Beaumont Hamel, The Somme, World War I. At 8:45 a.m. on July 1, 1916, the Newfoundland Regiment was ordered to attack. Of the 780 men who went over the top, 68 answered roll call the next day. Think of it — sixty-eight. The slaughter of WW1 leaves me breathless. My historic family (Wilcox) is from Newfoundland, I am the mother of soldier-age sons, how could it not?

3. What was the first book about war that you wrote and why did you write it?

Charlie Wilcox. I wrote it to prove to myself that I could!

4. What grade levels do you write for and what are some of your books that are important for teachers to share with their students?

Grades 4 to New Adult, although I visit K and Grades 2 & 3 as well.

I write ‘fact-based fiction.’ All my books take careful note of both history and geography. I am painfully aware that astute readers follow in the footsteps of my characters. Schools tour Brigus, Newfoundland, and trace Charlie’s steps. Teachers use the book(s) to teach history. Authenticity, and accuracy, is not important, it is critical.

The story of War Brothers is an accurate picture of child soldiers in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo today.

Enemy Territory is about Israelis and Palestinians. Both sides thought I favoured the other and yet it won the Canadian Jewish Book Award, Helen & Stan Vine, Children & Youth Literature. It was shortlisted for the Atlantic Book Awards, and the IODE. Given past controversies over books that tackle this subject, it should give teachers some comfort that this book may challenge the situation, but it is viewed as ‘balanced.’

5. Why is it important for today’s youth to “remember”?

It is not important to remember. It is important to learn.

6. Are you currently working on any war-related books? If so, please share what they are about and when they will be available.

Oh my gosh. Where to begin?

End of the Line, Annick (released fall, 2014), is a story about two old fellows who ‘find’ a little girl on a tram and shelter her from the Nazis. With the help of their neighbours, they learn to braid hair, let down hems and create a family. The two old men are in fact a composite of my three uncles from Belfast, Northern Ireland. This may be my favourite book. It may be an introduction to the Holocaust, but really, it’s about creating a family out of air.
Thunder Over Kandahar, the Graphic Novel, with artist Dan Lafrance (War Brothers) Annick. The story of two Afghan girls making a run for freedom over the mountains of Pakistan.

Thunder Over Kandahar, the movie.

Jack, a three-book series. WW2. Penguin Random House. Caught up in Dunkirk, Jack discovers that his father has been arrested by the Nazis. Armed with three languages and his wits, Jack runs into a war in an attempt to rescue his father.


SHARON E. MCKAY is the author of over 30 books and lives in Prince Edward Island. Between October and April she is a writer-in-residence in Oakville and manages to visit a few schools each week. As a Canadian War Artist (CFAP Vet) she travelled to Afghanistan in 2009 and 2014. Sharon writes ‘fact-based fiction’ and always travels to the country she is writing about. War Brothers was, in part, written in Uganda, Enemy Territory was written, in part, in the West Bank and Israel, and Thunder Over Kandahar in Afghanistan. Sharon was born in Montreal but spent many, many summers in Belfast, Northern Ireland, during a war called 'The Troubles.' She has two sons, one grandson, one husband and a very large standard Poodle named Phoebe.
At Vimy Ridge: Canada's Greatest World War I Victory
Written by Hugh Brewster
Scholastic Canada, 2006
Grades 5-8 (Ages 10-13)

In April 1917, Canadian troops attacked and captured the German-controlled Vimy Ridge in northern France. This was a major military feat for our nation as the Allies had met with failure when they had tried to take the site on multiple occasions. Author-historian Hugh Brewster chronicles the fastidious preparations for the battle and the attack itself. He also discusses the Armistice, the significance of Vimy, the battle's famous memorial and more. Photographs, paintings and maps round out the text. An index, a glossary and a bibliography are included. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2008 selection and was the winner of the 2008 Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's Non-Fiction. The French version of the book is called La bataille de Vimy. Visit www.hughbrewster.com to learn more about the author and his work.

Thematic Links: World War I – France

Canada’s Wars: An Illustrated History
Written by Jonathan Webb
Scholastic Canada, 2010
ISBN: 978-0-545-98026-5 (hc)
Grades 5 and up (Ages 10 and up)

Webb chronicles Canada’s involvement in foreign conflicts throughout history, from the Boer War through to the World Wars and from various peacekeeping missions through to the present day in Afghanistan. The text features black-and-white and full-colour photographs and contains a glossary, a bibliography and an index. Maps providing details of Canadian operations in the World Wars are also included. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2011 starred selection and was nominated for the 2011-2012 Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award and Ontario Library Association’s 2012 White Pine Non-Fiction Award.

Thematic Links: Armed Forces – Military History

A Child in Prison Camp
Written by Shizuye Takashima
Tundra Books, 1992 ©1971
ISBN: 978-0-88776-241-3 (pb)
Grades 5 and up (Ages 10 and up)

Following Japan’s attack on the US’s Pearl Harbor naval base at Hawaii on December 7, 1941, years of smouldering fear and resentment towards Japanese Canadians erupted into anger and panic in British Columbia. Here is the true story of one Japanese-Canadian family living in British Columbia during this terrifying and turbulent time. In 1941, 11-year-old Shizuye “Shichan” Takashima and her family were uprooted from their homes on Canada’s west coast and sent to internment camps in the British Columbia Interior. Twenty-two thousand other Canadians of Japanese origin also endured this treatment. In this poignant story, accompanied by striking watercolour artwork, the author-artist chronicles the three years she spent as a child living with her family in a camp. This story concludes with a variety of supplemental information. The book earned the 1972 Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Illustrator’s Award, was adapted into a radio drama and was performed as a musical play.


