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# Changing the World, One Child at a Time

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**Note regarding website addresses:** The Canadian Children's Book Centre considers the provision of website links to be a service that provides tools for users to access information generally related to the books listed in this guide. The website addresses listed in this guide were current at the time of publication (January 2011) and were valid website addresses attributed to the authors, illustrators and subjects as indicated in this guide. The content of and/or views expressed on these third-party websites are strictly those of the individual or organization. These individuals or organizations may change, modify or remove content from these websites at any time. The Canadian Children's Book Centre assumes no liability, express or implied, concerning the accuracy, quality, likely results or reliability of the use of the information contained on any third-party websites listed in this guide.

# Changing the world, One Child at a Time

**I**NDIAN ACTIVIST AND POLITICAL-SPIRITUAL LEADER Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) once said: “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” Canadians Hannah Taylor, Craig Kielburger, Ryan Hreljac, Bilaal Rajan and Severn Cullis-Suzuki embody his words as they address local, national and global issues, work they’ve performed since they were 12 years old or younger. But don’t forget that there are multitudes of others just like them championing causes here at home and around the globe.

Journey to 20-something countries on four continents through 37 fictional stories and 31 non-fiction accounts. Find out about environmental challenges and what youth are doing to address them. Meet young people who speak out against war and those who speak in the name of peace. Listen to youth as they speak up about how issues, such as AIDS, child labour, poverty and genocide, affect their lives. Discover books that coach readers on how they too can become catalysts for change.

The books in this guide are listed alphabetically by title and grouped according to category (i.e., 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 at the end of the guide for suggestions on how to make these books come alive in your classroom or library.

Yes, there is truth in the well-known African saying, “It takes a village to raise a child.” But from what these books reveal, it is also true that “It takes a child to change the world.”

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Picture Books .....	2
Junior Fiction .....	5
Young Adult Fiction .....	8
Junior Non-Fiction .....	10
Senior Non-Fiction .....	13
Activities .....	16
Index .....	23

### Things to Look For:

**Suggested Audience:** Each annotation provides age ranges and grade levels recommending the suggested audience for each book. This information appears beneath the bibliographic information.

**Thematic Links:** Annotations include thematic links that indicate major themes featured in the books.

**Extension Activities:** Detailed ideas for activities based on some of the featured books are included at the end of the theme guide.

**A** This symbol indicates that an activity related to the book has been provided in the Activities section at the end of the theme guide.

**Websites:** Website addresses lead to additional information on the books, their authors and teacher’s guides.

**Awards:** Several annotations contain partial listings of awards and honours granted to books covered in the guide.

**Index:** Use the index of titles, authors and illustrators to simplify locating books in the guide.

# Picture Books

## **A Ahmed and the Nest of Sand: A Piping Plover Story**

Written by Kristin Bieber Domm

Illustrated by Jeff Domm

Nimbus Publishing, 2000

Kindergarten - Grade 3 (Ages 5 - 8)

In Kuwait, Ahmed cared for his pet birds, which lived in cages behind his home. But in his new Canadian home, he and his family can't have birds as pets in their apartment. When nature guardians speak to Ahmed's class about the various threats to piping plovers, he realizes what he has to do to help care for these small, delicate birds.

On his visits with the nature guardians to the beach where a pair of piping plovers are nesting, he sees the dangers the birds face and feels a special bond with their efforts to survive. What Ahmed wants most is for the tiny fledglings to grow up and fly away at summer's end. Ahmed swears to do all he can to keep them safe. The Dommms have created two other picture books about wildlife: *Atlantic Puffin: Little Brother of the North* and *The Hatchling's Journey: A Blanding's Turtle Story*.

**Thematic Links:** Endangered Species - Birds - Nova Scotia - Pets

## **A Bagels from Benny**

Written by Aubrey Davis

Illustrated by Dušan Petričić

Kids Can Press, 2003

Kindergarten - Grade 3 (Ages 5 - 8)

This story stems from the ancient Jewish folklore of Spain. Benny loves to help Grandpa at his bakery where he makes bagels that everyone loves. One day, his grandfather explains that he should thank God, not him, for his delectable bagels. After reflecting on the matter, Benny finds a way to show his gratitude. At the end of each week, he leaves God a bag of bagels in the synagogue. Benny thinks that God is noshing on the treats because each bagful of them disappears. In the end, Benny discovers that a hungry man has, in fact, been eating the bagels, and the man promises to help others as Benny has helped him. Pencil and watercolour artwork appears in this heart-warming tale about giving thanks. This book was shortlisted for the 2004 Mr. Christie Book Award and the OLA's 2005 Blue Spruce Award. Visit [www.aubreydavis.com](http://www.aubreydavis.com) to learn more about

this author-storyteller and his work. To learn more about the illustrator and some of his work, visit [www.kidscanpress.com](http://www.kidscanpress.com).

**Thematic Links:** Sharing - Folklore - Thankfulness - Food - Jewish Life/Culture

## **A Big Bear Hug**

Written and illustrated by Nicholas Oldland

Kids Can Press, 2009

Preschool - Grade 2 (Ages 3 - 7)

If the bear in this story had a musical motto, it would be "All my huggin', I will give to you," sung to the tune of The Beatles' "All My Lovin'." This light-hearted modern-day fable tells of a bear who loves hugging trees and other living things bears are known to eat. When he spies a man chopping down a tree, the bear resists his angry urge to eat him and hugs him instead. The startled man drops his axe and runs away in fright, leaving the bear to give the tree a much-needed hug. Incidentally, Nicholas Oldland runs Hatley, an apparel company that also promotes environmental and social awareness. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010* selection.

**Thematic Links:** Bears - Displays of Affection - Fables

## **A Free as the Wind: Saving the Horses of Sable Island**

Written by Jamie Bastedo

Illustrated by Susan Tooke

Red Deer Press, 2007

Grades 1 - 4 (Ages 6 - 10)

This fictional account of a pivotal, historic Canadian moment, which unfolded during the 1960s, is an inspirational tale for school children everywhere. Lucas Beauregard lives on Nova Scotia's Sable Island and loves the majestic wild horses that live there, too. His discovery of the government's plan to auction and slaughter the horses propels him to find a way to free them for good. As Lucas spots the horses being unloaded and sold in Halifax, an idea springs to his mind. He writes a letter to Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, pleading with him to release the horses back into the wild where they belong. The rest of his school's students also write letters. The Prime Minister writes Lucas a letter in which he promises to free the horses. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2008* selection.

Visit [www.onthinice.ca](http://www.onthinice.ca) to learn more about the author and his books and [www.susantooke.com](http://www.susantooke.com) to learn more about the illustrator and her work.

**Thematic Links:** Horses - 1960s - Nova Scotia - Historical Fiction - Letter Writing

## **From Far Away**

Written by Robert Munsch

Illustrated by Michael Martchenko

Annick Press, 1995

Kindergarten and up (Ages 5 and up)

Saoussan and her family escape their war-ridden homeland of Lebanon and seek refuge abroad. They have come in search of a safer and quieter life here in Canada. Saoussan faces learning English and adapting to a new culture in the midst of her lingering memories of war and death. This is a true story, which Robert Munsch and Saoussan developed from a letter she had written him when she was seven years old. The National Film Board's *Talespinners* collection features a short film, also called *From Far Away*, which was adapted from the book. To learn more about the author and his books, visit

[www.robertmunsch.com](http://www.robertmunsch.com). You can also listen to him read this book or one of his many others. To learn more about the illustrator and his work, visit [www.annickpress.com](http://www.annickpress.com).

**Thematic Links:** Moving - War - Immigrant Children - Fear - Halloween

## **A The Good Garden: How One Family Went from Hunger to Having Enough (CitizenKid)**

Written by Katie Smith Milway

Illustrated by Sylvie Daigneault

Kids Can Press, 2010

Grades 2 and up (Ages 7 and up)

This story follows a Honduran farming family's journey and struggle to grow sufficient food to meet their needs. Eleven-year-old Maria Luz lives with her family on a little farm. With their poor crop this year, the Luzes may not have enough to eat or to sell for other necessities such as health care, school uniforms and books. Maria finds herself in charge of the family's garden when her father must leave home to find work. A new teacher then arrives at Maria's school and introduces her to sustainable farming practices that produce ample crops. As

Maria starts to employ the same methods at home, she sees improvements that help her family to edge their way out of the grasp of the greedy “coyotes” (middlemen who reap profits at the expense of poor farmers). Little by little, the farms and the hopes of the girl and her neighbours are transformed as good gardens begin to grow. This book is based on the actual farm transformation underway in Honduras and elsewhere. Visit [www.kidscanpress.com](http://www.kidscanpress.com) for a teaching guide and poster. This fall, a digital learning environment will be launched at [www.thegoodgarden.org](http://www.thegoodgarden.org). Katie Smith Milway also wrote *One Hen: How One Small Loan Made a Big Difference*, which is featured in this section of the guide. Visit [www.sylviedaigneault.com](http://www.sylviedaigneault.com) to learn more about Canadian illustrator Sylvie Daigneault.

**Thematic Links:** Food - Family - Sustainable Farming - Honduras - Gardens

### **A If You Could Wear My Sneakers: A Book About Children’s Rights**

Written by Sheree Fitch  
Illustrated by Darcia Labrosse  
Doubleday Canada, 1997  
Grades 3 - 6 (Ages 8 - 11)

“Get up, stand up. / Stand up for your rights.” The world’s youth possess several rights, including the right to play. Here, Sheree Fitch offers lyrical poems that correspond to 15 of the 54 articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The book contains a quiz that allows readers to match the poems with the articles they highlight. Vibrant watercolour artwork appears in this innovative poetry collection that both informs and entertains. The book won the 2000 Silver Birch Award (Non-Fiction) and the 1999-2000 Hackmatack Children’s Choice Book Award (Non-Fiction) and was shortlisted for others.

Visit [www.shereefitch.com](http://www.shereefitch.com) to find out more about the author and her books and visit [www.darcialabrosse.com](http://www.darcialabrosse.com) to find out more about the illustrator and her work.

**Thematic Links:** Children’s Rights - United Nations - Poetry

### **Jack the Bear**

Written and illustrated by Christina Leist  
Simply Read Books, 2009  
Kindergarten - Grade 3 (Ages 4 - 7)

To Nosy Fox, it looks as if Jack the Bear is merely sitting under a tree and eating his honey with Grumpy Squirrel. When Brainy Owl explains that Jack the Bear is making the world a better place, Nosy Fox wants to know how. This inspirational and thought-provoking tale about random acts of kind-

ness features mixed-media art created on recycled paper shopping bags. It is a finalist for the ForeWord Magazine 2010 Book of the Year.

**Thematic Links:** Bears - Animals - Kindness

### **A Lily and the Paper Man**

Written by Rebecca Upjohn  
Illustrated by Renné Benoit  
Second Story Press, 2007  
Kindergarten - Grade 2 (Ages 4 - 7)

On her walk home from school with her mother, Lily encounters a gruff, dishevelled man selling newspapers. Initially, she is afraid of the fellow she calls the Paper Man. But when the weather grows cold, she begins to view him in a new light. Lily spies the Paper Man’s thin shirt through the holes in his coat and his bare toes through the holes in his boots. As she rests in her own warm bed at night, she worries about how he keeps warm. Lily then thinks of a great idea: to make him a gift of warm clothes. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens* 2008 starred selection and finalist for the 2009 Shining Willow Award. Rebecca Upjohn is also the co-author of *Patrick’s Wish*, which is featured in the Junior Non-Fiction section of this guide. Visit [www.rebeccaupjohn.com](http://www.rebeccaupjohn.com) to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** Homelessness - Compassion - Clothing - Warmth

### **A Maria’s Wish**

Written and photographed by Kathy Knowles  
Osu Children’s Library Fund, 2008  
Grades 1 - 3 (Ages 6 - 8)

Trees are disappearing in the East African village of Iramba Ndogo, Tanzania. This story tells of how Maria and her family are working hard to bring back the trees and restore beauty to their land. Colour photographs accompany this true story. This book is also available in Swahili as *Taraja la Maria*. The Osu Children’s Library Fund, a non-profit Canadian organization, introduces African children to the world of books and provides opportunities for non-literate African adults to gain basic literacy skills. For more information, visit [www.osuchildrenslibraryfund.ca](http://www.osuchildrenslibraryfund.ca).

**Thematic Links:** Tanzania - Trees - Africa - Forestry - Environment

### **Maxine’s Tree**

Written by Diane Carmel Léger  
Illustrated by Dar Churcher  
Orca Book Publishers, 1990  
Grades 2 - 4 (Ages 7 - 9)  
Five-year-old Maxine and her family make

weekend visits to British Columbia’s Carmanah Valley where some of the Earth’s oldest and tallest trees grow. There they build trails that help to clear a path through the ancient rainforest. Maxine creates a special hideaway in one old tree, a gigantic Sitka spruce. Via a clearing in the trail, Maxine spies a nearby mountain that has been logged and abandoned. Due to this discovery, she now realizes that her forest and her favourite tree may be jeopardized by the loggers’ chainsaw. Maxine fears for the safety of her rainforest playground and so seeks a way to save her tree. Her innovative solution, which is effective and simple, yields some startling results. This book is the prequel to *Who’s in Maxine’s Tree?*, which is discussed in this section of the guide. Maxine’s Tree is available in French as *L’arbre de Maxine*.

