

# Native American Children's Literature Recommended Reading List

#NativeReads



Art by Julie Flett (Cree-Métis)



FIRST NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLE

We believe that when armed with the appropriate resources, Native peoples hold the capacity and ingenuity to ensure the sustainable economic, spiritual and cultural well-being of their communities.

# Native American Children's Literature

## RECOMMENDED READING LIST

### BOOKS FOR HEAD START AND PRESCHOOL

#### *Baby Learns About Colors*

by Beverly Blacksheep (Navajo)  
(Salina Bookshelf, 2003)

#### *Wild Berries*

by Julie Flett (Cree-Métis)  
(Simply Read Books, 2013)

#### *Boozhoo: Come Play With Us*

by Deanna Himango (Ojibwe)  
(Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior  
Chippewa, 2002)

#### *Sweetest Kulu*

by Celina Kalluk (Inuit)  
(Inhabit Media, Inc., 2014)

#### *Cradle Me*

Photos in book provided by Native families  
and edited by Debby Slier.  
(Star Bright Books 2012)

#### *My Heart Fills With Happiness*

by Monique Gray Smith (Cree, Lakota  
and Scottish)  
(Orca Book Publishing, 2016)

### BOOKS FOR EARLY ELEMENTARY GRADES (K-3)

#### *Hungry Johnny*

by Cheryl Minnema (Ojibwe)  
(Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2014)

#### *Hiawatha and the Peacemaker*

by Robbie Robertson (Mohawk)  
(Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2015)

#### *Chukfi Rabbit's Big Bad Bellyache: A Trickster Tale*

by Greg Rodgers (Choctaw)  
(Cinco Puntos Press, 2014)

#### *Jingle Dancer*

by Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee (Creek)  
(Morrow Junior Books, 2000)

#### *Kamik: An Inuit Puppy Story*

by Donald Uluadluak (Inuit)  
(Inhabit Media, 2012)

#### *SkySisters*

by Jan Bourdeau Waboose (Ojibwe)  
(Kids Can Press, 2000)

### BOOKS FOR MIDDLE GRADES (4-7)

#### *Hidden Roots*

by Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki)  
(Scholastic, 2004)

#### *The Birchbark House*

by Louise Erdrich (Turtle Mountain  
Chippewa)  
(Hyperion Books for Children, 1999)

#### *In the Footsteps of Crazy Horse*

by Joseph Marshall III (Sicangu Lakota)  
(Amulet Books, 2015)

#### *Son Who Returns*

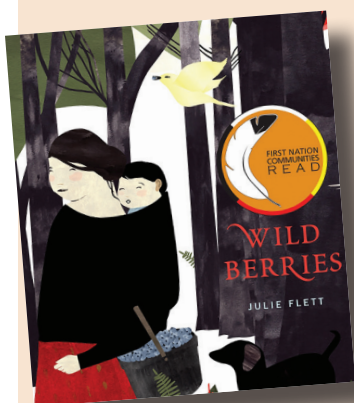
by Gary Robinson (Choctaw/Cherokee)  
(7<sup>th</sup> Generation, 2014)

#### *Indian Shoes*

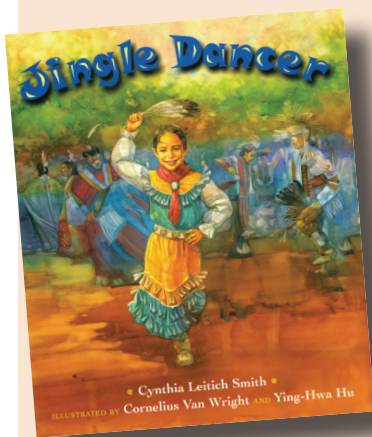
by Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee (Creek)  
(HarperCollins, 2002)

#### *How I Became a Ghost: A Choctaw Trail of Tears Story*

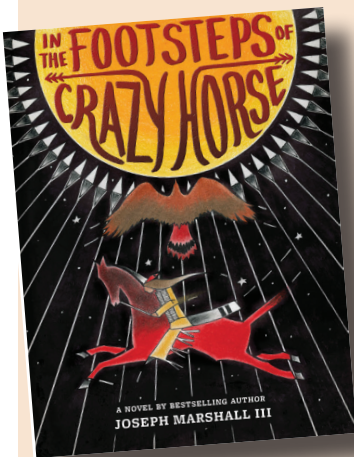
by Tim Tingle (Choctaw)  
(Roadrunner Press, 2015)



Cover art by Julie Flett



Cover art by Cornelius Van Wright  
and Ying-Hwa Hu



Cover art by  
Jim Yellowhawk

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## BOOKS FOR HIGH SCHOOL (8-12)