Desperate Glory: The Story of World War I (Stories of Canada)
Written by John Wilson
Napoleon Publishing, 2008
Grades 6-8 (Ages 11-13)

After the Canadian government passed the Military Service Bill in 1917, introducing conscription, some Vancouver Island men refused to enlist and went into hiding. This is just one of the intriguing and unusual facts the author presents as he tells the story of World War I from a Canadian perspective. Illustrations, in the form of black-and-white photographs, original sketches and maps, accompany the clear and concise text and appear on every page. A timeline for the war years, a bibliography, a list of useful websites and a detailed index are included. This book was shortlisted for the Ontario Library Association’s 2009 Red Maple Award. Readers may also be interested in Wilson’s Bitter Ashes: The Story of WWII. Visit johnwilsonauthor.com to learn more about the author and his work.

Thematic Links: World War I
DIEPPE: Canada’s Darkest Day of World War II

Written by Hugh Brewster
Scholastic Canada, 2009
ISBN: 978-0-545-99420-0 (hc)
ISBN: 978-0-545-99421-7 (pb)
Grades 4-7 (Ages 9-12)

This work sheds light on World War II’s Dieppe Raid, which has been called the most controversial battle Canadians have ever fought. On August 19, 1942, Canadian troops were sent to raid the French coast at Dieppe after waiting almost three years in England for a chance to fight. The Germans, however, were ready for them, and the attack grew into a massacre. Nearly 5,000 Canadians were sent to Dieppe, but only 2,000 returned home. Author-historian Hugh Brewster discusses the raid, including its planning, execution and failure, and its aftermath for the fortunate soldiers who survived. He also covers the event’s 65th anniversary reunion, which was held in 2007. Black-and-white and colour photos, colour paintings and maps illustrate the text. A bibliography, an index, a glossary and a listing of useful websites are also included. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010 selection and was shortlisted for the Ontario Library Association’s 2011 Red Maple Award. Visit www.hughbrewster.com to learn more about the author and his work.

Thematic Links: World War II – Dieppe Raid – Battles

The Great War (Discovering Canada)

Written by Robert Livesey
Illustrated by A.G. Smith
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2006
ISBN: 978-1-55005-136-0 (pb)
Grades 4 and up (Ages 9 and up)

Livesey explores our nation’s role in World War I, the first great global conflict. He addresses several aspects of this war, including the first tanks, life in the trenches, convoys and U-boats, dogfights and aces, cavalry charges and machine guns, and gas warfare. The author also discusses the drastic changes the Great War brought to women’s roles. Hands-on activities, such as writing a coded message, are included.

Thematic Links: World War I

Guardian Angel House (A Holocaust Remembrance Series for Young Readers)

Written by Kathy Clark
Second Story Press, 2009
Grades 4-6 (Ages 9-11)

The Sisters of Charity of Budapest (Hungary) ran a convent, nicknamed “Guardian Angel House,” where they sheltered more than 120 Jewish children in German-occupied Hungary during World War II. This book, based on true events, tells of the author’s mother and aunt who were two of these children sheltered there by the nuns. Twelve-year-old Susan had always heard Mama say that there was no safe place for Jews, especially in German-occupied Hungary in 1944. Susan is frightened and doubtful when she and her younger sister, Vera, are sent to a convent to be kept ‘safe’ from the Nazis. Susan and Vera find their lives changed and soon learn the true nature of courage when they are sheltered by a group of nuns who risk their own lives to save theirs. Photographs and notes about the author’s family and the convent are included. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010 selection and was shortlisted for the Ontario Library Association’s 2011 Red Maple Award. Visit www.kathyclark.ca to learn more about the author and her books and to obtain a study guide. Readers will also be interested in Hiding Edith by award-winning Holocaust author Kathy Kacer.

Thematic Links: World War II – Righteous Gentiles – Hungary – Holocaust

Hana’s Suitcase Anniversary Album (Holocaust Remembrance Series for Young Readers)

Written by Karen Levine
Second Story Press, 2012
ISBN: 978-1-926920-36-8 (hc)
Grades 4-6 (Ages 9-11)

Fumiko Ishioka curates a small Holocaust education centre for children in Tokyo. In 2000, the Auschwitz museum lent her artifacts connected to children who had lived in the camp of the same name for an exhibit she was planning. An empty suitcase was among the items she received. From the instant she saw it, Fumiko was captivated by the writing on its exterior that identified its owner — Hana Brady, May 16, 1931, Waisenkind (the German word for “orphan”). Children frequenting the centre were full of questions. Energized by their curiosity and her own need to know, Fumiko embarked on a year of detective work, scouring the world for clues with which to piece together Hana Brady’s story. This 10th-anniversary edition of this beloved story contains over 60 pages of additional material, such as commemorative letters from the author Fumiko Ishioka and Hana’s brother George, international reader reactions to the story, and letters and art from children. Visit the Second Story Press website for the teacher’s guide that accompanies the Holocaust Remembrance Series for Young Readers.