**Thematic Links:** Trees - British Columbia - Nature Conservation - Rainforests

### **A One Hen: How One Small Loan Made a Big Difference (CitizenKid)**

Written by Katie Smith Milway  
Illustrated by Eugenie Fernandes  
Kids Can Press, 2008  
Grades 2 and up (Ages 7 and up)

Meet Kojo, a Ghanaian boy who transforms a little loan into a thriving farm and livelihood for several others. After his dad dies, he must quit school to help his mom collect firewood to sell at the market. When she obtains a loan from some village families, she gives Kojo a little bit of money. He purchases a hen with his tiny loan. Within a year, Kojo builds up a flock of 25 hens. Thanks to his earnings, he can return to school. Soon his farm grows to become the largest one in his area. Kojo is based on a real man, Kwabena Darko, who changed his community and is helping others do the same via a micro-credit lending program. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens* 2009 selection and shortlisted for many awards, including the 2009 Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children’s Non-Fiction. Katie Smith Milway is also the author of *The Good Garden: How One Family Went from Hunger to Having Enough*, which is featured in this section of the guide. To learn more about the Canadian illustrator and some of her work, visit [www.kidscanpress.com](http://www.kidscanpress.com).

**Thematic Links:** Microfinancing - Ghana - Community - Farming

### **A Peter's Wish**

Written and photographed by Kathy Knowles  
Osu Children's Library Fund, 2008  
Grades 1 - 3 (Ages 6 - 8)

Peter's father, Genda, works as a village game scout with an anti-poaching team in Tanzania. This book describes Genda's efforts to protect wild animals from poachers. And what is Peter's wish? To follow in his father's footsteps. Photographs accompany this true story. This book is also available in Swahili as *Taraja la Peter*. The Osu Children's Library Fund, a non-profit Canadian organization, introduces African children to the world of books and provides opportunities for non-literate African adults to gain basic literacy skills. For more information, visit [www.osuchildrenslibraryfund.ca](http://www.osuchildrenslibraryfund.ca).

**Thematic Links:** Animal Protection - Africa - Tanzania - African Wildlife

### **Roses in My Carpets**

Written by Rukhsana Khan  
Illustrated by Ronald Himler  
Stoddart Publishing, 1998  
Grades 3 - 6 (Ages 8 - 11)

In Pakistan, a fatherless Afghan boy lives with his family in a refugee camp. Poverty and fear of the screaming jets that fly overhead are constant realities in his world. Fortunately, the boy's carpet-weaver training, given via sponsorship, offers him hope and an eventual way to feed his mother and sister. Spare watercolour-and-pencil artwork accompanies this moving tale told in simple yet detailed prose. Rukhsana Khan's meeting with her sponsored child and his family inspired this story. Visit [www.rukhsanakhan.com](http://www.rukhsanakhan.com) for a teacher's guide or more information on the author-storyteller and her work.

**Thematic Links:** Afghanistan - War - Refugees - Family - Weaving

### **Sandy's Incredible Shrinking Footprint**

Written by Femida Hamdy and Carole Carpenter  
Illustrated by Adrianna Steele-Card  
Second Story Press, 2010  
Kindergarten - Grade 2 (Ages 5 - 7)

"Mom, I shrunk my ecological footprint!" Sandy is a city girl who adores visiting her grandfather's house by the seashore each summer. While taking a stroll on the beach, she spies a shocking and unpleasant sight of garbage left behind by folks who made a bonfire there. Sandy then gets to work clearing away the debris. The Garbage Lady appears on the scene and joins her. She explains to Sandy that everyone has an ecological footprint and that it is their responsibility to shrink it. A "Ways to Shrink Our Footprints" list invites readers to put into practice what they've learned here. Collages crafted from recycled and natural materials illustrate the story.

**Thematic Links:** Nature - Recycling - Environment - Grandfathers - Footprints

### **The Weber Street Wonder Work Crew**

Written and illustrated by Maxwell Newhouse  
Tundra Books, 2010  
Preschool - Grade 2 (Ages 3 - 7)

This story demonstrates how being neighbourly pays in more ways than one. The Weber Street Wonder Work Crew is a group of enterprising kids who employ their oodles of talents and interests to earn money while assisting their neighbours. The kids in this bunch step in as needed to accomplish a plethora of tasks, from babysitting and window washing to lending a hand in a garden and helping a senior citizen stay in touch with her friends online. This simple text, paired with lively folk-style paintings, motivates children to participate in their communities. Visit [www.maxwellnewhouse.com](http://www.maxwellnewhouse.com) to learn more about the author-illustrator and his work.

**Thematic Links:** Neighbourhood - Community - Helping - Jobs - Responsibility

### **Who's in Maxine's Tree?**

Written by Diane Carmel Léger  
Illustrated by Darlene Gait  
Orca Book Publishers, 2006  
Grades 2 - 4 (Ages 7 - 9)

Maxine adores her giant Sitka spruce in the Walbran Valley. She worries, though, that her tree is gone as she stares at clearcuts from the car window. When Maxine darts ahead of her friends and family as they trek in the old-growth forest, she confirms that her tree is still there. As she stands and listens at its foot, she doesn't hear the special sound ("keer, keer") it emits. Maxine learns that the sound is the song of a marbled murrelet (a mamu). This endangered seabird flies far from the sea to nest in the Sitka spruce's high flat branches. Maxine realizes her tree will be safe for good when a tree climber confirms the presence of a mamu nest in it. This book made the 2006 *Resource Links* "The Year's Best" list. It is also the follow-up title to *Maxine's Tree*, which is discussed in this section of the guide. *Who's in Maxine Tree?* is available in French as *Qui est dans l'arbre de Maxine?*

**Thematic Links:** Endangered Species - Nature Conservation - Trees - Birds - British Columbia

# Junior Fiction

## After Peaches

Written by Michelle Mulder

Orca Book Publishers, 2009

Grades 3 and up (Ages 8 and up)

Ten-year-old Rosario Ramirez and her family are Mexican political refugees who come to Canada to embark on a new life. After the girl is teased at school, she swears not to speak English again until she can speak it with “a one-hundred percent Canadian accent.” Rosario is surrounded once more by Spanish speakers during the summer, which she spends working with her parents on British Columbia fruit farms. She is forced to reconsider her vow to not speak English when her family’s dearest friend, José, grows quite ill. Neither Rosario’s parents nor José speak English sufficiently to get him the help he needs. Like it or lump it, Rosario must confront her fears about letting her voice be heard in her new language. This book is shortlisted for the 2011 Chocolate Lily Awards. Michelle will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2011. Visit [www.michellemulder.com](http://www.michellemulder.com) to learn more about the author and her books. Michelle Mulder also wrote *Maggie and the Chocolate War* and *Yeny and the Children for Peace*, which are both discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Mexico - Political Refugees - British Columbia - Language

## A Aram’s Choice

(New Beginnings)

Written by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch

Illustrated by Muriel Wood

Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2006

Grades 3 - 5 (Ages 8 - 11)

Aram Davidian, who has fled the Armenian genocide in Turkey, now lives in an orphanage in Greece. When he and 49 other Armenian refugee orphan boys have the chance to start a new life in Canada, he makes the difficult and heartbreaking choice to leave his grandmother behind. Aram and the others embark on a long journey of multiple trips by train and ship to reach their new home with Rev. and Mrs. Edwards on their farm. This book is based on the story of Kevork Kevorkian, one of the original Georgetown Boys, a group of Armenian orphans brought to Georgetown, Ontario, in 1923. Colour

illustrations, a historical note, a glossary, a suggested reading list and an index round out the text. This book was a CCBC *Our Choice 2007* selection, was nominated for the OLA’s 2007 Silver Birch Award and was shortlisted for the CLA’s 2006 Book of the Year for Children Award. This is the prequel to *Call Me Aram*, also featured in this section of the guide. Visit [www.calla.com](http://www.calla.com) for a teacher’s guide and to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** Armenian Genocide - Orphans - Refugees - 1920s - Farm Life - Georgetown, Ontario - Historical Fiction

## A The Breadwinner

Written by Deborah Ellis

Groundwood Books, 2000

Grades 4 - 9 (Ages 9 - 14)

Deborah Ellis, a political activist, based this compelling novel on the true stories of women in Afghan refugee camps. Life changes drastically for Parvana when the Taliban, the extreme religious faction that controls Afghanistan, arrests her father. Since girls are forbidden to work, Parvana must disguise herself as a boy to earn money and provide food for her family. This book won the 2002 Middle East Book Award and 2003 Swedish Peter Pan Prize and was nominated for several other awards. *Parvana’s Journey* and *Mud City* are the other titles in the trilogy. A literature circle guide is available at [http://teacher.scholastic.com/clubs/pdfs/Breadwinner\\_t.pdf](http://teacher.scholastic.com/clubs/pdfs/Breadwinner_t.pdf). Ellis also wrote *The Heaven Shop* and *I Am a Taxi*, both discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Afghanistan - Women - Social Conditions - Taliban

## A Call Me Aram

(New Beginnings)

Written by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch

Illustrated by Muriel Wood

Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2009

Grades 3 - 5 (Ages 8 - 11)

Aram Davidian and other Armenian refugee orphan boys start new lives in Canada when Rev. and Mrs. Edwards sponsor them and invite them to live with them on their farm in Georgetown, Ontario. The boys had fled Turkey’s Armenian genocide and sought refuge at a Greek orphanage before travelling to Canada. Aram is grateful for his new home and its comforts, but is

shaken when he discovers the Edwardses have given the boys English names. The boys don’t believe they should be expected to give up their identity. They also worry that, with new names, surviving family members won’t be able to locate them. When the boys refuse to change their Armenian names to English ones, Aram finds a way for them to tell the Edwardses of their decision without hurting their feelings. Colour illustrations, a historical note, a glossary, a suggested reading list, an index and photos round out the text. This is the sequel to *Aram’s Choice*, also featured in this section of the guide. Visit [www.calla.com](http://www.calla.com) to download a teacher’s guide and to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** Armenian Genocide - Orphans - Refugees - Identity - 1920s - Georgetown, Ontario - Farm Life - Historical Fiction

## Claire and the Water Wish

Written and illustrated by Janice Poon

Kids Can Press, 2009

Grades 2 - 5 (Ages 7 - 10)

Janice Poon’s got a groovy kind of graphic novel for girls. Claire and Jet are thrilled to be back at school. But they start to drift apart when Jet wins a digital camera and only cares about snapping photos with the “in” crowd. Claire meets a girl who reveals that the water from Lovesick Lake is making people ill. Jet and Claire must then put their differences aside to help bring the lake polluters to justice. Readers can join the main character on another one of her adventures in *Claire and the Bakery Thief* (2008).

**Thematic Links:** Pollution - Friendship - Health

## A The Eco-Diary of Kiran Singer

Written by Sue Ann Alderson

Illustrated by Millie Ballance

Tradewind Books, 2007

Grades 3 - 7 (Ages 8 - 12)

Twelve-year-old Kiran worries about various world issues such as pollution. In a letter to her grandmother, she writes: “*But what can I do? / I’m just a kid. / What can a kid do?*” Her question leads to a week of visits to Camosun Bog where her grandmother works as part of a volunteer crew known as

the Crazy Boggers. Kiran keeps a diary of the week she spends with her grandma at the bog. The text, penned in the form of 35 poems, is illustrated with rich watercolour paintings. Sue Ann Alderson's inspiration for this story stemmed from her involvement with the restoration of Vancouver's Camosun Bog. This novel, written in verse, was shortlisted for the 2008 Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's Non-Fiction.

**Thematic Links:** Novels in Verse - Poetry - Vancouver - Ecology - Nature

### **A Ellen Fremedon, Volunteer**

Written by Joan Givner  
Groundwood Books, 2007  
Grades 4 - 6 (Ages 9 - 11)

When her best friend, Jenny, heads off to art school in Saskatchewan, Ellen anticipates a boring summer at home in Partridge Cove, BC. With nothing else to do, she reluctantly accompanies her teacher on a visit to a senior citizens' home where she befriends a blind and crotchety resident named Mr. Martin. Of her own volition, she begins visiting the facility regularly and running various errands for its residents.

Emotionally attached to the home, Ellen speaks out when she learns about the government's decision to close it. Joan Givner gives readers the following message on which to reflect: when you don't have a favourable first impression of someone, it is worth trying to get to know that person. S/he just might start to grow on you — as Ellen finds with Mr. Martin. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2008* selection. *Ellen Fremedon*; *Ellen Fremedon, Journalist* and *Ellen's Book of Life* are other books about the independent, plucky and socially conscious heroine whose imperfections make her all the more likeable.

