

## Grades K-2

### At Grandpa's Sugar Bush – Margaret Carney

*Alongside his grandpa, a young boy shares the tasks involved in making maple syrup the old-fashioned way. This is more than a story about syrup-making. It is the story of the grandfather's bond with nature and how he transfers this feeling to his grandson.*

### A Sled Dog for Moshi – Jeanne Bushey

*The young Inuit girl, Moshi, longs for a pet dog like the one owned by her friend, Jessica. Moshi's father explains that the puppies that Nuna, their missing sled dog, is expecting are work dogs not playthings. While out walking, Moshi and Jessica are surprised by a sudden whiteout. Nuna finds the children and leads them to shelter in a small shed, where the dog is keeping her puppies. While the girls huddle with the pups, Nuna runs off, soon returning with rescuers. Praised by her father for thinking "like an Inuk" to survive the snow, Moshi happily chooses a pup—deciding she would rather have a sled dog than a pet.*

### A Pioneer Sampler – Barbara Greenwood

*The Robertson family, pioneers living on a backwoods farm, begin to celebrate the coming of spring and begin the new chores when the hardships of winter are over. Meet Sarah and Willy as they make maple syrup, delight in the box of baby farm animals brought from the market, find honey, milk cows, shear sheep and so much more as they learn the many tasks for living off the land in the backwoods. Follow the Robertson family through the year, until winter closes around them once again. Factual information and highly detailed drawings of daily life accompany each story and expand on what children have just read.*

### Caddie Woodlawn – Carol Ryrie Brink

*Caddie Woodlawn is a real adventurer. She'd rather hunt than sew and plow than bake, and tries to beat her brother's dares every chance she gets. Caddie is friends with Indians, who scare most of the neighbors -- neighbours who, like her mother and sisters, don't understand her at all. Caddie's story is special because it's based on the life and memories of Carol Ryrie Brink's grandmother, the real Caddie Woodlawn.*

### In Grandmother's Attic – Arleta Richardson

*Remember when you were a child—when all the world was new, and the smallest object a thing of wonder? Arleta Richardson remembers: the funny wearable wire contraption hidden in the dusty attic, the century-old schoolchild's slate that belonged to Grandma, an ancient trunk filled with quilt pieces—each with its own special story—and the button basket, a miracle of mysteries. And best of all was the remarkable grandmother who made magic of all she touched, bringing the past alive as only a born storyteller could.*

## Grades 3-4

Julie of the Wolves – Jean Craighead George

*To her small Eskimo village, she is known as Miyax: to her penpal in San Francisco, she is Julie. When her life in the village becomes too dangerous, Miyax runs away, only to find herself lost in the Alaskan wilderness. With food and time running out, Miyax tries to survive by copying the ways of a pack of wolves. Accepted by their leader and befriended by a feisty pup named Kapu, she soon grows to love her new wolf family. Life in the wilderness is a struggle, but when she finds her way back to civilization, Miyax is torn between her old and new lives. Is she Miyax of the Eskimos, or Julie of the wolves?*

The Sign of the Beaver – Elizabeth Speare

*Matt's father leaves their wilderness cabin with the promise that he will return. Until then, the 12-year-old boy knows that he must bravely fend for himself. Time passes without a sign of his father and Matt nearly dies when he disturbs a bee hive. Thankfully, Attean, an American Indian boy and his father, the chief, rescue him in the nick of time. A lot of time passes and eventually Matt teaches Attean how to speak English and Attean teaches Matt how to hunt. Realizing that the boy's father will probably never return, the Indian chief asks him to join the tribe. Should Matt leave his old life as a white settler child behind and start fresh as a Native American?*

Madeline Takes Command – Ethel C. Brill

*Madeleine de Verchere's story is based on a true account of colonial French Canada of the 1690's. Harassed by Iroquois, the Verchere family's fort (seigneurie) must keep a continual guard. 14-year-old Madeleine is left alone with two younger brothers and few others when the Indians attack. We follow the brave and determined stratagems of Madeleine and her small circle. Madeleine's youthful but determined leadership will win the reader's admiration.*