Thematic Links: Holocaust – Japan – Orphans – Czechoslovakia – World War II
Highway of Heroes
Written by Kathy Stinson
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2010
Grades 4-8 (Ages 9-13)

MacDonald-Cartier Freeway is the stretch of Highway 401 that runs from CFB (Canadian Forces Base) Trenton, Ontario, to Toronto. In 2007, it was officially renamed the Highway of Heroes in remembrance of Canada's fallen soldiers. Kathy Stinson explains that this non-fiction work is her way of paying her respects to families who have lost and will lose loved ones wherever and whenever they may serve. The book's fictional story is about a boy who attends the formal repatriation ceremony that begins at CFB Trenton after his soldier father is killed in the line of duty. The book's second half consists of ‘The Story of the Highway,’ which explains how the impromptu gatherings of hundreds of people along the route began in 2002. Photographs accompany this moving and powerful text. A share of the proceeds from the sale of this book will go to Wounded Warriors (a charity that has offered support to wounded soldiers and their families since 2006) as well as to UNICEF. Highway of Heroes was nominated for the following four awards: the Ontario Library Association’s 2013 Red Cedar Award, 2012 Silver Birch Award and 2012 Golden Oak Award, and the 2012 Hackmatack Children’s Choice Book Award. For more information about the author and her work, visit kathystinson.com.

In Flanders Fields: The Story of the Poem by John McCrae
Written by Linda Granfield
Illustrated by Janet Wilson
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2005
ISBN: 978-1-55005-144-5 (pb)
Grades 4 and up (Ages 9 and up)

This book gets its title from John McCrae’s famous 1915 poem that opens with “In Flanders fields the poppies blow / Between the crosses, row on row...” Linda Granfield conveys the story of the poem, the soldiers who inspired it, and its creator who penned the poem shortly after his friend perished in World War I. The poem is interwoven with the main text. Evocative oil paintings accompany lines of the poem, while archival posters, postcards and artifacts appear with Granfield’s lucid and accessible text. The book's endpapers feature a map of Europe in 1915. Granfield’s book, Remembering John McCrae: Soldier, Doctor, Poet, is also discussed in this section of the theme guide. Visit www.lindagranfield.com to learn more about the author and her books.

The Kids Book of Canada at War (Kids Books of)
Written by Elizabeth MacLeod
Illustrated by John Mantha
Kids Can Press, 2007
ISBN: 978-1-55453-003-8 (hc)
ISBN: 978-0-9869495-1-7 (hc)
Grades 3-7 (Ages 8-12)

MacLeod sheds light on our nation’s wars and battles, as well as on those who fought these conflicts. She journeys through history, introducing us to a range of courageous Canadians, from those who fought in the earliest documented battles on Canadian soil to those who serve in our nation’s present-day peacekeeping missions abroad. Learn about military technology and read gripping first-person narratives from soldiers on the battlefields. The text features illustrations, maps and archival photographs and includes guides to museums and historic sites to visit. This book was shortlisted for the Ontario Library Association’s 2009 Red Maple Non-Fiction Award.

Last Airlift: A Vietnamese Orphan’s Rescue from War
Written by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch
Pajama Press, 2011
ISBN: 978-0-9869495-4-8 (hc)
ISBN: 978-0-9869495-1-7 (pb)
Grades 3-7 (Ages 8-12)

During the final days of the Vietnam War, the last Canadian airlift operation left Saigon and arrived in Toronto on April 13, 1975. The flight transported 57 children (including babies). Son Thi Anh Tuyet, an eight-year-old orphaned girl, was one of its passengers. Being an older child and having both her left leg and foot damaged by polio, she feared that she wouldn’t be adopted like other children. Using the third-person narrative voice, Skrypuch brings to life Tuyet’s story of the Saigon orphanage where she lived and her flight to Canada. This dramatic and moving story is based on personal interviews and enhanced with archival black-and-white photographs. This title was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2012 selection and earned the Ontario Library Association’s 2013 Red Maple Non-Fiction Award. Readers will want to check out the book’s sequel, One Step at a Time: A Vietnamese Child Finds Her Way. To learn more about the author and her books, visit calla2.com.

Marsha Skrypuch will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014.

Thematic Links:

Highway of Heroes
• Military History – Heroes
• Family – Adoption

In Flanders Fields: The Story of the Poem by John McCrae
• Thematic Links: Military History – Heroes

The Kids Book of Canada at War (Kids Books of)
• Thematic Links: Military History – Heroes

Last Airlift: A Vietnamese Orphan’s Rescue from War
• Thematic Links: Military History – Heroes
• Immigration – Family – Adoption
• Orphans – Adoption – Vietnam
The Last Train: A Holocaust Story

Written by Rona Arato
Owlkids Books, 2013
Grades 5-9 (Ages 10-14)

Rona Arato shares the gripping true story of how her husband’s family survived the Nazi occupation during World War II’s final years. When the Nazis occupy the town of Karcag, Hungary, in 1944, Paul, his older brother, Oscar, and their mother face escalating situations of fear and panic. The family is first sent to a ghetto in their hometown, then to an Austrian labour camp and finally to Germany’s Bergen Belsen concentration camp. In 1945, Nazi guards force the brothers into a dark and filthy stranded boxcar. After spending four days there, Paul and Oscar are certain they will be killed. While marching through Germany, a battalion of American soldiers discover the train and rescue the boys. Stunning photographs taken by US soldiers at the moment of liberation supplement the text. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2013 selection. Visit ronaarato.com to learn more about the author and her books.