**Thematic Links:** Volunteerism - Elderly - Summer Vacation

### **A The Heaven Shop**

Written by Deborah Ellis  
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2004  
Grades 5 - 8 (Ages 10 - 13)

With this story, Deborah Ellis pays tribute to Malawi's children orphaned by AIDS. Thirteen-year-old Binti is shocked by her father's sudden death from AIDS, the same illness that claimed her mother's life six years earlier. She and her siblings are split up and shipped off to relatives who can hardly tolerate their presence. Their extended family ostracize and treat them like the lowliest servants. Binti, who was once a child star in a popular radio play, always considered herself special. Although

now she is merely another AIDS orphan struggling to survive, Binti is not ready to give up. As she clutches the hope that her old life will return, she faces a bigger challenge. Binti must look beyond herself and discover a new way to be special if she wishes to see her siblings again. This book was a CCBC *Our Choice 2005* selection, a 2005 Red Maple Award nominee and a Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Award finalist. To order a free teacher's guide, visit [www.fitzhenry.ca](http://www.fitzhenry.ca). Ellis also penned *I Am a Taxi* and *The Breadwinner*, which are both discussed in this section of the theme guide. **Thematic Links:** AIDS - Africa - Orphans - Siblings - Malawi

### **I Am a Taxi (Cocalero Novels)**

Written by Deborah Ellis  
Groundwood Books, 2006  
Grades 5 - 8 (Ages 10 - 13)

The San Sebastian Women's Prison in Cochabamba, Bolivia, is home to 12-year-old Diego and his family. His parents were farmers of coca, a traditional Bolivian medicinal plant, before they landed in the middle of the government's war on drugs and were mistakenly charged with drug possession. Diego's father and mother are locked up. But he is allowed to attend school, sell his mother's hand-knitted wares at the market and work as a "taxi," which involves running errands for other prisoners. His mother faces a hefty fine when his little sister runs away. With the debt and the dawning realization of his desperate situation, Diego is vulnerable to his pal Mando's scheme to make big money, fast. He is soon deep in the jungle, working almost as a slave in an illegal cocaine operation. As his situation grows quite dangerous, he knows he must take an awful risk if he wishes to see his family ever again. This is the prequel to *Sacred Leaf*, which is discussed in this section of the guide. This title was a 2007 CLA Book of the Year for Children Award Honour Book, a CCBC *Our Choice 2007* selection and the winner of the 2007 Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Award. Visit [www.groundwoodbooks.com](http://www.groundwoodbooks.com) to learn more about the author and most of her books. Ellis also penned *The Breadwinner* and *The Heaven Shop*, which are both discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Drug Trade - Bolivia - Imprisonment - Family - South America

### **A Keep Out!**

(Red Dune Adventures)  
Written by Hélène Boudreau  
Illustrated by Diane Lucas  
Nimbus Publishing, 2010  
Grades 2 - 4 (Ages 7 - 9)

Twin brothers, André and Lucas, live on Prince Edward Island with their parents. Their father works as a veterinarian and their mother is a park warden who works to protect tiny birds called piping plovers. The brothers pitch in to lend their mom a hand by setting up gates around nests and ensuring no one trespasses in the delicate region. But when a nest is found damaged, André and Lucas must perform some handy detective work to find the culprits. Line drawings round out the engaging and accessible text. Visit [www.heleneboudreau.com](http://www.heleneboudreau.com) to download a teacher's guide and to find out more about the author and her books. Kristin Bieber Domm's *Ahmed and the Nest of Sand* is another story about piping plovers that is discussed in the picture book section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Birds - Twins - Prince Edward Island - Mysteries

### **Lacey and the African Grandmothers (A Kids' Power Book)**

Written by Sue Farrell Holler  
Second Story Press, 2009  
Grades 4 - 8 (Ages 9 - 13)

Lacey Little Bird lives in Alberta and is a member of the Siksika Blackfoot tribe. She adores spending time with Kahasi, an elder on her reserve who is like a grandmother to her. Through Kahasi, Lacey learns about their people, including the art of beadwork. She discovers a project to support African grandmothers who are raising their grandchildren because the parents of the children have succumbed to AIDS. Even though Africa is thousands of kilometres away, Lacey is keen to help and emails the grandmothers with a plan to raise funds through the sale of beaded purses. Her decision sparks dynamic changes in her life and her community. This book is based on real people, true events and the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

**Thematic Links:** First Nations - Africa - AIDS - Grandmothers - Fundraising



## **A Libertad**

Written by Alma Fullerton  
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2008  
Grades 5 and up (Ages 10 and up)

A news story inspired this compelling and haunting novel penned in free verse. Libertad, his little brother, Julio, and their mother live in a dump in Guatemala City while his father travels to the United States to earn money for the family. Though it is too late for Libertad to attend school, he insists that Julio should attend. Libertad plays the marimba, a skill learned from his father, to earn enough cash to pay for his brother's school supplies. When a freak accident kills their mother, Libertad's dreams for the future are dashed. He must face the inevitable truth that he and his brother cannot survive on the Guatemala City streets by themselves. Libertad realizes there is only one thing to do. He and Julio embark on the long and lonely trek to the Rio Grande River, which they intend to cross to enter the United States and find their father. Not only was this book a starred selection in the CCBC's *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009*, but it won the 2009 Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Award and was shortlisted for the 2009 TD Canadian Children's Literature Award and the 2008 Governor General's Literary Award. Visit [www.almafullerton.com](http://www.almafullerton.com) to learn more about the author and her work. To obtain a teacher's guide, visit [www.fitzhenry.ca](http://www.fitzhenry.ca).

**Thematic Links:** Guatemala - Street Children - Brothers - Poetry - Novels in Verse

## **Maggie and the Chocolate War**

(A Kids' Power Book)  
Written by Michelle Mulder  
Second Story Press, 2007  
Grades 4 - 8 (Ages 9 - 13)

"Keep that chocolate price down, down, down!" It's 1947, and food prices keep climbing though World War II has ended. Maggie saves her salary from her delivery job to purchase her best friend, Jo, a chocolate bar for her birthday. Without notice, the price of chocolate jumps nearly 60 percent. This drastic and sudden increase means Maggie won't be able to save enough money by Jo's birthday. Maggie and her pals spring into action and wage a strike against

the chocolate price hike. A national children's strike over chocolate bars, which occurred in Canada in 1947, inspired this story rich with excitement and energy. A historical note is included. Michelle Mulder will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children's Book Week 2011. To learn more about the author and her books, visit [www.michellemulder.com](http://www.michellemulder.com). Mulder also wrote *After Peaches* and *Yeny and the Children for Peace*, which are both discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** 1940s - Chocolate - Protests - Canadian History - Historical Fiction

## **A New Life**

Written by Rukhsana Khan  
Illustrated by Nasrin Khosravi  
Groundwood Books, 2009  
Grades 3 - 6 (Ages 8 - 11)  
Eight-year-old Khadija, her older brother, Hamza, and their parents arrive in Canada from Pakistan. They struggle and learn while they adjust to a new language, a new society and life in a new country. Khadija and Hamza initially become targets of school bullies, but then make friends and begin to feel more at ease in their new home. A glossary is included. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010* selection. Note that this is a revised edition of *Coming to Canada*, published in May 2008 for Settlement Workers in Schools/Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Visit [www.rukhsanakhan.com](http://www.rukhsanakhan.com) to download a teacher's guide and learn more about the author and her work.

**Thematic Links:** Immigration - Pakistan - Adjustment

## **Yeny and the Children for Peace**

(A Kids' Power Book)  
Written by Michelle Mulder  
Second Story Press, 2008  
Grades 4 - 8 (Ages 9 - 13)

This story shows how children use a vote for peace to speak out against violence. In Colombia, Yeny and her family flee the violence in their mountain village for a safer life in the city. But danger abounds and surrounds her in the form of troupes of armed men who have kidnapped her uncle, and a frightening bully at school. Yeny feels powerless until her new friends opt to organize a peace carnival. The peace movement attracts youth from across Colombia who decide to stage a national vote for peace. The Colombian Children's Movement for Peace inspired this story. Black-and-white photographs, a glossary of Spanish terms and a historical note are included. Michelle Mulder will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children's Book Week 2011. Visit [www.michellemulder.com](http://www.michellemulder.com) to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** Peace - Colombia - South America

# Young Adult

## Fiction

### **An Island of My Own**

Written by Andrea Spalding  
Dundurn Press, 2008 (c 1998)  
Grades 6 - 9 (Ages 11 - 14)

When her journalist parents head abroad on assignment, Rowan goes to live for six months with her cousins near Tofino, British Columbia. When she discovers sea otters living in the kelp beds surrounding a nearby island, she sets out to protect the creatures and their home. With permission from her aunt and uncle, Rowan takes a two-week camping trip on the island to research the otters. Her project draws support from a wildlife biologist and interest from the media. However, there are others who have self-serving interests in the island: the island's owner who wants to sell the land as he needs the money, and a businessman who wants to buy the island as a personal retreat for himself and others who enjoy the area. Will Rowan succeed in saving the sea otters in the face of these obstacles? This book was a CCBC *Our Choice* 1999-2000 selection and was shortlisted for the 1999 Silver Birch Award and nominated for the 2001 Manitoba Young Reader's Choice Award. Visit [www.andreaspadding.com](http://www.andreaspadding.com) to learn more about the author and her books.

**Thematic Links:** Wildlife Conservation - British Columbia - Otters

### **Borderline**

Written by Allan Stratton  
HarperCollins Canada, 2010  
Grades 8 and up (Ages 13 and up)

Though this powerful page-turner is a work of fiction, it conveys a story that could frighteningly transpire in real life. Sami Sabiri is a Muslim-American teen who not only feels disconnected from his father but distrusted, misunderstood and unloved by him as well. The boy also knows what it's like to be a target as he faces bullying at school, of which his father is unaware. His father then learns what it's like to be a target. When law enforcement officials misinterpret some of his email correspondence, they suspect that he is collaborating with Islamic terrorists in a plot to contaminate the water supplies of New York City and Toronto. It is Sami who puts past hurts between him and his father aside and comes to his father's rescue. It is also he who must

now rely on his wits and act quickly to unearth the truth, clear his father's name and save his family. Visit [www.allanstratton.com](http://www.allanstratton.com) to learn more about the author and his work.

**Thematic Links:** Muslim-Americans - Terrorism - Trust - Bullying - Fathers and Sons

### **Branded**

Written by Eric Walters  
Orca Book Publishers, 2010  
Grades 6 - 10 (Ages 11 - 15)

To wear or not to wear: that is the question. This story shows how we can make a political statement and take an ethical stand through the clothes we choose to wear or not wear. Ian finds himself in a conundrum when he learns the students at his junior high will be required to wear uniforms. His friend and classmate, Julia, who is also school president, wants him to hatch a plan to quash the decision. But his principal and teacher, Mr. Roberts, is convinced that the uniforms are a great initiative. While conducting research for his social-justice class, Ian discovers that the manufacturer of the uniforms is on the top-ten list for human-rights violations. When he shares his discovery with Mr. Roberts, the principal reminds him that refusing to wear the uniform will result in a school suspension. Ian finds himself caught in conflict yet again, but this time with himself. Visit [www.ericwalters.net](http://www.ericwalters.net) to learn more about the author and his work.

**Thematic Links:** : Human Rights - School - Clothing Industry - Ethical Dilemmas - Friendship - Social Networking Media

### **Chanda's Secrets**

Written by Allan Stratton  
HarperTrophyCanada, 2008  
Grades 7 - 12 (Ages 12 - 18)

Since Mama died, Chanda has struggled to care for her brother and sister. To seek support from her grandparents and end a family feud, she travels with the children to their family's remote rural village. But rebels attack the village and kidnap her siblings to use as soldiers in a civil war. Risking their lives, Chanda and a troubled young tracker must pursue the rebels through the unforgiving bush to rescue her brother and sister. This tale, which unfolds in sub-Saharan

Africa, is the gripping and suspenseful sequel to *Chanda's Secrets*, which is also discussed in this section of the guide. Visit [www.allanstratton.com](http://www.allanstratton.com) for a teacher's guide and to learn more about the author and his work. A reading group guide is available at <http://harperteen.com>.

**Thematic Links:** AIDS - Africa - War - Family - Child Soldiers

### **Child of Dandelions**

Written by Shenaaz Nanji  
Second Story Press, 2008  
Grades 7 - 12 (Ages 12 - 18)

Fifteen-year-old Sabine is an East Indian girl who was born in Uganda and lives a pampered existence there with her family. Her life as she knows it is shattered when president-dictator Idi Amin declares that East-Indian Ugandans must be "weeded" and gives these citizens 90 days to leave Uganda. For Sabine, it is impossible to escape the growing resentment that black Ugandans harbour towards Indian Ugandans. Even her best friend, Zena, who is a black Ugandan, shuns her and tells her she doesn't belong. Sabine's parents are forced to flee when soldiers raid their home and her uncle disappears. Sabine is faced with taking charge of her own and her brother's fate and finding a way to escape the country that once was her home. A historical note and author's note are included. This book was a finalist for the 2008 Governor General's Literary Award, the 2009 Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People and the 2010 Manitoba Young Readers' Choice Award. It was also a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens* 2009 selection. Visit [www.snanji.com](http://www.snanji.com) to learn more about the author and her work. For a study guide, visit [www.secondstorypress.ca/resources](http://www.secondstorypress.ca/resources).

**Thematic Links:** Historical Fiction - Uganda - Friendship - Ethnic Cleansing - Dictatorships - Idi Amin - 1970s

### **Earthgirl**

Written by Jennifer Cowan  
Groundwood Books, 2009  
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

This intelligent, sharp and informative story follows the eco-evolution of funny and endearing 16-year-old Sabine Solomon. When leftover food tossed from a vehicle

lands on her, she throws it back at the culprit driver. When her pals capture the ensuing altercation with their videophones and post the footage on YouTube, Sabine finds herself at the heart of a heated eco-debate. Inspired to higher global consciousness, she takes a job at an organic food co-op where she befriends eco-warrior Vray Foret. But Sabine is then left to make some difficult and heartbreaking decisions when Vray's activism takes a sinister turn. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010* selection and was shortlisted for the 2010 Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Award. Visit [www.groundwoodbooks.com](http://www.groundwoodbooks.com) to learn more about the author.

**Thematic Links:** Environmentalism - Social Networking - Activism - Relationships

### **A** Hate Cell (Casey Templeton Mystery)

Written by Gwen Molnar  
Dundurn Press, 2009

Grades 5 and up (Ages 11 and up)

Casey and his family move to Richford, Alberta, a town that is home to a brutal cell of white supremacists who target those they deem "alien." He discovers that his teacher and residents, both young and old, are linked to the dangerous organization. Soon Casey's brother and the RCMP are drawn into solving the mystery of the hate group. But it is Casey who leads the investigation into its skewed world where hatred is promoted on the Internet and bullies and bigots blinkered by prejudices prey on innocent folks. Visit [www.dundurn.com](http://www.dundurn.com) to obtain a teacher's guide.