The Broken Blade – William Durbin

*In 1800, 13-year-old Pierre La Page never imagined he'd be leaving Montreal to paddle 2,400 miles. It was something older men, like his father, did. But when Pierre's father has an accident, Pierre quits school to become a voyageur for the North West Company, so his family can survive the winter. It's hard for Pierre as the youngest in the brigade. From the treacherous waters and cruel teasing to his aching and bloodied hands, Pierre is miserable. Still he has no choice but to endure the trip to Grand Portage and back. In the process he gains self-confidence and proves that he has what it takes to be a voyageur.*

Gold Rush Fever – Barbara Greenwood

*The year is 1898. Over the last decade, North America has been ground down by a depression. Wages are low, jobs are scarce and people are getting desperate. Although Aunt Rachel isn't happy about 13-year-old Tim and his older brother, Roy, heading off to the Klondike Gold Rush, the possibility of striking it rich is hard to resist. Tim and Roy begin their trek to the Yukon filled with excitement. Little do they suspect the harsh realities they'll have to face: blinding snowstorms, raging rapids, backbreaking*

*work and bitter disappointment. In this unique book, each chapter is followed with factual information, illustrations and photographs of the people and places of the time. In addition, easy-to-do activities help bring the historical period to life.*

## **Grades 5-6**

### **Fatty Legs – Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton**

*Eight-year-old Margaret Pokiak has set her sights on learning to read, even though it means leaving her village in the high Arctic. Faced with unceasing pressure, her father finally agrees to let her make the five-day journey to attend school, but he warns Margaret of the terrors of residential schools. At school Margaret soon encounters the Raven, a black-cloaked nun with a hooked nose and bony fingers that resemble claws. She immediately dislikes the strong-willed young Margaret. Intending to humiliate her, the heartless Raven gives gray stockings to all the girls — all except Margaret, who gets red ones. In an instant Margaret is the laughingstock of the entire school. In the face of such cruelty, Margaret refuses to be intimidated and bravely gets rid of the stockings. Although a sympathetic nun stands up for Margaret, in the end it is this brave young girl who gives the Raven a lesson in the power of human dignity.*

### **Stranger at Home (Sequel to Fatty Legs) – Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton**

*Traveling to be reunited with her family in the arctic, 10-year-old Margaret Pokiak can hardly contain her excitement. It's been two years since her parents delivered her to the school run by the dark-cloaked nuns and brothers. Coming ashore, Margaret spots her family, but her mother barely recognizes her, screaming, "Not my girl." Margaret realizes she is now marked as an outsider. And Margaret is an outsider: she has forgotten the language and stories of her people, and she can't even stomach the food her mother prepares. However, Margaret gradually relearns her language and her family's way of living. Along the way, she discovers how important it is to remain true to the ways of her people—and to herself.*

### **The Last Safehouse – Barbara Greenwood**

*This is the dramatic story of the Underground Railroad as seen through the eyes of two young girls --- Eliza, a runaway slave from a plantation in Virginia, and Johanna, whose family gives her refuge in St. Catharines, Canada West (now Ontario). In a unique mix of fact and fiction, each chapter is followed by background information and hands-on activities. Kids will learn about life on a cotton plantation, about abolitionists who fought to have slavery made illegal, and about the heroic actions of Canadians who sheltered runaway slaves.*

### **Underground to Canada – Barbara Smucker**

*Taken away from her mother by a ruthless slave trader, all Julilly has left is the dream of freedom. Every day that she spends huddled in the slave trader's wagon travelling south or working on the brutal new plantation, she thinks about the land where it is possible to be free, a land she and her friend Liza may reach someday. So when*

*workers from the Underground Railroad offer to help the two girls escape, they are ready. But the slave catchers and their dogs will soon be after them.*

#### The Breadwinner – Deborah Ellis

*Young Parvana lives with her family in one room of a bombed-out apartment building in Kabul, Afghanistan. Because he has a foreign education, her father is arrested by the Taliban, the religious group that controls the country. Since women cannot appear in public unless covered head to toe, or go to school, or work outside the home, the family becomes increasingly desperate until Parvana conceives a plan. She cuts her hair and disguises herself as a boy to earn money for her family. Parvana's determination to survive is the force that drives this novel set against the backdrop of an intolerable situation brought about by war and religious fanaticism.*