### *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*

by Sherman Alexie (Spokane/Coeur d'Alene)  
(Little Brown, 2007)

### *Moccasin Thunder: American Indian Stories for Today*

A collection of stories by Native writers edited by Lori Marie Carlson  
(HarperCollins, 2005)

### *If I Ever Get Out of Here*

by Eric Gansworth (Onondaga)  
(Arthur A. Levine Books, 2013)

### *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel*

by Drew Hayden Taylor (Ojibway)  
(Annick Press, 2007)

### *House of Purple Cedar*

by Tim Tingle (Choctaw)  
(Cinco Puntos Press, 2014)

### *The Lesser Blessed: A Novel*

by Richard Van Camp (Dogrib)  
(Douglas & McIntyre, 2004)

## COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS

### *We Speak in Secret*

by Roy Boney (Cherokee)  
(INC Comics, 2014)

### *Trickster: Native American Tales, A Graphic Collection*

A collection of stories written by Native authors edited by Matt Dembicki  
(Fulcrum Books, 2010)

### *Moonshot: The Indigenous Comics Collection, Volume*

A collection written by Native authors edited by Hope Nicholson  
(Alternative History Comics, 2015)

### *Super Indian Volume One*

by Arigon Starr (Kickapoo)  
(Wacky Productions, 2012)

### *Super Indian Volume Two*

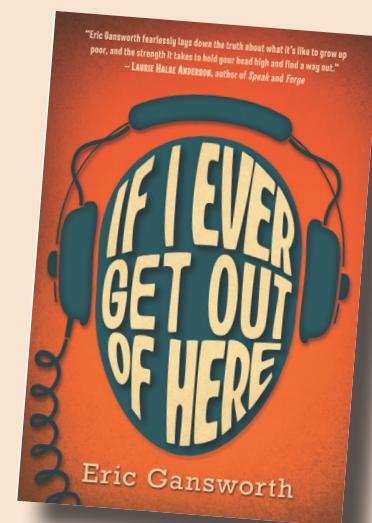
by Arigon Starr (Kickapoo)  
(Wacky Productions, 2015)

### *Captain Paiute: Indigenous Defender of the Southwest*

by Theo Tso (Las Vegas Paiute Tribe)  
(War Paint Studios, 2015)

### *A Blanket of Butterflies*

by Richard Van Camp (Dogrib)  
(Highwater Press, 2016)



Jacket art and design by Christopher Stengel



Super Indian Volume One: © 2012 Wacky Productions Unlimited. All Rights Reserved.



Photo by Della Nohl (White Earth Ojibwe)

DEBBIE REESE, PH.D., IS AN ENROLLED MEMBER OF NAMBÉ PUEBLO and the curator of the Native American Children's Literature Recommended Reading list. Dr. Reese is an expert in the field of Native children's literature, an educator, and has served on many national literacy boards. She holds a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Illinois, and a Masters of Library and Information Science from San Jose State University. Dr. Reese is the editor and publisher of the "American Indians in Children's Literature" website at <http://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.net>.

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## About the Cover Art

The cover art is a portrait of reading list curator Dr. Debbie Reese. The artist, Julie Flett (Cree-Métis), is also the author of *Wild Berries*, which is one of our featured books.

## FIRST NATIONS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

### TEN WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- 1 Select a book and read it with your child or a young person you know.
- 2 Share this list with librarians at your local public library and suggest they get the books and e-books for their collections that they can feature in library displays all year long.
- 3 Use the hashtag #NativeReads and share comments about your favorite #NativeReads on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat or other platforms.
- 4 Share this list with your local bookstore and ask them to set up a display in the store, and feature one or more of the books on their website.
- 5 Share the reading list with your local bookstore and encourage them to purchase some of them to have on hand for the local community.
- 6 Provide a quantity of copies of the list to both libraries and local bookstores, for them to hand out to potential customers.
- 7 Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper and public radio or television stations and ask them to do a story on the books, in honor of Native American Heritage Month and throughout the year. The story could ask parents to choose books from the list for their own children to read and then share with their friends.
- 8 Give the list to the librarians at your local elementary, middle and high school.
- 9 Purchase copies of the books or e-books and donate them to a teacher who works with that age level.
- 10 Organize a book club in your community or virtually online with your friends on Facebook or Goodreads. After you've read the book, post your thoughts on social media.



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Our mission is to strengthen American Indian economies to support healthy Native communities. We invest in and create innovative institutions and models that strengthen asset control and support economic development for American Indian people and their communities.

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