**Thematic Links:** Hate Crime - Racism - Prejudice - Mysteries - Bullying

### **A** Poster Boy

Written by Dede Crane  
Groundwood Books, 2009

Grades 7 - 9 (Ages 12 - 14)

Life is good for 16-year-old Gray Fallon. That's until his 12-year-old sister, Maggie, is diagnosed with a rare cancer. When he learns her illness may be linked to environmental causes, he strives to make her environment carcinogen-free. But Gray feels unable to help his sister and improve the health of his home environment. As a result, he drops out of regular life by ditching school and his part-time job. Gray becomes the poster boy for the environmental movement when he opts to live in a tent, forage for food and work on an organic farm. His new lifestyle creates other problems and cannot shield him from the reality of Maggie's illness. This fast-paced novel

peopled with realistic characters was a finalist for the CLA's 2010 Young Adult Canadian Book Award and was selected as one of the OLA's "Best Bets" in 2009.

**Thematic Links:** Illness - Family - Environmental Issues - Death - Advocacy

### **A** Run

Written by Eric Walters  
Penguin Group (Canada), 2003  
Grades 6 - 9 (Ages 11 - 14)

Fourteen-year-old Winston MacDonald travels with his journalist dad to Nova Scotia to interview Terry Fox for an article about Terry's Marathon of Hope. Winston meets Terry and his best friend, Doug Alward. Their drive to accomplish what appears to be an insurmountable feat leaves a great impression on Winston. He is ecstatic when his dad's article about Terry and his marathon sparks interest across Canada. But when Winston learns his dad's next piece will depict Terry and Doug in an unflattering light and misleading manner, he is angry with his father and afraid of betraying them. Uncertain of where to turn or what to do, Winston does what he knows best and runs away. This part-fictional, part-factual novel includes a foreword by the Fox family, a copy of Terry's letter requesting support for his run, a timeline of Terry's journey and more. Eric Walters donates the book's royalties to The Terry Fox Foundation, and Penguin matches these donations. The novel was shortlisted for the CLA's 2004 Book of the Year for Children Award. Visit [www.ericwalters.net](http://www.ericwalters.net) to learn more about Walters and his work.

**Thematic Links:** Fathers and Sons - Terry Fox - Cancer - Fundraising - Marathons - Historical Fiction - Journalists

### Safe House

Written by James Heneghan  
Orca Book Publishers, 2006  
Grades 4 - 7 (Ages 9 - 12)

This story, set in 1999, revolves around Liam Fogarty, a 12-year-old Catholic boy who lives in Northern Ireland. One night, two men break into his home and murder his parents. Before escaping his house via his bedroom window, Liam sees the face of one of the murderers. He finds refuge, for a brief time, with his neighbours who live across the street from him. The police then send him to live in a safe house to protect him from the man who is trying to kill him. When he discovers that the man who runs the safe house has blown his cover, he escapes through the window of his bedroom there and is on the run once more. James

Heneghan supplements the story with a timeline and an author's note. This title was a CCBC *Our Choice 2007* selection. It was also nominated for the 2007 BC Book Prize, the 2007 Sheila A. Egoff Children's Literature Prize and the 2007 Chocolate Lily Award. Visit [www.jamesheneghan.com](http://www.jamesheneghan.com) to learn more about the author and his work.

**Thematic Links:** Northern Ireland - Religion - Death

### **A** The Shepherd's Granddaughter

Written by Anne Laurel Carter  
Groundwood Books, 2008

Grades 6 and up (Ages 11 and up)

Since she was a child, Amani has wanted to be a shepherd like her grandfather, Sido. For generations, her family has tended sheep above the olive groves of their homestead near Hebron, a city located in the West Bank. But now, encroaching Jewish settlements threaten Amani's family home. As she struggles to find increasingly rare grazing land for her starving flock, her brother and uncle are tempted to take a more militant stance against the Israeli settlers. She befriends Jonathan, an American boy visiting his dad who is one of the settlers. The pair discover her grandfather's secret meadow, which is the domain of a lone wolf. Amani discovers that she must share the meadow, and even her sheep, with the animal, if she is going to keep using it. A glossary of Hebrew and Arabic terms is included. This book won the CLA's 2009 Book of the Year for Children Award and was a 2010 Red Maple Award nominee. Visit [www.annecarter.com](http://www.annecarter.com) to learn more about the author and her work.

**Thematic Links:** Middle East Conflict - Israel - Palestine - Shepherds - Wolves

### Speechless

Written by Valerie Sherrard  
Dundurn Press, 2007

Grades 5 - 10 (Ages 10 - 15)

Griffin Maxwell is a shy, quiet boy who dreads public speaking so much that he breaks into a sweat when his teacher announces that it's time for the yearly class speeches. The humiliation he faced when he gave his speech last year is not an experience he wishes to relive. So how does Griffin manage to get out of giving his speech? He takes a bogus vow of silence to show his concern for child soldiers in Africa, a real cause that he has randomly chosen. Griffin's speechlessness sparks an odd chain of comical events, but also leads him to develop a genuine interest in a cause

that he initially only pretended to care about. Visit [www.dundurn.com](http://www.dundurn.com) to obtain a teacher's guide.

**Thematic Links:** Social Activism - School - Public Speaking - Social Responsibility

### **A** *Wanting Mor*

Written by Rukhsana Khan

Groundwood Books, 2009

Grades 5 - 9 (Ages 10 - 14)

After her mother dies, Jameela feels alone and lost despite her father's presence. Her life takes a darker turn when her dad weds a woman who despises her. Her father, urged by her stepmother, abandons Jameela in a marketplace. The girl lives with a kind-hearted shopkeeper and his family for a few days before she must leave for her final destination: an orphanage. This new home proves to be a blessing in disguise for Jameela. She gains the chance to attend school, learn to read and undergo surgery to correct her mild facial deformity (a cleft palate). This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010* starred selection and

was nominated for the 2010/2011 Hackmatack Children's Choice Award and the 2010 National IODE Violet Downey Award. *Wanting Mor* is based on a true story about a girl who ended up in one of the orphanages Rukhsana Khan sponsors in Afghanistan through the royalties of her book, *The Roses in My Carpets*, which is discussed in the picture book section of this guide. To learn more about the author and her work and to obtain a teacher's guide, visit [www.rukhsanakhan.com](http://www.rukhsanakhan.com).

**Thematic Links:** Girls in Afghanistan - Afghan War 2001 - Orphanages - Muslims

### **A** *War Brothers*

Written by Sharon McKay

Puffin Canada, 2008

Grades 5 - 9 (Ages 10 - 14)

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 novel 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. McKay will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children's Book Week 2011. To learn more about the author and her work, visit [www.sharonmckay.ca](http://www.sharonmckay.ca).

**Thematic Links:** Uganda - Child Soldiers - Kidnapping - Survival - Africa - War

# Junior

# Non-Fiction

### **Animal Rights Activist**

(Get Involved!)

Written by Carrie Gleason

Crabtree Publishing, 2010

Grades 4 - 7 (Ages 9 - 12)

Who speaks for the animals that cannot speak for themselves? Carrie Gleason explains how animal welfare differs from animal rights, discusses vegetarianism and what constitutes animal cruelty, shows kids how they can work for the protection and preservation of animals in a peaceful manner and more! The "Field Notes" feature lets kids hear first-hand from animal rights activists. "Get Active" sidebars call readers to action on the animal rights front. Colour photographs round out the eye-opening text. Websites for well-known organizations mentioned in the text are provided, as well as a glossary and an index.

**Thematic Links:** Animal Welfare - Activism - Animal Rights

### **Environmental Activist**

(Get Involved!)

Written by Carrie Gleason

Crabtree Publishing, 2010

Grades 4 - 7 (Ages 9 - 12)

Be keen, go green! Did you know that the first Earth Day was held in the United States on April 22, 1970? Carrie Gleason shows how environmentalists work to preserve and improve the natural environment. In doing so, she discusses topics such as air, land, water, energy and environmental justice. Through "Get Active" text boxes, she offers tips on how kids can act in more environmentally conscious ways. The "Field Notes" feature lets kids hear first-hand from environmental activists. Colour photographs complement the insightful text. Websites for organizations mentioned in the text, a glossary and an index are included.

**Thematic Links:** Environment - Activism - Earth

### **If the World Were a Village: A Book About the World's People**

(CitizenKid)

Written by David J. Smith

Illustrated by Shelagh Armstrong

Kids Can Press, 2002

Grades 2 and up (Ages 7 and up)

Did you know that the world is home to more than six billion people? David J. Smith uses the concept of a 100-person village to discuss the topic of population. Through the exploration of the lives of the 100 people living in the village, kids discover that life in other countries is often quite unlike their own. The author also offers tips on cultivating "world mindedness" and provides a bibliography of the sources (print and online) that he consulted to write the book. This book won the International Reading Association's 2003 Children's Book Award. Smith also wrote a companion title called *If America Were a Village*. Visit [www.kidscanpress.com](http://www.kidscanpress.com) to learn more about

the author and [www.shelagharmstrong.com](http://www.shelagharmstrong.com) to learn more about the illustrator and her work.

**Thematic Links:** Population - Human Geography - Cultures - Countries - Global Village

### It Takes a Child

Written by Craig Kielburger  
Illustrated by TurnStyle Imaging  
Me to We Books, 2008  
Grades 1 - 4 (Ages 6 - 9)

There is truth in the African saying, “It takes a village to raise a child.” But it also seems true that “It takes a child to change the world.” Craig Kielburger was 12 years old when he founded the international development organization Free The Children, which is the world’s leading youth-driven charity. This book offers a colourful, inspiring look back at Craig’s adventures in taking global action. Craig invites young readers along on an eye-opening journey through South Asia to learn about global poverty and child labour. The “You Can Help!” section suggests many Free The Children projects and programs in which children can participate. “A Note to Parents and Educators” and a glossary are included. For information visit [www.freethechildren.com](http://www.freethechildren.com)

**Thematic Links:** Children’s Rights - Social Justice - Child Advocates

### ▲ Making Change: Tips from an Underage Overachiever

Written by Bilaal Rajan  
Orca Book Publishers, 2008  
Grades 4 - 6 (Ages 9 - 13)

Bilaal Rajan is a boy who knows how to put the “fun” into fundraising. Since the age of four, this Torontonian has been raising funds to help children in other countries such as India and Haiti. Here, he gives activist kids fundraising tips and offers them eight principles to maximize their true potential. (The book contains forms that kids can use to chart their progress in meeting their fundraising goals.) In March 2005, Rajan was named UNICEF Canada Child Representative. Black-and-white photographs and sidebars entitled “Bilaal’s Way” round out this motivating guide. A bibliography entitled “Bilaal’s Reading List” is also included. Visit [www.bilaalrajan.com](http://www.bilaalrajan.com) to learn more about the author.

**Thematic Links:** Fundraising - Philanthropy - Altruism

### Not Your Typical Book About the Environment

Written by Elin Kelsey  
Illustrated by Clayton Hanmer  
Owlkids, 2010  
Grades 4 - 7 (Ages 9 - 12)

Sustainable happiness, anyone? Elin Kelsey is a breath of fresh air that blows through the wilds of environment books for kids. She promotes a happy and hopeful message about saving our planet instead of dwelling on the doom-and-gloom aspect of the state of the environment. The author explains the ways we are linked to the Earth by discussing our production and consumption of clothing, food and technology, as well as the energy that stems from our bodies. (Did you know that human waste powers streetlights in the Indian town of Thiruneralmai?) The innovative and insightful feature, “Elin Explains,” illustrates how sea otters are connected to fish sticks; bees to burgers and world peace; video games and cell phones to gorillas; and penguins to bicycles. Cartoon-style colour artwork illustrates this book, which encourages kids to live a “one-planet” life. An introduction and an index are included. To learn more about the author and her work, visit [www.elinkelseyandcompany.com](http://www.elinkelseyandcompany.com).

**Thematic Links:** Human Ecology - Sustainable Living - Environment

### One Peace: True Stories of Young Activists

Written and illustrated by Janet Wilson  
Orca Book Publishers, 2008  
Grades 4 - 8 (Ages 9 - 13)

This is a celebration of the power of one and the accomplishments of children who have worked to promote world peace. The featured young pacifists hail from Canada, Colombia, Liberia, Bosnia, Japan, Great Britain, Cambodia, Afghanistan and the United States. Paintings, poems and colour photographs illustrate this inspiring collection. This book won the 2009 Information Book Award. Janet Wilson’s *Our Earth: How Kids are Saving the Planet* is also discussed in this section of the guide. The author-illustrator will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children’s Book Week 2011. Visit [www.janetwilson.ca](http://www.janetwilson.ca) to learn more about Wilson and her work.