Off to War: Voices of Soldiers’ Children

Written by Deborah Ellis
Groundwood Books, 2008
ISBN: 978-0-88899-894-1 (hc)
Grades 5 and up (Ages 10 and up)

Through frank and revealing interviews, readers meet Canadian and American children whose parents are soldiers deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. The subjects, who are seven to 17 years old, discuss openly how war has touched their lives. They also remind us that though they live safely in North America, children always suffer when nations go to war. Black-and-white photographs and a glossary are included. Deborah Ellis donates the royalties from this book to the IBBY Children in Crisis fund. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010 selection, was shortlisted for the Ontario Library Association’s 2011 Silver Birch Award and was nominated for the 2010-2011 Hackmatack Children’s Choice Book Award. Granfield’s book, In Flanders Fields: The Story of the Poem by John McCrae, is also discussed in this section of the theme guide. Visit www.lindagranfield.com to learn more about the author and her books.

Thematic Links: World War I – Poetry – Soldiers – Medicine

Rescuing the Children: The Story of the Kindertransport

Written by Deborah Hodge
Tundra Books, 2012
ISBN: 978-1-77049-256-1 (hc)
Grades 5-8 (Ages 10-13)

From 1938 to 1939, the Kindertransport evacuated nearly 10,000 Jewish children from Nazi-occupied countries and led them to safety in Great Britain. Hodge recounts the story of this vast rescue operation, weaving anecdotes and brief quotes from a
handful of men and women who escaped from Germany as children between the ages of nine and 14. The author covers what British life was like for the children, their efforts to maintain contact with their families during the war and the children’s lives after the war. She profiles numerous individuals who served as prominent leaders in the rescue, discusses Kindertransport reunions/memorials, and more. Featured artwork consists of archival photographs, original art created by the Kinder commemorating their rescue, panels from Kindertransport memorial quilts, and drawings created by Kinder artist Hans Jackson, who was 18 years old when he escaped to England in 1939. A glossary, a map, a timeline and a bibliography are included. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2013 selection and nomi- nated for the 2013-14 Hackmatack Children’s Choice Book Award. It is a companion title to the author’s In Flanders Fields: The Story of the Poem by John McCrae and Where Poppies Grow: A World War I Companion, which are both discussed in this section of theme guide. Visit www.lindagranfield.com to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** Holocaust – World War II – Jewish Children – Rescue Operations – Refugee Children

**The Unknown Soldier**

*Written by Linda Granfield*

Scholastic Canada, 2008

ISBN: 978-0-439-93558-6 (hc)

Grades 3 and up (Ages 8 and up)

Author-historian Linda Granfield leads us on a global journey of the tombs of unknown soldiers in 15 countries, including Canada. She addresses the history and traditions regarding unknown soldiers from World War I to the 21st century. Symbols often found on the tombs/gravestones of unknown soldiers are featured and how DNA testing can identify the bodies of unknown soldiers is discussed. Archival photos, poems, coins, medals and postcards illustrate the text which includes a glossary, index and timeline. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009 selection and was nominated for the 2009-2010 Hackmatack Children’s Choice Book Award. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010 starred selection. To learn more about the author and his books, visit [www.ericwalters.net](http://www.ericwalters.net).

**Thematic Links:** Child War Victims – Conflict

**Where Poppies Grow: A World War I Companion**

*Written by Linda Granfield*

Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2005

ISBN: 978-1-55005-146-9 (pb)

Grades 6 and up (Ages 11 and up)

After the publication of her book In Flanders Fields, Granfield received letters asking her to write more books about the First World War. She wrote this book in response to these requests. The author-historian describes a soldier’s training, life on the home front and how a child’s world was changed by war and she discusses food, medicine, books and weaponry. Granfield also shares stories of men who did return home from the war, and those who did not. Roughly 200 items of archival material from the war years illustrate this scrapbook-formatted work. This book was a CCBC Our Choice 2002 starred selection and won the 2002 Information Book Award. Visit [www.lindagranfield.com](http://www.lindagranfield.com) to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** World War I – Symbols – Flowers
A Child in Prison Camp
The author of this novel was a child when she was among the 22,000 Japanese Canadians interned in camps during the 1940s. Students can explore this topic through television and radio clips in the CBC Digital Archives. Teachers can also find educational activities for Grade 6 to 12 students.

Hana’s Suitcase Anniversary Album
*Hana’s Suitcase* started its life as a CBC radio documentary and was then published as a book in 2002. Since then it has been adapted for the stage and made into a CBC documentary film. *Hana’s Suitcase on Stage* combines the story and images of the original book with the full script of award-winning writer Emil Sher’s theatrical adaptation. For an interactive exploration of the story, students can read the play. The CBC television documentary, “Inside Hana’s Suitcase,” aired on March 6, 2011. Have students watch and discuss the film. (Don’t forget to check about public performance rights prior to viewing the movie.)