#### Ryan and Jimmy – And the Well in Africa that Brought Them Together – Herb Shoveller

*It costs a lot of money to build a well in Africa --- a lot more than Ryan Hreljac had thought. Still, the six year old kept doing chores around his parents' house, even after he learned it could take him years to earn enough money. Then a friend of the family wrote an article in the local newspaper about Ryan's wish to build a well to supply people with safe, clean water. Before long, ripples of goodwill began spreading. In Agweo, Uganda, villagers were used to walking a long way every day in search of water. What they found was often brown and smelly and made a lot of people sick. But when Ryan's well was built, life in the village changed for the better. A young orphan named Akana Jimmy longed for a chance to thank Ryan in person for this gift of life --- clean water. When they finally meet, an unbreakable bond unites these boys from very different backgrounds, and a long and sometimes life-threatening journey begins.*

### Grades 7 -9

#### My Story: Pyramid of Secrets – Jim Eldridge

*It's 2517 BC and Pharaoh Khafre is building a great pyramid at Giza to rival those built by his predecessors. He is also making plans for what will become one of the most famous and iconic monuments in history — the Sphinx. But Khafre has enemies and division in his workforce. Among the labourers in his employ is one 12-year-old boy — Nebka. Nebka has his own reasons for hating the pyramids and wanting to rebel. But his rebellion could have drastic consequences for those closest to him.*

#### The Golden Goblet – Eloise Jarvis McGraw

*Ranofer wants only one thing in the world: to be a master goldsmith like his beloved father was. But how can he when he is all but imprisoned by his evil half-brother, Gebu? Ranofer knows the only way he can escape Gebu's abuse is by changing his destiny. But can a poor boy with no skills survive on the cutthroat streets of ancient Thebes? Then Ranofer finds a priceless golden goblet in Gebu's room and he knows his luck—and his destiny—are about to change.*

#### The Secrets of Vesuvius – Caroline Lawrence

*It's the summer of AD 79, and Flavia Gemina the sea captain's daughter and her friends Jonathan the Jewish boy, Nubia the African slave-girl and Lupus the homeless beggar-boy set sail for the Bay of Naples, to stay with Flavia's uncle near Pompeii. They are soon absorbing in trying to solve a riddle that may lead to treasure. But then tragedy strikes - Mount Vesuvius erupts and the children are fleeing for their lives, in one of the worst natural disasters ever recorded.*

Adam of the Road – Elizabeth Gray Vining

*"A road's a kind of holy thing," said Roger the Minstrel to his son, Adam. "That's why it's a good work to keep a road in repair, like giving alms to the poor or tending the sick. It's open to the sun and wind and rain. It brings all kinds of people and all parts of England together. And it's home to a minstrel, even though he may happen to be sleeping in a castle." And Adam, though only eleven, was to remember his father's words when his beloved dog, Nick, was stolen and Roger had disappeared and he found himself traveling alone along these same great roads, searching the fairs and market towns for his father and his dog.*

The King's Shadow – Elizabeth Alder

*Evyn, a young Welsh serf, has dreamed all his life of becoming a storyteller. But in a cruel twist of fate, Evyn and his father suffer a brutal attack by a group of murderous ruffians. Evyn's tongue is cut off and his father is killed. Orphaned and unable to speak, Evyn assumes he is destined to a life of slavery. But Evyn is resilient and teaches himself to read and write. He is then appointed the personal companion to Earl Harold of Wessex, who later becomes the King of England. The two travel the countryside together, forming a close father-son bond. Evyn chronicles all of their exciting journeys, which culminate at the Battle of Hastings, where the future of the country is decided.*

The Shakespeare Stealer – Gary Blackwood

*Widge is an orphan with a rare talent for shorthand. His fearsome master has just one demand: steal Shakespeare's play "Hamlet"--or else. Widge has no choice but to follow orders, so he works his way into the heart of the Globe Theatre, where Shakespeare's players perform.*

The Hungry Year – Connie Brummel Cook

*Twelve-year-old Kate has always had to be more responsible than other girls her age. Since her mother's death and her family's flight to Canada, Kate's father has relied on her to keep house and look after her younger twin brothers. In a new place with poor shelter and no help, Kate must grow up even faster. It is 1787. After poor crops, with little food to spare, the winter is terribly harsh. Kate's father is forced farther and farther from their makeshift cabin to hunt for food. Then one day, he simply doesn't return. Can Kate fend off danger and protect her brothers? Can these three children survive the Hungry Year when thousands of others will die? Desperate, Kate prays for help. It finally comes from a most unlikely source - but is it in time?*