**Thematic Links:** Peace - Pacifists - Children and Peace

### ▲ One Well: The Story of Water on Earth

Written by Rochelle Strauss  
Illustrated by Rosemary Woods  
Kids Can Press, 2007  
Grades 3 and up (Ages 8 and up)

Did you know that China and India are home to over one-third of the world’s population, yet they only have access to one-tenth of the world’s freshwater? Rochelle Strauss uses the metaphor of “one well” to make the subject of the water accessible to readers. They learn about the water cycle; the relationship of water to plants, animals and people; water habitats; freshwater; our access to water; pollution and the demands we place on the planet’s water supply. The author also conveys how we can protect our water, which is threatened by our heightened demands and the planet’s expanding population. The “Becoming Well Aware” section provides children with ways they can protect and conserve the global well. The “Notes to Parents, Guardians, and Teachers” section offers adults ways to participate in water conservation and explains how they can help children become “well aware.” An index is also included. Strauss’ *Tree of Life: The Incredible Biodiversity of Life on Earth* is also discussed in this section of the guide. Visit [www.rochellestrauss.com](http://www.rochellestrauss.com) to learn more about the author and her work.

**Thematic Links:** Water Conservation - Natural Resources - Environment

### Our Earth: How Kids are Saving the Planet

Written and illustrated by Janet Wilson  
Second Story Press, 2010  
Grades 2 - 7 (Ages 7 - 12)

Janet Wilson profiles 10 young environmental activists through the use of painted portraits, colour photos, her words and their own words. Meet Malawian William Kamkwamba, who brought electricity to his village by building a windmill; a German tree planter; an American agro activist; animal activists from China and Costa Rica and eco activists from India and Indonesia. Readers will be moved by the story of Aika Tsubota, a Japanese girl who longed to have her comic book about the environment published but died before her dream came true; Canada’s Severn Cullis-Suzuki, the pioneer of “pester power” and Ryan Hreljac, who started the Ryan’s Well Foundation. The environmental work of additional young people is highlighted in sections entitled “Kids Take Action!”, “Kids Create!”, “How You Can Help Save the Planet” and “Get Unplugged.” Read more about Hreljac

in greater detail in *Ryan and Jimmy and the Well in Africa that Brought Them Together*. Both this title and Wilson's *One Peace: True Stories of Young Activists* are discussed in this section of the guide. The author-illustrator will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children's Book Week 2011. Visit [www.janetwilson.ca](http://www.janetwilson.ca) to learn more about Wilson and her work.

**Thematic Links:** Environmentalism - Child Activists - Earth

### **A Our New Home: Immigrant Children Speak**

Edited by Emily Hearn and Marywinn Milne  
Second Story Press, 2007  
Grades 3 - 6 (Ages 8 - 11)

"I'm leaving on a jet plane / don't know when I'll be back again..." Children share their feelings about leaving their native countries and discuss the challenges they faced once they moved to Canada. Learning English, weather (snow in particular), teachers and discipline, war/peace, safety and Canada's diverse population are topics mentioned often throughout the collection. The children's accounts ring honest and authentic as the editors left them just as they were written. Their stories are divided into five sections entitled "Leaving," "Differences," "Adjusting," "Problems" and "Feelings." One to three drawings serve as end pages for each chapter. The book features a map, which indicates the 29 countries from which the young writers and artists hail.

**Thematic Links:** Emigration and Immigration - Immigrant Children in Canada

### **A Patrick's Wish**

Written by Karen Mitchell with Rebecca Upjohn  
Photography provided by Patrick4Life  
Second Story Press, 2010  
Grades 2 - 5 (Ages 7 - 10)

The story of Patrick Fortin (1978–2001) is presented with colour family photographs and told as a first-person narrative by his younger sister, Lyanne. Patrick had hemophilia, which meant he relied on blood transfusions to stabilize his condition. But it is a sad yet true fact that what was meant to help him harmed him. He received blood contaminated with HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), which led to his contracting the virus. (This happened before there was a test for HIV. Today, donated blood is tested to ensure that it doesn't contain HIV). Patrick's HIV developed into AIDS and he died when he was 23. Karen Mitchell and Rebecca Upjohn are to be commended, for they subtly indi-

cate that he passed away but they do not dwell on the death-and-dying aspects of his illness. A section entitled "Some Things Patrick Would Want You to Know About HIV and AIDS" is included. His family established Patrick4Life through which it works to make his wish for a cure for AIDS come true. This book is also available in French as *Le voeu de Patrick*.

**Thematic Links:** Hemophiliacs - AIDS (Disease) - Wishes - Brothers and Sisters

### **A Raise Your Voice, Lend a Hand, Change the World**

Written by Susan Hughes  
Scholastic Canada, 2006  
Grades 4 - 10 (Ages 9 - 15)

"We can make a difference, you and I / We can make a difference if we try" are two lines from a camp song that embody the spirit of this title. Susan Hughes offers inspiration and ideas for getting involved, tips from kids who've had fun volunteering, fundraising suggestions, lists of organizations that are looking for great kids and lots of true stories about young people who helped out. The author wraps up the text with a novel twist by introducing readers to five adults whose career paths were influenced by volunteer work they performed as young people. An index is included. This book is a must for kids who think they are too young to create the change they wish to see in the world. To learn more about the author and her books, visit [www.susanhughes.ca](http://www.susanhughes.ca).

**Thematic Links:** Volunteerism - Social Change - Activism

### **A Ryan and Jimmy and the Well in Africa that Brought Them Together (CitizenKid)**

Written by Herb Shoveller  
Kids Can Press, 2006  
Grades 5 - 9 (Ages 10 - 14)

This is a story of how one well brought two boys (one Canadian, one Ugandan) together and changed both of their lives forever, with far-reaching ripple effects. In 1998, Ryan Hreljac, then six years old, was shocked when he learned that hundreds of thousands of African children die from drinking contaminated water. After his discovery, he started raising money for a well, which he asked to be built near a school. In 1999, his first well was built in northern Uganda near Angolo School. Jimmy Akana, who studied there, wanted to thank Ryan in person for his gift. Not only did the boys become penpals, meet and become friends, but the Hreljac family adopted Jimmy, who was an orphan. Colour photographs and

drawings round out this inspiring and moving story of philanthropy, friendship and family. This book was shortlisted for several awards, including the 2007 Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's Non-Fiction and the 2007 Information Book Award.

Learning materials related to the book are available at [www.kidscanpress.com](http://www.kidscanpress.com).

**Thematic Links:** Water - Uganda - Africa - Health - Philanthropy - Friendship - Family

### **A Terry Fox: A Story of Hope**

Written by Maxine Trottier  
Scholastic Canada, 2005  
Grades 2 - 5 (Ages 7 - 10)

Did you know that Terry Fox ranked second out of ten in the CBC's *The Greatest Canadian* contest held in 2004? When Fox (1958–1981) was 18 years old, his right leg was amputated six days after he was diagnosed with bone cancer. This ordeal prompted his decision to run across Canada to raise money for cancer research. In 1980, he set off from St. John's, Newfoundland, on his Marathon of Hope. But 143 days later, the onset of coughing and chest pain forced Fox to end his run near Thunder Bay, Ontario. The cancer had returned and it was now in his lungs. Photographs complement Maxine Trottier's straightforward yet sensitive prose. Royalties from this book, available in French as *Le courage de Terry*, are donated to The Terry Fox Foundation. Eric Walters' novel, *Run*, is about Fox and is discussed in the Young Adult Fiction section of this guide.

**Thematic Links:** Terry Fox - Cancer - Runners - Amputees - Fundraising - Campaigns

### **Tree of Life: The Incredible Biodiversity of Life on Earth**

(CitizenKid)  
Written by Rochelle Strauss  
Illustrated by Margot Thompson  
Kids Can Press, 2004  
Grades 4 - 10 (Ages 9 - 15)

Imagine a tree that has 1,750,000 leaves – one leaf for every known species on Earth. Since we humans count for merely one leaf on the tree, we have lots to learn about the millions of other life forms with which we share the planet. This striking book, which features realistic artwork, introduces readers to the concept of biodiversity. Rochelle Strauss shows how living things are classified into five kingdoms — and how each one has plenty to tell us about all aspects of life on Earth. She also encourages readers to become guardians of biodiversity through self-education, practising reducing/recy-

cling/reusing, creation and restoration of habitat and sharing knowledge. This book was shortlisted for the 2006 Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award, the 2005 Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon's Illustrators Award and the OLA's 2005 Silver Birch Award. Strauss' *One Well: The Story of Water on Earth* is also discussed in this section of the guide. Visit [www.rochellestrauss.com](http://www.rochellestrauss.com) to learn more about the author and her work. For learning resource materials and to find out more about the illustrator and her work, visit [www.kidscanpress.com](http://www.kidscanpress.com).  
**Thematic Links:** Biodiversity - Species - Biological Classification

### **A You Are the Earth: Know Your World So You Can Make It Better**

Written by David Suzuki and Kathy Vanderlinden  
 Illustrated by Wallace Edwards

Greystone Books/David Suzuki Foundation, 2010  
 Grades 4 - 6 (Ages 9 - 11)

Did you know that the water inside you was once sweat that washed off the bodies of people who lived thousands of years ago? *You Are the Earth*, based on Suzuki's adult title, *The Sacred Balance*, was first published in 1999. In the children's book, the author duo explore how the four physical elements of earth, air, fire and water contribute to life on our planet and explain how we all are linked to the Earth. Eleven years later, *You Are the Earth* is back in a revised and updat-

ed edition. The book's new version contains an expanded discussion of leading environmental issues, information on new environmental technologies, additional ways kids can care for the environment and new sidebars featuring facts, tips and examples of what kids can do to be more green. The book also has had a facelift, thanks to entirely new, full-colour art rendered by award-winning children's book illustrator Wallace Edwards.

**Thematic Links:** Environment - Earth

*Senior*

**Non-Fiction**

### **A The Bite of the Mango**

Written by Mariatu Kamara with Susan McClelland  
 Annick Press, 2008  
 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, now 23, 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.

**Thematic Links:** Africa - War Victims - Amputees - Sierra Leone - Civil War - Biographies

### **A 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 an 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. Deborah Ellis donates the book's royalties to the Children in Crisis Fund operated by IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People). This book was nominated for the OLA's Silver Birch Award (Non-Fiction) and was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010* selection. Ellis also wrote *Off to War: Voices of Soldiers' Children*; *Our Stories, Our Songs: African Children Talk About AIDS* and *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*, which are all discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Child War Victims - Iraq War (2003) - Refugee Children

### **A Climate Change**

(Groundwork Guides)

Written by Shelley Tanaka  
 Groundwood Books, 2006

Grades 9 and up (Ages 14 and up)

Change can be a good thing, but not when it comes to climate. Humans are responsible for the warming of the planet, which leads to melting permafrost, threatened water supplies, shrinking glaciers and erratic weather patterns. Shelley Tanaka tackles the tough questions surrounding climate change, which has been dubbed the single greatest threat confronting societies today. The author succeeds in making this vast and scientifically complex topic accessible for teens. Maps, graphs, sidebars, a glossary, an index and a list of websites round out the text. This book was a CCBC *Our Choice 2007* starred selection. For a teacher's guide, visit [www.groundwoodbooks.com](http://www.groundwoodbooks.com).

**Thematic Links:** Weather - Environment - Earth - Global Warming

### **A Genocide**

(Groundwork Guides)

Written by Jane Springer  
 Groundwood Books, 2006

Grades 9 and up (Ages 14 and up)

What does the term "genocide" make you think of? The Holocaust? The extermination of European Jews during World War II (1939–1945) is the event that first springs to many people's minds. But did you know

that the killing of Armenians in Turkey during the period from 1915 to 1923 was the first genocide of the 20th century?

Genocide is far from being a crime of the past. Over the past two decades, genocide has taken place during the 1990s in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, and during the 2000s in Darfur, Sudan. What can be done to prevent genocide from happening in the future? Jane Springer's accessible prose enables readers to comprehend this and other difficult questions that surround this dark and disturbing topic. She provides an overview of the history of genocide worldwide. The author also sets genocide in the context of today's world, reminding teens that every genocide begins as a hate crime. Text boxes scattered throughout the book provide details on specific issues linked to genocide, or provide an in-depth look at one genocide in particular. This book was a CCBC *Our Choice 2007* starred selection and a finalist for the 2007 Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's Non-Fiction. For a teacher's guide, visit [www.groundwoodbooks.com](http://www.groundwoodbooks.com). Springer also penned *Listen to Us: The World's Working Children*, which is discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Human Rights - Conflict - War - Genocide

### Healing Our World: Inside Doctors Without Borders

Written by David Morley  
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2007  
Grades 7 - 12 (Ages 12 - 17)

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), known in English as Doctors Without Borders, is the world's largest independent medical humanitarian relief organization. More than 3,000 MSF volunteers and 12,000 local citizens deliver medical assistance to those in need in more than 70 countries annually. For seven years, David Morley served as the executive director of the Canadian section of Doctors Without Borders. He shares his story and those of others who have volunteered with the organization in some of the most forgotten and perilous pockets of the world — El Salvador, the Congo, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Mozambique, Chechnya and Southern Africa. Black-and-white photographs are included. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2008* starred selection and was a nominee for the 2009 Red Maple Award (Non-Fiction).

**Thematic Links:** Medical Assistance - International Relief - Volunteerism

### June Callwood: A Life of Action

Written by Anne Dublin  
Second Story Press, 2006  
Grades 5 - 9 (Ages 10 - 14)

June Callwood (1924 – 2007) was a humanitarian who founded 50+ activist groups, including Casey House, the world's first special-care hospice for people with AIDS. She was also a journalist who wrote about the people and issues she cared about in 20+ books and hundreds of magazine and newspaper articles. Governor General Jeanne Sauvé made Callwood an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1986. Black-and-white photos, a selected bibliography and an index are included. With the first biography of this late, great Canadian written for young people, Anne Dublin delivers an engaging and enlightening portrait of her subject. This book was a CCBC *Our Choice 2007* selection and nominated for the OLA's 2008 Golden Oak Award. Visit [www.annedublin.ca](http://www.annedublin.ca) to learn more about the author and her work. A teacher's guide is also available online at [www.secondstorypress.ca](http://www.secondstorypress.ca) under 'Resources.'