In Flanders Fields and Remembering John McCrae
In Canada, Veterans’ Week takes place annually from November 5–11. During this event, you can introduce students to poems related to the themes of war, remembrance and peacekeeping, and also invite them to write similar-type poems of their own.

Rescuing the Children
Canadian children’s author Irene N. Watts, a friend of Deborah Hodge, is one of the children who was rescued by the *Kindertransport*. Watts has written a trilogy about a Jewish girl named Marianne who leaves Germany for England via the Kindertransport. Tundra Books released the trilogy in one volume, *Escape from Berlin*, in 2013. The new edition includes Watts’ classics, *Good-bye Marianne*, *Remember Me* and *Finding Sophie*. The *Kindertransport Association (KTA)* is a resource that offers multiple ways to further explore the topic of Hodge’s book. Visit [www.irenenwatts.com](http://www.irenenwatts.com) for more information about Irene Watts and her books.

When Elephants Fight
War Child Canada is part of a network of independent organizations working across the world to help children affected by war. Visit [www.warchild.ca](http://www.warchild.ca) to learn more about War Child Canada and how your students can support its projects and/or participate in its programs.
1. Why do you write books about war for young readers? Why is it important for young people to know about war (past and/or present)?
I write about history and war because, alas, it is a major part of our collective past. Canada’s participation in the wars of the last century was, until recently, in danger of being forgotten. And those two wars played a major role in the emergence of Canada as a nation. For those who say that Canadian history is dull one need only point to the stories of Canadians under fire on the Western Front or in Normandy.

2. Share one story/fact you discovered in your research that you have not been able to forget.
I never cease to be shocked by the fact that the Canadians who survived the Dieppe Raid were shackled in prison camps on Hitler’s express orders. It’s something very few Canadians know about.

3. What was the first book about war that you wrote and why did you write it?
Before the 60th anniversary of D-Day, the Dominion Institute ran a survey asking Canadians if they knew what Juno Beach was and almost no one did. That was what led me to write On Juno Beach: Canada’s D-Day Heroes in 2004.

4. What grade levels do you write for and what are some of your books that are important for teachers to share with their students?
I write for grades four and up but the books are also used in high school and even adults tell me they find them informative. In addition to On Juno Beach, I’ve written At Vimy Ridge, DIEPPE and a novel in the I Am Canada series, Prisoner of Dieppe. All, I’m told, work well in the classroom.

5. Why is it important for today’s youth to “remember”?
Wars are fought by young people. I think today’s youth should know that it was young men not much older than they are who advanced up Vimy Ridge and went ashore on the Normandy beaches. And that it was young women who tended to their shattered bodies in the aftermath. I’d like to say that young people learning about the horrors of war will help prevent wars, but I’m not that naïve.

6. Are you currently working on any war-related books? If so, please share what they are about and when they will be available.
I’m just completing the final layouts of From Vimy to Victory: Canada’s Fight to the Finish in World War I. It will be in the same landscape format as On Juno Beach, At Vimy Ridge and DIEPPE and will be out in September 2014.

Hugh Brewster began his career as an editor in 1972 for Scholastic Canada where he was involved in the launching of Scholastic’s Canadian publishing program. Between 1984 and 2004, he was the publisher of Madison Press Books in Toronto. He has written 14 books, beginning with Anastasia’s Album in 1996. On Juno Beach won the Information Book Award in 2005, and At Vimy Ridge was a Norma Fleck Award winner in 2008. DIEPPE: Canada’s Darkest Day of World War II (2009) was followed by two novels in Scholastic’s I Am Canada series: Prisoner of Dieppe and Deadly Voyage. His latest book, From Vimy to Victory: Canada’s Fight to the Finish in World War I, will be published in September 2014.
The Bite of the Mango
Written by Mariatu Kamara and Susan McClelland
Annick Press, 2008
ISBN: 978-1-55451-159-4 (hc)
ISBN: 978-1-55451-158-7 (pb)
Grades 9 and up (Ages 14 and up)
This honest, riveting account tells of how one teen took the fragments of her fractured life in Africa and survived to build a new life in North America. Mariatu was born in Sierra Leone and had a peaceful childhood there. But life changed for its citizens when the West African nation endured a brutal civil war from 1991 to 2002. Armed rebels destroyed property and raped, maimed and murdered women and children. In 1999, 12-year-old Mariatu fell victim to rebel soldiers. After they attacked her, they cut off her hands. While living in a refugee camp for amputees, Mariatu begged on the streets to earn money. Mariatu is a UNICEF Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict and speaks to North American audiences about her experiences. Her remarkable story will shock and unsettle teens, yet stay with and inspire them long after they've finished reading it. This book won the 2009 Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's Non-Fiction and was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009 starred selection.
Thematic Links: Africa – War Victims – Amputees – Sierra Leone – Civil War – Biographies

