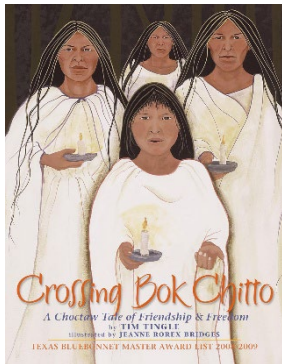


Annotated Bibliography of Children's Literature about Native People
Prepared for Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) Annual Session, August 2025

by Betty Ansin Smallwood (smallbetty@aol.com) and Dellie James
(delliestar@gmail.com) for the Indigenous Affairs Committee (IAC). July 18, 2025

This booklist annotates ten children's books about Native Americans from Betty and Dellie's collections. We do not claim it to be comprehensive, but rather a starting point. However, we gladly share some of our favorites in order to introduce you to Native people's stories and cultures. Feel free to send us the names of some of your favorites (ideally also with a short description) and we can add them to the next edition of this booklist, with your permission. In sum, we hope this becomes a collective and ongoing project of the IAC of BYM.

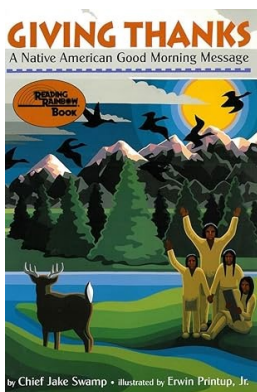
Picture Books/Children's Literature/Fiction



Crossing Bok Chitto: A Choctaw Tale of Friendship and Freedom. Tingle, Tim. (2006). Illustrated by Jeanne Rorex Bridges. El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press.

This is a touching story about Native people, the Choctaw, and enslaved families who lived on the other side of the Mississippi River. It compassionately tells of friendship between a native girl and an enslaved family before the Civil War, in the 1850s. The illustrations are particularly compelling. Recommended for grades 3-8.

Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message. Swamp, Chief Jake. (1995). Illustrated by Erwin Printup, Jr. New York: Lee Low.

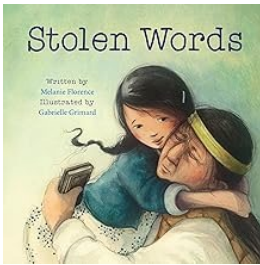


"Mohawk parents have traditionally taught their children to start each day by giving thanks to Mother Earth. This Native American message is based on the belief that the natural world is a rare gift. The whole universe—from the moon and the stars to the tiniest blade of grass-- is addressed as one great family." From book jacket.

Author Chief Jake Swamp (Mohawk) is internationally renowned as a founder of the Tree of Peace Society. This book brings a timeless celebration of the beauty and spirit of the environment, based on the traditional Native American Thanksgiving address. Recommended for grades K-8.

Stolen Words. Florence, Melanie. (2017). Illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard. Toronto: Ontario, Canada.

"How do you say "grandfather" in Cree? asks his granddaughter. Thus begins a tender journey of her helping him reclaim his native Cree language, which was forbidden during his boarding school experience. This is a simple but powerful story from Canada. English pronunciation and translations of Cree words used are included at

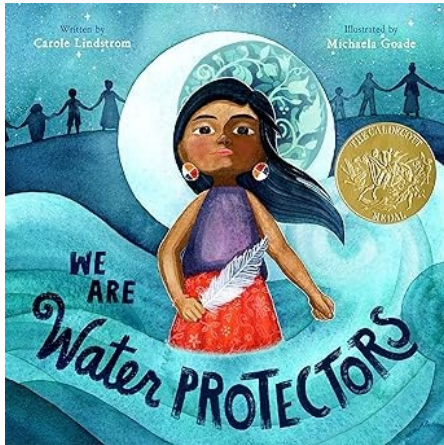


the end. Winner of the Second Story Press Indigenous Writing Contest. Recommended for grades K-6.