**Thematic Links:** Activists - Journalists - Biography - Ontarians

### Listen to Us: The World's Working Children

Written by Jane Springer  
Groundwood Books, 1997  
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

As a writer, editor and consultant in international development who lived and worked for 11 years in India and Mozambique, Jane Springer knows first-hand about world issues affecting youth. In her lucid introduction to the topic of child labour, she allows child workers from around the globe to speak for themselves, sharing their experiences of deprivation, exploitation and suffering. The author discusses the types of work children perform and reasons why they work and explains why child labour is a concern in both developing and industrialized countries. Sidebars, maps, charts and heartbreaking photographs round out the haunting text. Springer penned *Genocide*, part of the Groundwork Guides series, which is also discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Child Labour - Human Rights - Employment

### The Making of an Activist

Written by Lekha Singh, Craig Kielburger and Marc Kielburger  
Me to We Books, 2009  
Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

This author-activist trio warn readers that this book will change them. Here, they lead us on a voyage of positive global change and present an intimate portrait of the young activists involved with the Free The Children organization. Their book is made up of two hundred pages featuring poems, travelogues, photos, children's artwork and news clippings. The Toronto-based Free The Children is the world's largest network of children helping children through education, with more than one million youth involved in innovative education and development programs in 45 countries. To find out more about the work of Free The Children and how you can support them, visit [www.freethechildren.com](http://www.freethechildren.com).

**Thematic Links:** Youth Activism - International Development - Organizations

### Notes from Canada's Young Activists: A Generation Stands Up for Change

Compiled and edited by Daniel Aldana Cohen, Severn Cullis-Suzuki, Kris Frederickson, Ahmed Kayssi and Cynthia MacKenzie  
Greystone Books, 2007  
Grades 7 - 12 (Ages 12 - 17)

Meet young Canadian activists who are working to build a more conscientious, compassionate and sustainable global society. Learn how they were inspired to pursue their passion to better their world and the innovative ways in which they chose to go about it. Tim Harvey rowed and biked around the world to call attention to climate change. Lyndsay Poaps, Vancouver's youngest elected official, served as a city park board commissioner for three years. George Roter established Engineers Without Borders, an organization dedicated to helping develop communities in Africa. Iqaluit's Miali-Elise Coley organized a summer camp program for less-fortunate children to get them out on the land. Craig Kielburger founded Free The Children to raise awareness about child labour. These individuals were motivated by their experiences at home and overseas to initiate change on environmental, political, community and humanitarian levels in the face of challenges such as guilt, burn-out, isolation and apathy. The accounts shared here celebrate how young people are becoming leaders and are taking responsibility for their own and future generations.

**Thematic Links:** Youth Activism - Canadian Activists



### Off to War: Voices of Soldiers' Children

Written by Deborah Ellis

Groundwood Books, 2008

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 glossary are included. Deborah Ellis donates the royalties from this book to the Children in Crisis fund operated by IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People). This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2009* selection. Ellis also wrote *Children of War: Voices of Iraqi Refugees; Our Stories, Our Songs: African Children Talk About AIDS* and *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*, which are all discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Parents - War - Military

### Our Stories, Our Songs: African Children Talk About AIDS

Written by Deborah Ellis

Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2005

Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

In 2003, during her visit to Zambia and Malawi, Deborah Ellis interviewed children orphaned by AIDS. Her powerful book, which resulted from that trip, puts a face to the millions of these children. Their frank accounts, presented in their own words, tell of an array of circumstances, such as living with relations who can't afford to support them, living on the streets or in jail, or witnessing the death of one or both parents from AIDS. Sidebars and two-colour photos of the subjects accompany each story. A map, a bibliography and a list of organizations working to fight AIDS, as well as those that help orphans, plus fact sheets about AIDS are included. The book was shortlisted for multiple awards, including the 2006 Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's Non-Fiction and the 2007 Red Maple Award (Non-Fiction). Royalties from the book are donated to UNICEF. Ellis also wrote *Children of War: Voices of Iraqi Refugees; Off to War: Voices of Soldiers' Children* and *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*, which are all discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** AIDS - Africa - Orphans - Pandemics - Disease

### Tell Me Why: How Young People Can Change the World

Edited by Eric Walters

Doubleday Canada, 2008

Grades 6 and up (Ages 11 and up)

"What, if anything, do you think one kid can do to make a difference?" is one of three questions asked by a 13-year-old fictitious boy named Jo in his letter to a variety of prominent people. Twenty-six influential figures, such as Rick Hansen, Susan Aglukark, and Lloyd Axworthy, share ideas on how young people can strive to change the world as they respond to Jo's questions via letters. Five children (Bilal Rajan, Hannah Taylor, Kyle Angelow, Paige Pedlar and Ryan Hreljac) who have worked to help others are also profiled. Quotes from influential individuals are peppered throughout the text, which is based on a clever and personalized premise. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010* selection. Eric Walters co-wrote *When Elephants Fight: The Lives of Children in Conflict in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda*, which is discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Social Justice - Social Action - Conduct of Life - Social Problems

### Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak

Written by Deborah Ellis

Groundwood Books, 2004

Grades 7 and up (Ages 12 and up)

Hear Palestinian and Israeli children's thoughts about death, injury, their feelings toward the opposite side and their struggle to lead normal lives in a dangerous and scary environment. Some of them have lost friends and family members to shootings and bombings; others have been injured. The profiles end with subjects sharing their wishes, reminding readers that hope can still thrive within children living and coping with war. Black-and-white photos of the children, snapped by Deborah Ellis, are included. She also offers further reading suggestions and lists organizations attempting to effect change in the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. This powerful and insightful book was a CCBC's *Our Choice 2005* starred selection and was shortlisted for many honours, including the OLA's 2006 Silver Birch Award. Ellis also wrote *Children of War: Voices of Iraqi Refugees; Off to War: Voices of Soldiers' Children* and *Our Stories, Our Songs: African Children Talk About AIDS*, which are all discussed in this section of the theme guide.

**Thematic Links:** Middle East - Children in Conflict - Palestinians - Israelis

### When Elephants Fight: The Lives of Children in Conflict in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda

Written by Eric Walters and Adrian Bradbury

Orca Book Publishers, 2008

Grades 7 - 9 (Ages 12 - 14)

"When elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers." In other words, the youngest citizens are the most vulnerable victims of war. Meet five children (Faroq, Nadja, Annu, Toma and Jimmy) whose lives are affected by conflict raging in their respective nations of Afghanistan, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda. Maps and facts on regional history, and causes and results of the conflicts lend context to these personal accounts. The book includes an introduction by the authors. It also features a foreword by Kim Phuc — immortalized in a famous 1972 photograph that shows her as a nine-year-old girl, running naked and burnt by napalm during the Vietnam War. Half of the book's royalties go to the Gulu Walk organization and to help kids in northern Uganda. This book was a CCBC *Best Books for Kids & Teens 2010* starred selection. Eric Walters edited *Tell Me Why: How Young People Can Change the World*, which is also discussed in this section of the theme guide.

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

### Yes You Can! Your Guide to Becoming an Activist

Written by Jane Drake and Ann Love

Tundra Books, 2010

Grades 6 and up (Ages 11 and up)

Step up and be part of the solution, not part of the problem! Jane Drake and Ann Love, lifelong environmental activists, teach youth how they can become agents of change in nine steps. Their discussion of each step is three-fold. The sister-author team first share a dramatic true story of change on a major issue, such as the creation of Amnesty International to address human rights, to highlight the step itself. They then equip readers with handy strategies and the skills essential to fulfilling the step, such as fundraising. To wrap up, they present a timeline chronicling the milestones and setbacks in the evolution of a particular cause, such as human rights, forest stewardship and women's and children's rights. The text closes with an index. This straight-shooting, practical guide holds the key to transforming teens into the catalysts for the change they wish to see in the world. Drake and Love will be touring as part of TD Canadian Children's Book Week 2011.

**Thematic Links:** Social Change - Activism - Social Action

# Activities

## Picture Books

### Bagels from Benny

Thanksgiving is a time to express gratitude for the positive aspects of our lives. You can locate basic historical information on Canadian Thanksgiving on the Internet. Encourage children to give thanks throughout the year and not just on this holiday. Ask them to tell what they are thankful for and invite them to think of the various ways that we can express gratitude. To create acrostic poems about thankfulness, have each child write the word “THANKS” vertically on a sheet of paper and use each letter in the word to start a sentence that relates to the topic.

### Big Bear Hug

Randomness can be a good thing, especially when it comes to being kind to others. Random acts of kindness are planned or spontaneous selfless acts performed to help others and brighten their mood, spirit or life. Ask children to give examples of when they have performed and have been shown random acts of kindness. Visit The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation’s website at [www.actsofkindness.org](http://www.actsofkindness.org) where you’ll find a teacher’s guide, lesson plans and much more.

### Free as the Wind

Bring back the power of the pen (or pencil). The handwritten letter is a dying art form. In today’s high-tech culture, the typical Canadian child likely receives few or no handwritten letters via snail mail and likely doesn’t write letters by hand that are sent by snail mail. Youngster Tyler Page founded Kids Helping Kids whose “mission is to educate and partner with children and adults globally who want to be the difference.” Visit [www.kidzhelpingkids.org](http://www.kidzhelpingkids.org) and click on “PenPals” to find out about the organization’s program that links children/classes through letters sent by snail mail.

### The Good Garden and One Hen

These stories explore how families can use farming to rise out of poverty. Speaking of farming, kids can take a virtual tour of the Canadian Agriculture Museum’s Food for Health travelling exhibition at [www.agriculture.technomuses.ca](http://www.agriculture.technomuses.ca). In the left-hand menu, click on “Exhibitions” and then on “Virtual - Food for Health” to access the exhibition. After reading *The Good Garden*, why not get your hands dirty and start a school garden? Need some inspiration? Read Cheryl Embrett’s *Canadian Living* article, “Building Eco-Friendly Schools,” at [www.canadianliving.com](http://www.canadianliving.com). *One Hen*’s author, Katie Smith Milway, offers the “One Hen: Microfinance for Kids” website ([www.onehen.org](http://www.onehen.org)) where teachers, librarians and parents have a plethora of resources at their fingertips.

### If You Could Wear My Sneakers

An illustrated summary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child written in plain language is available at [www.unicef.org/voy/media/rights\\_leaflet.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/voy/media/rights_leaflet.pdf). Have students write poems and create artwork that capture the essence of various rights. The United Nations’ Human Rights Day is observed yearly on December 10th to mark the anniversary of the presentation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Ask children to think of simple and meaningful ways in which they on their own or as a class can observe this significant international occasion.

### Lily and the Paper Man

When Hannah Taylor was eight years old, she started The Ladybug Foundation to help people who are homeless. She is now 13 years old, and her charity is still going strong. Have students go to [www.ladybugfoundation.ca](http://www.ladybugfoundation.ca) to learn more about her, her foundation and its National Red Scarf Day observed on January 31st. You can

also show the National Film Board’s documentary, *Hannah’s Story*, at [www.nfb.ca/film/hannahs\\_story](http://www.nfb.ca/film/hannahs_story). Explore simple ways in which your class can reach out, through organizations such as Share the Warmth, and help children who are homeless or underprivileged.

### Maria’s Wish and Peter’s Wish

Maria and Peter are real children who live in Tanzania. Their stories are also available in Swahili, which is one of the two official languages spoken in their country. Kids can learn to count from one to 10 in Swahili and say basic phrases in the language. They can learn more about this eastern African nation by conducting basic research and reading American author Megan K. Williams’ *Maddy’s Amazing African Birthday*, a true story that tells of a Canadian girl’s visit to Tanzania. Introduce the class to the work of Tololwa Mollel, a Tanzanian-born author-storyteller who lives in Edmonton. *The Orphan Boy*, *Ananse’s Feast* and *Dume’s Roar* are some of his picture books.

### Roses in My Carpets

The main character learns weaving, a skill that will help him to build a better life for himself and his family. Both natural and manmade materials are used in weaving. Children can try their hand at making simple and inexpensive, yet attractive, woven baskets with wool. Instructions for this craft can be found by visiting [www.creativekidsathome.com](http://www.creativekidsathome.com) and clicking on “Activities.” The instructions for woven baskets can be found under “Family Crafts and Kids Activities” by scrolling down to the bottom of the page.

# Activities

## Junior Fiction

### **Aram's Choice** and **Call Me Aram**

These two stories are about the Georgetown Boys, Armenian orphans who were invited to start a new life in Georgetown, Ontario, in 1923. They were among the Armenians who fled Turkey's genocide of their people and sought refuge in Canada during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Give children a taste of some foods Aram and his fellow orphans may have eaten back in Turkey by making one or two traditional Armenian recipes found on the Internet. Have them listen to selections of Armenian music. Use the Little Armenia website ([www.littlearmenia.com/html/language](http://www.littlearmenia.com/html/language)) to teach students some simple Armenian words and phrases. Introduce students to famous Armenian-Canadians such as filmmaker Atom Egoyan, former children's musician and current activist Raffi (Cavoukian) and the late, great portrait photographer Yousuf Karsh.

### **The Breadwinner**

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](http://www.cw4wafghan.ca). Click on the "For Educators" option under "What We Do" in the menu bar to access the following: Canadian Students as Global Citizens: Understanding Human Rights in Afghanistan teacher's resource kit, interactive game, province-specific curricula and lesson plans and links.