Canada at War: A Graphic History of World War Two
Written by Paul Keery
Illustrated by Michael Wyatt
Douglas & McIntyre, 2012
ISBN: 978-1-55365-596-1 (pb)
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)
This full-colour graphic novel follows the developments and setbacks, wins and losses, of a country learning to stand up for itself in the midst of the 20th century’s most difficult war. The book charts the growth of Canada’s navy, army and air force through movingly portrayed triumphs and tragedies. From the heartbreaking losses at Dieppe and Hong Kong through the Battle of the Atlantic and the invasion of Sicily, it also addresses the human aspect of the principal battles and decisions that eventually swayed the war in the Allies’ favour. This poignant and appealingly crafted account also discusses Canada’s victories of D-Day, Juno Beach and the liberation of Europe. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2013 selection.
Thematic Links: Graphic Novels – World War II

Hold the Oxo! A Teenage Soldier Writes Home (Canadians at War)
Written by Marion Fargey Brooker
Dundurn Press, 2011
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)
During World War I, Canada was a young nation and so was its army with as many as 20,000 underage soldiers enlisted. James “Jim” Fargey, the author’s uncle, was one of them. In July 1915, 17-year-old Jim enlisted in the Canadian army and served with the 79th Queen’s Own Cameron Highlanders. He died on October 16, 1916, at the age of 18, from wounds sustained during the Battle of the Somme. Marion Fargey Brooker shares letters that her Uncle Jim wrote from the war and sent home to his family. These documents enable readers to discover what World War I was like from his perspective. The author also presents a historical overview and sets the context for the accounts shared by the children. Black-and-white photographs of the children, a glossary, a map and sources for further information are included. Royalties from the sale of this book are donated to the IBBY Children in Crisis Fund. This book was nominated for the Ontario Library Association’s Silver Birch Non-Fiction Award and was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010 selection. To learn more about the author and her books, visit deborahellis.com.

Children of War: Voices of Iraqi Refugees
Written by Deborah Ellis
Groundwood Books, 2009
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)
Listen to the voices of 23 Iraqi children, aged eight to 19, who have fled war and their homes. In their own words, they confide what it means to be a refugee. An introduction offers a historical overview and sets the context for the accounts shared by the children. Black-and-white photographs of the children, a glossary, a map and sources for further information are included. Royalties from the sale of this book are donated to the IBBY Children in Crisis Fund. This book was nominated for the Ontario Library Association’s Silver Birch Non-Fiction Award and was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010 selection. To learn more about the author and her books, visit deborahellis.com.

Thematic Links: Africa – War Victims – Amputees – Sierra Leone – Civil War – Biographies
together. Black-and-white illustrations, including World War I cartoons drawn by Bruce Bairnsfather, appear throughout the text. A timeline, index and glossary, as well as lists of websites and resources, are included. This book was shortlisted for the Ontario Library Association’s 2014 White Pine Non-Fiction Award. Visit ouralabertawriters.com to learn more about the author and her books. Visit the Dundurn Press website for a teacher’s resource guide.

**Thematic Links:** James Fargey – Soldiers – World War I – Personal Narratives – Correspondence

**Italian Canadian Internment in the Second World War**

* (Righting Canada’s Wrongs)

Written by Pamela Hickman and Jean Smith Cavalluzzo
Lorimer, 2012
ISBN: 978-1-4594-0095-5 (hc)
Grades 9-12 (Ages 14-17)

The authors shed light on a dark and lesser-known chapter in our nation’s history. When our nation waged war on Italy on June 10, 1940, all Italian-Canadian citizens aged 18 years and older were labelled as enemy aliens under Canada’s War Measures Act. Even those Italians who had obtained Canadian citizenship after 1922 were considered enemy aliens. The RCMP promptly began making arrests. Young and old men, and some women, were taken from their offices, homes or social clubs without notice. Roughly 700 Italian Canadians were imprisoned in internment camps, primarily in New Brunswick and Ontario. Historical photographs, paintings, documents and first-person narratives round out this illuminating and insightful text. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2013 starred selection. Follow this link for the resource guide that accompanies the Righting Canada’s Wrongs series.

**Thematic Links:** Italian Canadians – World War II – Internment – Discrimination

**Japanese Canadian Internment in the Second World War**

* (Righting Canada’s Wrongs)

Written by Pamela Hickman and Masako Fukawa
Lorimer, 2012
ISBN: 978-1-55277-853-1 (hc)
Grades 9-12 (Ages 14-17)

In 1941, life took a dark turn for the more than 20,000 Japanese Canadians living in British Columbia. In the same year, Japan’s attack on the US’s Pearl Harbor triggered wartime hysteria. BC’s Japanese-Canadian residents were rounded up and forced to move to internment camps with inadequate food, water and housing. Their property and homes were also seized. Men and older boys went to road camps, while some families wound up on farms where they were nothing more than slave labour. First-person narratives from five Japanese Canadians, who were themselves youths at the time and whose families were forced to move to the camps, are featured. Historical photographs, documents and images of museum artifacts round out the text. This book was a CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens 2012 selection. Visit Lorimer’s website to purchase the resource guide that accompanies the Righting Canada’s Wrongs series.