We are the Water Protectors. Lindstrom, Carole. (2020). Illustrated by Michaela Goade. New York: Roaring Press.

Water is the first medicine and connects us all. “Inspired by the many indigenous-led movements across North America, this bold and lyrical picture

book...tells the tale of one young water protector taking a stand to defend Earth’s most sacred resource” (from book jacket).

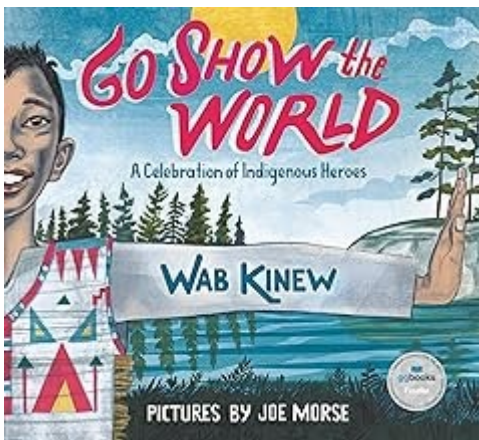


Artist Michaela Goade, of the Tlingit and Haida Indian tribes of Alaska, became the first Native American to win the prestigious Caldecott Medal for best children’s illustrations (2021). Recommended for grades K-8.

Singable Books, a Genre of Children’s Literature

Selections below from Singable Books for Pre-K – Grade 8:

The Multicultural Collection. An Annotated Booklist and You Tubes for Educators and Parents. Smallwood, Betty Ansin & Marcus, Nicole E. Likely publication date: 2026. Publisher: Amazon.



Go Show the World: A Celebration of Indigenous Heroes. Kinew, Wab. (2018).

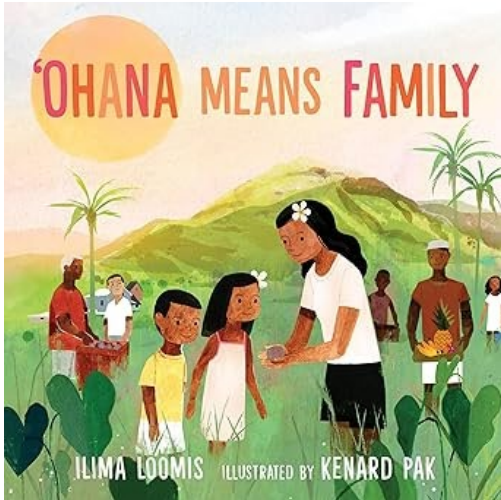
Illustrated by Joe Morse. Plattsburgh, NY: Penguin Random House Canada Young Readers (Tundra Books of Northern New York).

Wab Knew, of Ojibwe and Anishinaabe descent, created a rap song celebrating various Native Americans in the U.S. and Canada. These heroes consist of both men and women throughout various periods of history. These important figures come alive in pictures by the award-winning illustrator, Joe Morse. The end pages contain biographies

for each of the 13 heroes in the book, including each person’s native heritage, accomplishments, and a black and white portrait drawing. Recommended for grades 4-10.

Recommended YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yffiKLbizwl> (Title: Go Show the World: A Celebration of Indigenous Heroes by Mrs. Del Brocco).

This is a presentation by the author reading/rapping his own work. The performance was held in Calgary, Canada. The video begins with Kinew greeting the audience in his native language, Ojibwe.



'Ohana Means Family. Loomis, Ilima. (2020). Illustrated by Kennard Pak: New York: Holiday House (Neal Potter Books).

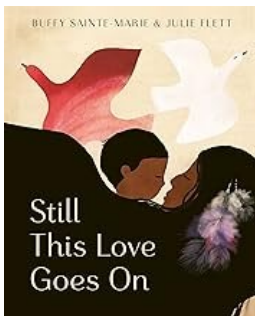
This beautiful and warm book is set to the familiar tune of "The House that Jack Built" with its iconic cumulative verses. It highlights the importance of the native Hawaiian kalo plant in the preparation of an authentic Hawaiian luau. The vibrant illustrations and storyline depict a deep respect for family and nature, showing people caring for each other and the land.