### **The Eco-Diary of Kiran Singer**

Kiran spends a week at Vancouver's Camosun Bog where her grandmother works as part of a volunteer crew known as the Crazy Boggers. Your class could have an experience similar to Kiran's through participating in The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup. The event's 2010 edition took place

from September 18 - 26. Find out if your village/town/city or one close to you will host a site as part of the event in 2011.

Visit [www.shorelinecleanup.ca](http://www.shorelinecleanup.ca) to learn more about The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, which is our nation's largest and the world's third largest shoreline cleanup program.

### **Ellen Fremedon, Volunteer**

Volunteers make the world go around! What better way to demonstrate the importance and value of volunteering than to have students work together on a community service project? You could aim to have the class perform a one-time volunteer act during each season of the year. Susan Hughes' *Raise a Voice, Lend a Hand, Change the World*, featured in the guide's Junior Non-Fiction section, is an ideal source of information and inspiration to get the ball rolling. Canada's next National Volunteer Week (April 10 - 16, 2011) is a super time to read real and fictional stories about kids helping people, including other kids.

### **Keep Out!** and **Ahmed and the Nest of Sand**

This theme guide is putting piping plovers on the map! In *Keep Out!*, André and Lucas, twin brothers from PEI, are on the case to find out who has damaged a nest belonging to these birds. In the picture book, *Ahmed and the Nest of Sand*, the title character helps two nature guardians keep the piping plovers safe in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Have students conduct and present basic research about these birds. Visit Hinterland Who's Who super page on piping plovers ([www.hww.ca](http://www.hww.ca)) by clicking on "Species" and then "Bird Fact Sheets." The US Fish & Wildlife Service's website ([www.fws.gov/northeast/pipingplover](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/pipingplover)), dedicated to the Atlantic Coast population of piping plovers, is another great resource kids can consult.

### **Lacey and the African Grandmothers**

Lacey is a First Nations girl who is a member of Alberta's Blackfoot tribe.

Kids can consult

[www.bigorin.org/blackfoot\\_kids.htm](http://www.bigorin.org/blackfoot_kids.htm) to find basic and thorough information, accompanied by photographs, about the Blackfoot tribe. Lacey sells beaded purses to raise money for African grandmothers who are bringing up their grandchildren who have been orphaned by AIDS. Perhaps students could create bead crafts that they can sell to raise money to be divided between two charities (one local, one international) of their choosing. Visit <http://crafts.kaboose.com> and type "Bead Crafts" in the search field to find an array of bead crafts for kids.

### **Libertad**

Alma Fullerton drew her inspiration to write this book from the short documentary, *Guatemala — Out of the Dump*, which can be viewed on YouTube. The film tells of how journalist Nancy McGirr helps poor Guatemalan and Honduran youth break the cycle of poverty through training in visual arts and technology. Visit [www.fotokids.org](http://www.fotokids.org) to learn more about Fotokids, which was originally called Out of the Dump. After watching the film, ask students in what small, simple ways they can work to help poor youth living in Canada and abroad.

### **Maggie and the Chocolate War**

Maggie and her pals fight the steep hike in the price of chocolate. Kids love chocolate, right? So why not lead the class on a journey into the world of this delectable delight. At [www.fieldmuseum.org/chocolate/kids.html](http://www.fieldmuseum.org/chocolate/kids.html), you'll find Chicago's Field Museum's "All About Chocolate: Just for Kids," a fabulous feast of facts about the tasty treat. Use the subject of chocolate to introduce the principle of fair trade. Fair trade is a social movement and market-based approach that aims to get workers in developing nations the best prices for their goods and services. Encourage the kids to purchase fair trade chocolate whenever possible, as doing this makes for a win-win situation for both consumers and producers.

# Activities

## Young Adult Fiction

### **Branded**

Ian is concerned when he learns that the manufacturer of his school's uniforms is on the top 10 list for human-rights violations. He brings his discovery to the attention of his principal who shows no interest in the matter. Fair trade is a social movement and market-based approach that aims to get workers in developing nations the best prices for their goods and services. In Canada, Ten Thousand Villages (known as Dix Mille Villages in Quebec) is one of several stores that sell fair trade products. Their website is [www.tenthousandvillages.ca](http://www.tenthousandvillages.ca). Encourage kids to support fair trade merchants whenever possible. Host a debate in which the pros and cons of fair trade are discussed. TransFair Canada's website ([www.transfair.ca](http://www.transfair.ca)) is a valuable resource to help students prepare for the debate.

### **Child of Dandelions**

In this story, Sabine is a Ugandan-born East Indian girl who must flee her country of birth when president-dictator Idi Amin calls for the "weeding" of East Indians from Uganda. In real life, tens of thousands of East Indians who had made Uganda their home for years were expelled from the country, and 300,000+ Ugandans were murdered under Amin's regime. Introduce students to the work of Ugandan actor-playwright, George Seremba. Having barely survived a botched execution at the hands of military intelligence, he was forced to flee Uganda in 1980. With his autobiographical play, *Come Good Rain*, Seremba leads us on his journey from survival to triumph over the oppressive political regimes of Uganda in the 1970s. The 2006 film, *The Last King of Scotland*, is based on Giles Foden's novel of the same title and factual events of Amin's reign. Forest Whitaker won an Academy Award (Best Actor) and a Golden Globe (Best Actor, Drama) for his portrayal of

Amin in the film. If you are unable to obtain public-performance rights to show the film in class, then ask students to view it at home. Due to the nature of its content, this film is suitable for Grade 9 to 12 students.

### **Hate Cell**

Casey and his family relocate to Richford, Alberta, which turns out to be home to a white supremacist group who go after those they consider to be "alien." The case of Brandon Teena is probably one of the most-publicized hate crimes of the past decade. Twenty-one-year-old Teena was a female-to-male transgendered person who was sexually assaulted and murdered in 1993. A documentary film, *The Brandon Teena Story*, was produced, and his life and death were also the subject of the 1999 Academy Award-winning film, *Boys Don't Cry*. Hold a class discussion about hate crimes. Here are some questions you can ask to get students talking. What actions qualify as hate crimes? What aspects of people's identity do those who commit hate crimes target? How has the Internet facilitated the proliferation of hate crimes? In what ways can youth speak out against hate crimes?

### **Poster Boy**

When Gray discovers that his younger sister's cancer may be linked to environmental causes, he strives to make their home carcinogen-free. Those of us who smoke put ourselves and non-smokers at risk for developing cancer. Smoking and our exposure to second-hand cigarette smoke are two factors we can control in our surroundings. Ask students if they believe there are any other ways in which they can eliminate or reduce any other carcinogenic elements in their lives. In what ways may politics and economics be at work when it comes to raising awareness and funds for research? This question may make some of us

cringe, but it is one worth asking. We can all agree that various forms of cancer claim the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. How is it, though, that other diseases that kill as many or more people than cancer do not receive as much attention and are not as highly profiled as cancer?

### **Run**

This part-fictional, part-factual book is unique as it is the first novel about Terry Fox written for young people. Bring history to life by playing CBC Radio and Television footage of Fox during his Marathon of Hope. To access these clips, go to the CBC online archives at <http://archives.cbc.ca> and type "Terry Fox" in the search box. Activities that use the clips are available for all grades at [http://archives.cbc.ca/for\\_teachers/80/](http://archives.cbc.ca/for_teachers/80/). Douglas Coupland donates all royalties from his book *Terry: The Life of Canadian Terry Fox* to The Terry Fox Foundation. The title was released to coincide with the 25th anniversary of Fox's Marathon of Hope. It is worth obtaining the book to share with students as the text is enhanced with memorabilia from the Fox family archives and 150 photographs, many of which were previously unpublished.

### **The Shepherd's Granddaughter**

This story, told from the perspective of a Palestinian girl, has been a target of controversy and a victim of censorship. After the class has read the book, students can weigh in on why some adults are uncomfortable with it. The author's defence of the book, which appeared in *The Toronto Star's* April 26, 2010 issue, can be found at [www.thestar.com](http://www.thestar.com) by typing "Anne Laurel Carter" into the search bar. Deborah Ellis's non-fiction book, *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*, also sparked controversy and came under censorship. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB)

# Activities

## Young Adult Fiction

removed the book from its libraries serving students younger than seventh graders. PEN Canada urged the TDSB to reverse its decision via a press release posted at [www.pencanada.ca](http://www.pencanada.ca) under “Archives” and “PEN Newsroom 2006.” (PEN Canada is a centre of International PEN, which campaigns on behalf of writers around the world who are persecuted for expressing their thoughts.) Canada’s Freedom to Read Week (February 20 - 26, 2011) is an ideal occasion to turn the heat up a notch on discussing censorship and the controversy surrounding certain books. Visit [www.freedomtoread.ca](http://www.freedomtoread.ca) for more information about the event.

### Wanting Mor

In this story set in Afghanistan, Jameela is abandoned by her father when his new wife instructs him to get rid of her. She eventually winds up at an orphanage where she has the life-changing opportunity to go to school. In North America, girls attending school is a given but it’s a part of reality that is easy for us to take for granted. Ask students to think of other countries where girls don’t have the same opportunities as boys and to explain why they think this situation occurs in these nations. Too many girls who live in developing nations are unable to attend school or stay in school long enough to receive an adequate education. The World Bank reports that “Girls’ education yields some of the highest returns of all development investments, yielding both private and social benefits that accrue to individuals, families, and society at large.” Invite students to raise funds for Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan who direct

donations to programs in Afghanistan aimed at providing higher quality education, particularly for Afghan women and girls. Visit [www.cw4wafghan.ca](http://www.cw4wafghan.ca) to learn more about this organization.

### War Brothers

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 victims of war. Sharon McKay donates 50 per cent of her royalties from 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.

# Activities

## Junior Non-Fiction

### **Making Change**

Bilal Rajan is a young fundraising dynamo! Visit his website [www.bilalrajan.com](http://www.bilalrajan.com) to watch a short video of him in action during his visit to Africa. Take a page from his book and launch into some fundraising of your own. Students can ask family and friends about the names and work of local and international charities that help children. Have children vote on two charities (one local, one international) for which they would like to raise funds. Make sure to keep the “fun” in fundraising by choosing an activity or event that the kids will enjoy pursuing.

### **One Well**

Celebrate the United Nations’ International Decade for Action – Water for Life (2005 – 2015). The goal for this decade is to promote greater awareness of water-related issues. Visit the decade’s website at [www.un.org/waterforlifedecade](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade) and click on “Kids and Youth” in the left-hand menu to check out educational resources available in the “Kids’ Corner.” For other ideas exploring the theme of water, see the activities suggested for Ryan and Jimmy and the Well in Africa that Brought Them Together.

### **Our New Home**

Ask students to find and interview a child who has moved to Canada from another country. Prepare a list of suggested questions for the children to ask during their interviews. The kids can present their findings to the class in a format of their choice. Robert Munsch’s picture book *From Far Away* and Michelle Mulder’s middle-grade novel *After Peaches* both deal with main characters who are immigrant children. Descriptions of these books can be found in the theme guide. A non-fiction book that deals with immigration is Anne Renaud’s *Pier 21: Stories from Near and Far*. Visit [www.pier21.ca](http://www.pier21.ca) to learn more about Pier 21: Canada’s Immigration Museum.

### **Patrick’s Wish**

After Patrick Fortin died from AIDS, his family started Patrick4Life to raise awareness and provide education about HIV and AIDS. Visit [www.patrick4life.org](http://www.patrick4life.org) to take a quiz on HIV/AIDS and learn more about this organization and how youth can get involved in its work. *Patrick’s Wish*, used with American author Margaret Merrifield’s picture book, *Come Sit By Me*, and Canadian author Larry Loyie’s picture book, *The Gathering Tree*, offers a gentle way to introduce the topic of HIV/AIDS to elementary-school students.

### **Raise Your Voice, Lend a Hand, Change the World**

Craig Kielburger, from Thornhill, Ontario, was 12 years old when he started his organization, Free The Children. Winnipeg’s Hannah Taylor was 8 years old when she started The Ladybug Foundation to help those who are homeless. Ryan Hreljac, from Kemptville, Ontario, was 6 years old when he started raising money to build a well in Uganda, and Toronto’s Bilal Rajan was just 4 years old when he started fundraising to help others. Introduce the class to these individuals as a way to remind them that no child is ever too young to make a difference and to motivate them to do so. Have the students think of ways that they can take small steps to improve the environment and make life better for others at school, at home and in the community.

### **Ryan and Jimmy and the Well in Africa that Brought Them Together**

Visit the Ryan’s Well Foundation website [www.ryanswell.ca](http://www.ryanswell.ca) and click on “In the Classroom” for educational resources. Lalita Krishna made a 50-minute film, *Ryan’s Well*, which is available in French as *Le puit de Ryan*. Both films are available for purchase on the website. Buy the film so that you can show it to students after they have read the book. For other

ideas exploring the theme of water, see the activities suggested for *One Well: The Story of Water on Earth*.

### **Terry Fox: A Story of Hope**

Create a paper quilt to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Terry Fox’s Marathon of Hope, which happened in 2010. Determine how big a quilt you’d like so that you can establish the size of its squares. Give each child a square of paper and have him/her write one fact about Terry Fox and draw a picture to accompany it. Ask each child to share his/her fact and show his/her drawing before collecting the squares to assemble the quilt. Visit [www.terryfoxrun.org](http://www.terryfoxrun.org) to learn more about Fox, the foundation created in his memory and the annual run that bears his name.