**Thematic Links:** Japanese Canadians – World War II – Internment – Discrimination

**Kids of Kabul: Living Bravely Through a Never-Ending War**

Written by Deborah Ellis
Groundwood Books, 2012
ISBN: 978-1-55498-181-6 (hc)
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

In 2011, Deborah Ellis travelled to Afghanistan to learn what had become of the country’s young people since the fall of the Taliban in 2001. During her visit, she interviewed children who talked about their lives after the overthrow of the terrorist group. Through interviews, readers meet two dozen or so of these young people who range in age from 10 to 17. Despite the absence of the Taliban, Afghan children still live in a war-ravaged nation where violence and oppression still thrive. But on a more positive and encouraging note, readers also discover that these young people employ optimism and courage to weather the turbulence that characterizes their lives. Photographs of the children profiled, as well as a glossary and map are included. All royalties from the sale of this book go to the organization Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan. To learn more about the author and her books, visit deborahellis.com.

**Thematic Links:** Afghan War – Child War Victims – Afghanistan – Terrorism

**Passchendaele: Canada’s Triumph and Tragedy on the Fields of Flanders**

Written by Norman Leach
Coteau Books, 2008
ISBN: 978-1-55050-399-9 (hc)
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

The Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele), which started in June 1917, marked a monumental moment in Canadian military history. Later in the autumn of the same year, Canadian troops drove Germans from their three-year occupation of Passchendaele after New Zealand, British and Australian troops had failed to do so. But this Canadian military triumph came at a heavy cost as nearly 16,000 Canadians were wounded or killed, while over 1,000 were lost.
and were never recovered from the muddy battlefields. Leach’s use of diary entries offers readers first-hand accounts of conditions which soldiers faced. Some diary entries or quotations from memoirs by Allied soldiers and some German soldiers are presented as sidebars. Archival and other photographs plus other illustrative material, such as maps and images of artifacts, accompany the text. The author is a military historian who served as historical advisor on the film *Passchendaele*, in which Canadian actor Paul Gross starred as well as wrote, directed and produced. Visit Coteau Books, website to obtain a teacher’s guide for the book.

**Thematic Links:** World War I – Third Battle of Ypres – Belgium

**Silent in an Evil Time: The Brave War of Edith Cavell**

Written by Jack Batten  
Tundra Books, 2007  
ISBN: 978-0-88776-737-1 (pb)  
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

This biography introduces readers to a courageous and remarkable yet little-known heroine of World War I. Edith Cavell (1865-1915) was a British nurse who served in World War I. She is celebrated for saving the lives, in Brussels, of soldiers from all sides without distinction. After the war started and Germany occupied Belgium, Edith continued to work at a Belgian clinic as it was under the jurisdiction of the Red Cross. When injured soldiers began arriving at the clinic for treatment, she became involved in smuggling them out of German-held Belgium and back to Britain. With French and Belgian colleagues, she helped 200+ Allied soldiers flee German-occupied Belgium. Cavell was arrested and then faced trial with 33 others in a German military court. After being found guilty of ‘assisting men to the enemy,’ she was killed by a German firing squad. Black-and-white photographs, drawings, a bibliography and an index are included.

**Thematic Links:** Nurses – World War I – Heroines – Biography

**The War to End All Wars: The Story of World War I**

Written by Jack Batten  
Tundra Books, 2009  
ISBN: 978-0-88776-879-8 (hc)  
Grades 8 and up (Ages 13 and up)

In this overview of World War I, the author discusses its most famous battles and pays particular attention to our nation’s effort in the war. Meet the soldiers who fought the bloody battles along the Western Front. Find out the strategy of Britain’s Grand Fleet of warships as it heads into history’s largest sea battle. Learn how civilians decoded nearly all the messages the Germans sent to their ships around the globe. Follow the trail of Canadian flying ace Billy Bishop as he tangles in the air with the Red Baron. From the Battle of the Somme, Gallipoli, Passchendaele and Vimy Ridge to the war’s last battles, this book elicits the anguish and courage of men from every nation, whose stories altered the face of the world forever. Black-and-white photographs round out this concise and riveting text, which includes maps, a bibliography and an index.

**Thematic Links:** World War I

**Whispers from the Ghettos**

(Whispers)  
Written by Kathy Kacer and Sharon E. McKay  
Puffin Canada, 2009  
ISBN: 978-0-14-331251-2 (pb)  
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

Kacer and McKay have compiled a dozen stories of survivors of Europe’s Jewish ghettos from the Second World War, told from the perspective of their younger selves. The co-authors open with an introduction to the Holocaust, outlining events and dates and describing the ghettoization of European Jews. Each story revolves around a specific event that is some form of an act of resistance. A postscript that briefly describes how life ultimately unfolded for the survivors accompanies each story. Readers will also want to read *Whispers in Hiding* and *Whispers from the Camps*. To learn more about the authors and their books visit [www.kathykacer.com](http://www.kathykacer.com) and [www.sharonmckay.ca](http://www.sharonmckay.ca). Both authors will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2014.

**Thematic Links:** Holocaust – World War II – Jews – Europe
Hold the Oxo! A Teenage Soldier Writes Home
Have teens read letters written by Canadian soldiers who served in World War I. The Canadian Great War Project is an ideal source for finding letters penned by soldiers. Students can also write letters to veterans as part of our country’s Thank a Veteran Letter Campaign.