The last page contains information about the rich history of kalo and poi (i.e., taro paste) in Hawaiian culture. The meaning of 'ohana is also included, along with a glossary that contains definitions for other native Hawaiian terms. Recommended for grades 3-6

Recommended YouTube Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8ees6SYZVc&t=19s> (Title: 'Ohana Means Family by Stephanie Sananikone.)

This is a very lovely, professional video with excellent audio and video quality. It provides a read-aloud of the full book and also useful information about Hawaii. For example, the geographical formation of the Hawaiian Islands is described, along with the importance of kalo, poi, and luaus to Hawaiian culture. A wonderful resource overall, the video ends with recommended books about Hawaii.



Still This Love Goes On. Sainte-Marie, Buffy. (2022). Illustrated by Julie Flett.

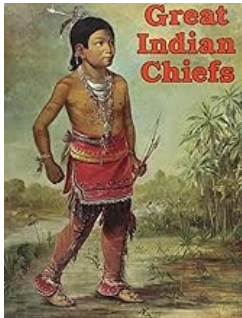
Vancouver, Canada: Greystone Books (Greystone Kids.)

This lovely book is by academy award-winner, singer-song writer, Buffy Sainte-Marie. The pictures show various indigenous people throughout multiple seasons, enjoying, appreciating, and admiring the nature and animals around them. References to Cree and other indigenous cultures are made and reflected in the illustrations. Recommended for grades K-6.

Recommended YouTube Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_E-kw9wL3c (Title: Still this Love Goes On Book with Music by WPS Wildcats.)

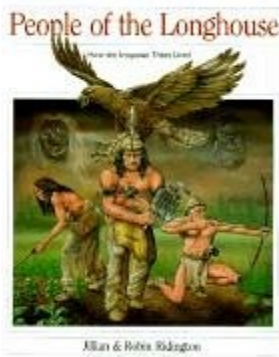
This beautiful, professional video features the book pages, along with Sainte-Marie's song from her album, *Running for the Drum*. The audio and video quality are both excellent. Listeners can sing along since the book pages show the text.

History/Non-Fiction



Great Indian Chiefs. No author listed. (1975). Santa Barbara, CA: no published listed

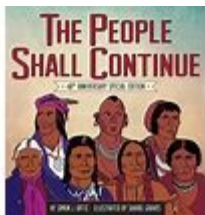
This amazing coloring book features authentic and detailed, full-page drawings as well as historical facts about 25 Native Americans. Both women and men are included, and all are important Native Americans, but not all are chiefs. In sum, the book is Interesting and informative and not outdated: a rich resource. 25 pages, Recommended for grades 8-12.



People of the Longhouse. How the Iroquoian Tribes Lived. (1982). Ridington,

Jillian & Robin. Illustrated by Ian Bateson. Buffalo, New York: Firefly Books.

This is a useful book about the Iroquois tribe of the East Coast, with illustrations and maps. It contains chapters on family life, social and political structure, farming and food, trade, and war and peace. The last chapter is "after the Europeans came." The book seems to be historically accurate and provides a decent history of the early life of the Iroquoian speaking people. 47 pages. Recommended for grades 4-12.



The People Shall Continue. 40th Anniversary Special Edition. Ortiz, Simon J. (2017).

Illustrated by Sharol Graves. New York: Lee & Low Books (Children's Book Press).

This is a comprehensive, illustrated history of Native peoples in America from the 1500s to present times. Told in a narrative story and poetic format, it is appealing and deceptively simple. Very user-friendly, it is a picture book but not for young children. Recommended for grades 4-12.

The last page captures the power of the book:

"We shall tell you of our struggles.
We are all the people of this land.
We must take great care with each other.
We are all one body of people.
We must ensure that life continues.
With the strength that comes from our shared responsibility for this life.
the people shall continue."