### **You are the Earth**

Have your class write a song that celebrates the theme of the book. The easiest way to do this is to take a song that already exists and change its words. Using “Hey Jude” by The Beatles, this is the start of a song about the Earth that I came up with: “Hey folks, don’t be afraid, take a hurt Earth and make it better.” Have the kids brainstorm a list of words and ideas that relate to our planet. They can draw from this list to help write lyrics to the song. If it proves to be difficult to write a song as a whole class, you can divide the class into smaller groups and have each group write a song.

# Activities

## Senior Non-Fiction

### The Bite of the Mango

North American media often takes a “doom-and-gloom” approach to their coverage of Africa, in general, and its individual countries. Why not learn about and celebrate the culture of an African country instead? If there are Sierra Leoneans living in your area, you could invite someone from that community to speak to the class. If this is not an option, you could divide the class into groups and have each group explore an aspect of Sierra Leone’s culture. Learn about some of the country’s poets, such as Syl Cheney-Coker and Salia Koroma. Find and make recipes from Sierra Leone. Visit [www.slmtv.com](http://www.slmtv.com) to learn about the country’s music scene. The website [www.sierra-leone.org](http://www.sierra-leone.org) is a handy resource for locating general information about the country. Groups can then report their findings to the class in the presentation formats of their choosing.

### Children of War and 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. Emmanuel Jal is a Sudanese hip-hop recording artist whose experience as a child soldier is documented in his memoir, *War Child: A Child Soldier’s Story*, and the award-winning film, *War Child*. Purchasing information for the book, film and movie soundtrack is available online at [www.warchildmovie.com](http://www.warchildmovie.com). For other related activity ideas, consult those offered for Sharon McKay’s *War Brothers* in the Young Adult Fiction Activities section.

### Climate Change

Since we humans have caused the problem of climate change, we must work towards solving it. Ask students to create public-service announcements that offer suggestions on what people can do to combat climate change. GreenLearning ([www.greenlearning.ca](http://www.greenlearning.ca)) helps students gain a more holistic and hopeful understanding of complex energy and environmental challenges. What’s great is that it offers a Climate Change Resource Centre that will allow you to further explore the topic of climate change with students. GreenLearning is a Canadian education program created by The Pembina Foundation for Environmental Research and Education.

### June Callwood: A Life of Action

June Callwood was a journalist, social activist and humanitarian who was widely admired and respected. Sadly, teens will not have the chance to meet this Canadian powerhouse of a woman since she died from cancer in 2007. But thanks to technology and YouTube, they can see the last interview with her, which was conducted by The Hour’s George Stroumbouloupoulos. “Inspirational Canadian Humanitarians and Activists,” posted online at the BC Teachers’ Federation website ([www.bctf.ca](http://www.bctf.ca)), is a lesson plan created for Grade 11 students, but it could be used with or adapted for use with students of other grade levels.

### Listen to Us

In the Western world, it is easy to think of child labour as an issue that affects poor children in developing countries. But in this book, the author discusses how this matter is also of concern to us here in North America. There are two articles (“Child Labour in Canada” and “The End is Within Reach?”) about child labour on the CBC website ([www.cbc.ca](http://www.cbc.ca)). You can access these articles by typing the article name and “+ CBC” into your computer’s Internet search engine. Use these articles as the basis for a discussion in which students compare and contrast child labour in Canada with child labour in developing nations.

### Our Stories, Our Songs

Africa’s AIDS pandemic triggers a domino effect within families. Initially, there are mothers and fathers who die from the disease. Then, there are the children who have become orphans because AIDS has claimed the lives of both of their parents. Finally, there are the grandmothers who are left to care for their orphaned grandkids. These women, some of whom are elderly, are working to accomplish the daunting task of raising multiple grandchildren with minimal resources. Support given to one grandmother has a ripple effect as it improves not just her life but those of the children in her care. The Stephen Lewis Foundation is a well-known and reputable charity that runs the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign. Visit the following website [www.stephenlewisfoundation.org/grandmothers.htm](http://www.stephenlewisfoundation.org/grandmothers.htm) to see how you and your students can offer support to these grandmothers.

# Activities

## Senior Non-Fiction

### Tell Me Why

Ask students if they can think of any teens from the past and/or any teens from the present, who have made or are making a significant contribution on a local, national or international level. Invite them to share how they believe they can effect positive change in their school, community, country and even the world. Some folks knock technology, but is there a way that it can be used in a positive and effective way such as to expand the reach of teen-activist projects? How can one's skills and talents in sports and/or the arts (visual, performing, literary) be employed to help others? These questions can jump-start students to take their thinking outside the box to come up with creative ways they can contribute to their local, national or international community.

### Three Wishes

This book has sparked controversy and been a target of censorship just like Anne Laurel Carter's book, *The Shepherd's Granddaughter*. Ask students to think about and share their thoughts on why books for young people that discuss the Palestinian-Israeli conflict tend to stir up heated discussion. On a related note, Canadian filmmaker Ronit Avni produced the 2009 award-winning documentary, *Budrus*, which shows a positive and more hopeful side of Palestinian-Israeli relations in the Middle East. The film was shown in Montreal and Toronto during the fall of 2010. Find out more about the film at [www.justvision.org/en/budrus](http://www.justvision.org/en/budrus).

Try to arrange for your students to see the film and have them discuss it after the screening. The film is an initiative of Just Vision ([www.justvision.org](http://www.justvision.org)), which is focused on increasing the power and legitimacy of Palestinians and Israelis working for non-violent solutions to their conflict. For other related activity ideas, consult those offered for *The Shepherd's Granddaughter* in the Young Adult Fiction Activities section.



# INDEX

- A**  
*After Peaches* 5  
*Ahmed and the Nest of Sand* 2, 17  
 Alderson, Sue Ann 5  
*Animal Rights Activist* 10  
*Aram's Choice* 5, 17  
 Armstrong, Shelagh 10
- B**  
*Bagels from Benny* 2, 16  
 Ballance, Millie 5  
 Bastedo, Jamie 2  
 Benoit, Renné 3  
*Big Bear Hug* 2, 16  
*Bite of The Mango, The* 13, 21  
*Borderline* 8  
 Boudreau, H el ene 6  
 Bradbury, Adrian 15  
*Branded* 8, 18  
*Breadwinner, The* 5, 17
- C**  
*Call Me Aram* 5, 17  
 Carpenter, Carole 4  
 Carter, Anne Laurel 9  
*Chanda's Secrets* 8  
*Child of Dandelions* 8, 18  
*Children of War* 13, 21  
 Churcher, Dar 3  
*Claire and the Water Wish* 5  
*Climate Change* 13, 21  
 Cohen, Daniel Aldana 14  
 Cowan, Jennifer 8  
 Crane, Dede 9  
 Cullis-Suzuki, Severn 14
- D**  
 Daigneault, Sylvie 2  
 Davis, Aubrey 2  
 Domm, Jeff 2  
 Domm, Kristin Bieber 2  
 Drake, Jane 15  
 Dublin, Anne 14
- E**  
*Earthgirl* 8  
*Eco-Diary of Kiran Singer, The* 5, 17  
 Edwards, Wallace 13  
*Ellen Fremedon, Volunteer* 6, 17  
 Ellis, Deborah 5, 6, 13, 15  
*Environmental Activist* 10
- F**  
 Fernandes, Eugenie 3  
 Fitch, Sheree 3  
 Frederickson, Kris 14  
*Free as the Wind* 2, 16  
*From Far Away* 2  
 Fullerton, Alma 7
- G**  
 Gait, Darlene 4  
*Genocide* 13  
 Givner, Joan 6  
 Gleason, Carrie 10  
*Good Garden, The* 2, 16
- H**  
 Hamdy, Femida 4  
 Hanmer, Clayton 11  
 Hate Cell 9, 18  
*Healing Our World* 14
- Hearn, Emily 12  
*Heaven Shop, The* 6  
 Heneghan, James 9  
 Himler, Ronald 4  
 Holler, Sue Farrell 6  
 Hughes, Susan 12
- I**  
*I Am a Taxi* 6  
*If the World Were a Village* 10  
*If You Could Wear My Sneakers* 3, 16  
*Island of My Own, An* 8  
*It Takes a Child* 11
- J**  
*Jack the Bear* 3  
*June Callwood* 14, 21
- K**  
 Kamara, Mariatu 13  
 Kayssi, Ahmed 14  
*Keep Out!* 6, 17  
 Kelsey, Elin 11  
 Khan, Rukhsana 4, 7, 10  
 Khosravi, Nasrin 7  
 Kielburger, Craig 11, 14  
 Kielburger, Marc 14  
 Knowles, Kathy 3, 4
- L**  
 Labrosse, Darcia 3  
*Lacey and the African Grandmothers* 6, 17  
 L eger, Diane Carmel 3, 4  
 Leist, Christina 3  
*Libertad* 7, 17  
*Lily and the Paper Man* 3, 16  
*Listen to Us* 14, 21  
 Love, Ann 15  
 Lucas, Diane 6
- M**  
*Making of an Activist, The* 14  
 MacKenzie, Cynthia 14  
*Maggie and the Chocolate War* 7, 17  
*Making Change* 11, 20  
*Maria's Wish* 3, 16  
 Martchenko, Michael 2  
*Maxine's Tree* 3  
 McClelland, Susan 13  
 McKay, Sharon 10  
 Milne, Marywinn 12  
 Milway, Katie Smith 2, 3  
 Mitchell, Karen 12  
 Molnar, Gwen 9  
 Morley, David 14  
 Mulder, Michelle 5, 7  
 Munsch, Robert 2
- N**  
 Nanji, Shenaaz 8  
*New Life, A* 7  
 Newhouse, Maxwell 4  
*Not Your Typical Book About the Environment* 11  
*Notes from Canada's Young Activists* 14
- O**  
*Off to War* 15  
 Oldland, Nicholas 2  
*One Hen* 3, 16  
*One Peace* 11  
*One Well* 11, 20
- Our Earth* 11  
*Our New Home* 12, 20  
*Our Stories, Our Songs* 15, 21
- P**  
*Patrick's Wish* 12, 20  
 Patrick4Life 12  
*Peter's Wish* 4, 16  
 Petri ci c, Du san 2  
 Poon, Janice 5  
*Poster Boy* 9, 18
- R**  
*Raise Your Voice, Lend a Hand, Change the World* 12, 20  
 Rajan, Bilal 11  
*Roses in My Carpets* 4, 16  
*Run* 9, 18  
*Ryan and Jimmy and the Well in Africa that Brought Them Together* 12, 20
- S**  
*Safe House* 9  
*Sandy's Incredible Shrinking Footprint* 4  
*Shepherd's Granddaughter, The* 9, 18  
 Sherrard, Valerie 9  
 Shoveller, Herb 12  
 Singh, Lekha 14  
 Skrypuch, Marsha Forchuk 5  
 Smith, David J. 10  
 Spalding, Andrea 8  
*Speechless* 9  
 Springer, Jane 13, 14  
 Steele-Card, Adrianna 4  
 Stratton, Allan 8  
 Strauss, Rochelle 11, 12  
 Suzuki, David 13
- T**  
 Tanaka, Shelley 13  
*Tell Me Why* 15, 22  
*Terry Fox* 12, 20  
 Thompson, Margot 12  
*Three Wishes* 15, 22  
 Tooke, Susan 2  
*Tree of Life* 12  
 Trotter, Maxine 12  
 TurnStyle Imaging 11
- U**  
 Upjohn, Rebecca 3, 12
- V**  
 Vanderlinden, Kathy 13
- W**  
 Walters, Eric 8, 9, 15  
*Wanting Mor* 10, 19  
*War Brothers* 10, 19  
*Weber Street Wonder Work Crew, The* 4  
*When Elephants Fight* 15, 21  
*Who's in Maxine's Tree?* 4  
 Wilson, Janet 11  
 Wood, Muriel 5  
 Woods, Rosemary 11
- Y**  
*Yeny and the Children for Peace* 7  
*Yes You Can!* 15  
*You Are the Earth* 13, 20

# Eugenie Fernandes

## Creator of this year's Book Week poster image

Eugenie Fernandes' memories of her childhood are full of the wonder of animals and nature. "I draw children in bare feet as much as I can, because that's me — frogs in my pocket and starfish in my hair!" laughs Eugenie. "I love warm beaches and turquoise water," she admits, "and I'd rather do trees than buildings." She looks back to her childhood to locate the inspiration that led her to become the successful writer and illustrator she is today. "My father, a comic book illustrator, had his studio overlooking Huntington Bay in Long Island. I had my own desk right next to his, where I spent much of my youth."

When Eugenie graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York City, she began designing greeting cards and knocking on publishers' doors with her portfolio. Before long she was submitting stories with her art, which led to the publication of her first book.



In the 1980s, Eugenie wrote and illustrated a number of Little Golden Books. One of her first books published in Canada was the acclaimed *A Difficult Day*. Since then she has worked on several projects a year and now lays claim to over 80 books. She is most proud of *Just You and Me*, a story she wrote that was brought to life with three-dimensional illustrations by her daughter, Kim.

Eugenie and her husband, Henry, also an illustrator, have two children, Kim and Matthew. Eugenie, who has lived in places as diverse as New York City and a thatch hut in the South Pacific, now

lives beside a lake in Ontario. She works in a glass studio surrounded by her favorite things: trees, birds, brushes, water, frogs, sunshine, snow and her family.

Eugenie Fernandes' books for young readers include *One Hen*, *Earth Magic* and *Sleepy Little Mouse*. Her most recent releases are *Kitten's Autumn* and *Kitten's Spring*.