Italian Canadian Internment in the Second World War
During World War II, thousands of Italian Canadians were interned in prisoner-of-war camps without charge on the mere suspicion that they were fascists. Montreal playwright Vittorio Rossi penned the play Paradise by the River, which explores this shameful moment in our nation’s history. The work was originally staged at Montreal’s Centaur Theatre in 1998, and performed there again in 2010. The play, which is available from Vancouver’s Talon Books, can be read and discussed with students. Have teens watch the National Film Board’s 1997 documentary Barbed Wire and Mandolins (48 minutes), which introduces audiences to some Italian Canadians who were interned during the Second World War.

Japanese Canadian Internment in the Second World War
Have students watch the National Film Board’s 1992 movie, Minoru: Memory of Exile (18 minutes, 5 seconds), which tells of Minoru Fukushima, a Japanese Canadian who was sent with his family to an internment camp and then deported to Japan along with them. If you live in or near Ottawa, teens can go on a field trip to the Canadian War Museum to see Two Views - Photographs by Ansel Adams and Leonard Frank. This travelling exhibition from the Nikkei National Museum (Burnaby, BC), which runs until March 23, 2014, showcases evocative images illustrating the experiences of Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians.

Silent in an Evil Time
During World War I, Mabel Beatrice Elliott discovered secret messages written in invisible ink between the lines of letters she inspected while employed as a deputy assistant censor for the British War Office. Teens can conduct research to find out more about this woman who used her knowledge of simple chemistry to nab German spies. Students can also try making their own invisible ink and using it to write secret messages and then having others decode their messages.

Whispers from the Ghettos
Have students learn about the Holocaust’s major ghettos. Two of the many sources they can consult are The Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre and the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. If you live in or near Toronto, teens can go on a field trip to visit the Young Voices from the Holocaust exhibit displayed at the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre. Roman Polanski’s 2002 film, The Pianist, revolves around Wladyslaw Szpilman, a Polish-Jewish pianist who lived in the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II. (The movie is based on the book of the same title.) If possible, you can show the movie to your class. (Don’t forget to check about public performance rights prior to viewing the movie.)
1. Why do you write books about war for young readers? Why is it important for young people to know about war (past and/or present)?

Anything we subject children to in the real world should be reflected in their literature, otherwise the victims just further disappear — and we continually subject children to the brutality of war.

2. Share one story/fact you discovered in your research that you have not been able to forget.

That war and brutality create more war and brutality, that leaders lie and that people are capable of being radically kind in the worst circumstances.

3. What was the first book about war that you wrote and why did you write it?

*The Breadwinner*. It was the second book I was able to get published, and I was deeply involved in solidarity work with Afghan women at the time. *The Breadwinner* grew out of trips I made to the Afghan/Pakistan border.

4. What grade levels do you write for and what are some of your books that are important for teachers to share with their students?

I don’t worry about that. Once a kid can read, they should be able to read every book there is. They will figure out for themselves what they can handle and what they don’t like reading.

5. Why is it important for today’s youth to “remember”?

The usual answer is that we need to remember the past mistakes in order to keep from repeating them, but remembering does not seem to have stopped us from continuing to commit atrocities against each other. Maybe through learning to identify with the victims of war, we can better put ourselves in their places, and maybe, maybe, make better decisions in the future.

6. Are you currently working on any war-related books? If so, please share what they are about and when they will be available.

The book coming out in the fall, *Cat At The Wall*, takes place in Israel and Palestine.

**DEBORAH ELLIS** is the author of over 20 books for young people, many dealing with war, injustice and how to find courage. She lives in Simcoe, Ontario.
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**BRIAN DEINES**
is an acclaimed children’s book illustrator who has been nominated for the Governor General’s Award for Illustration, the Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Award and the Lillian Shepherd Memorial Award, among others. He has illustrated such varied titles as *The Hockey Tree*, *The Road to Afghanistan* and *On a Snowy Night*.

Brian is a native of Red Deer, Alberta. He graduated from the Alberta College of Art. Before becoming an artist, he spent time as a “roughneck and a rigger” on the oilfields of Alberta and as a groundskeeper at a golf and country club.

Brian works in oils for both illustration and fine art. He has three children who help inspire his art. “I think about the inner light, spirit and energy that children project, a kind of lit-up quality — it is this quality that I seek in my imagery. Examining the relationships between siblings and parents definitely keeps projects challenging also. I have been able to explore these concepts in an honest manner through the books that I’ve illustrated. This and no two stories are the same keep the books interesting. These are all qualities I enjoy in painting images for picture books,” Brian says.

“For my most recent books, *Road to Afghanistan* and *On a Snowy Night*, the research involved was worlds apart. In the Afghanistan book a lot of the images that I came across were intense and, to be frank, quite brutal. All this mixed in with a country-side and people that can be very beautiful created mixed feelings as I worked my way through the text. Coming off my last book project, Joni Mitchell’s song “The Circle Game”, gave me insight into how to approach the material. I decided to treat the imagery as song also, with certain images repeating like a chorus (in a song) through the book, as wars repeat, the consequences repeat and are the same in any era. It was wonderful to have *On A Snowy Night* as my next project to follow up the *Road to Afghanistan*. All warm and fuzzy creatures to play with in a quiet snowy nightscape. It was so much fun to work with the different animal characters and their varying soft textures. The perfect counterpoint!”

Brian also enjoys hockey, bicycling and photography, and was lucky enough to indulge his love of music when he had the opportunity to illustrate *The Circle Game* based on the famous song by Joni Mitchell.