

Recommended Books for Independent Reading – Teen/Young Adult

Author	Title	Comment	Publ.	Genre
Allende, Isabel (Spanish)	City of the Beasts	An adventure story that takes place during a treacherous trip down the Amazon river. Ghosts, snakes, an adventurer grandmother ... there's a lot going on in these 400 pages! Translated from the Spanish.		Adventure
Almond, David (British)	Clay	Two young, mischievous altar boys befriend another boy who can bring clay creations to life. David Almond's novel are a bit creepy – you never know how far he is going to take things ...		Horror
Anderson, Jodi Lynn (American)	Peaches	Three very different girls end up on a Georgia peach farm and they learn about the healing power of friendship. All three are interesting, complex characters and the story is a lot of fun to read.	2005	Girl Fiction
Anderson, Laurie Halse (American)	Speak	Tough, tender, darkly funny story of a teenage outcast. Gripping plot, powerful characters. Melinda's sarcastic wit, honesty & courage make her a memorable protagonist. Highly recommended.		Realism
Anderson, Laurie Halse (American)	Fever 1793	Fictional account of the yellow fever epidemic that killed thousands in Philadelphia in, you guessed it, 1793. Good historical detail, and a compelling story of the events that befall an independent-minded young girl.	2000	Historical Fiction
Anonymous (American)	Go Ask Alice	A diary of a teenage girl caught in the world of drugs.		Realism
Bagdasarian, Adam (American)	*Forgotten Fire	A historical novel based on the true story of the writer's great-uncle, one of the few who survived the 1915 Armenian genocide in Turkey. As a young boy, Vahan spends three years begging, pretending to be deaf and mute, dressing as a girl, and mucking out one of the engineers of the holocaust's stables in an effort to survive. The relentless series of violent events, in which some of his family is shot before his eyes and young girls are raped, is almost unbearable but the quiet elegance of the writer's prose makes for a compelling, unforgettable read. National Book Award finalist.	2000	Historical Fiction
Baird, Alison (Canadian)	The Hidden World	A girl is sent to Newfoundland for the summer and discovers a secret world of Celtic myths and legend.	1999	Realism & Fantasy
Bédard, Michael (Canadian)	Redwork	A teenage boy and his friend are fascinated by the eccentric behaviour of his landlord. A blend of fantasy, realism and history.		Realism & Fantasy
Bell, William (Canadian)	Crabbe	An 18 yr.-old boy learns important life lessons in Algonquin Park while on a canoe trip with a mysterious woman.	2002	Adventure
Bell, William (Canadian)	Forbidden City	A teenage boy is caught in the middle of the Tiananmen Square massacre.	1990	Adventure & Historical Fiction
Bell, William (Canadian)	Speak to the Earth	Loosely based on the environmental battle to protect Clayoquot Sound in B.C. A boy and his mother are caught up in the fight between loggers and environmentalists.	1994	Realism
Bell, William (Canadian)	Stones	A boy in his last year of high school meets mysterious girl. Together they learn about prejudice and persecution in their community.	2001	Realism
Bell, William (Canadian)	Zack	A boy traces his roots and discovers racism.		Realism
Bennett, Holly (Canadian)	The Bonemender (there's a sequel and it's good too)	Gabrielle is a bonemender, a healer with special abilities. One day a stranger arrives, desperately seeking help for his injured friend. He is an Elf (think <i>Lord of the Rings</i>) and brings word that an invasion is imminent. A romantic and suspenseful fantasy. 200 pages.	2005	Romantic Fantasy
Blume, Judy	Tiger Eyes	A girl overcomes the tragic death of her father to find love. (Has the distinction of disappearing instantly and permanently from my collection not once, but twice!)		Realism
Boraks-Nemetz, L.	Sunflower Diary	16 yr.-old Jewish survivor of World War II immigrates to Canada.		Realism
Bradford, Karleen (Canadian)	There Will be Wolves	During the 11 th century, a young girl experiences the dark side of the Crusades. Winner 1992 Cdn Library Assoc. YA award.		Historical Fiction
Bray, Libba (American)	A Great and Terrible Beauty	16 yr. old Gemma Doyle is not your typical girl in Victorian England. Although she is being groomed to be a rich man's wife, she has other ideas. She also has frightening visions that come true and she is being followed by a mysterious young man from India. Some bizarre supernatural elements; interesting insights about friendship.	2003	Lit for Girls
Brenna, Beverley	**Wild Orchid	A story about Taylor, an 18 yr. old autistic girl. She is spending the summer in Prince Albert National Park and is not too happy about it. Written as a series of diary entries, it shows how she copes with the challenges of meeting new people and making friends. Quirky and insightful.	2005	Realism
Brian, Kate	Lucky T	A very lucky teenage girl discovers that her mother has given her lucky T-shirt to a charity in India. Naturally, she wants it back so, you guessed it, she flies to India!	2005	Lit for Girls
Brooks, Martha (Canadian)	Being with Henry	After a troubled 16 yr. old boy is kicked out of his house, he meets an old man who helps him to get himself together. Wonderful characters and story line; takes some unexpected turns.		Realism

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Brooks, Martha (Canadian)	True Confessions of a Heartless Girl	Set in a little Manitoba town, a 17 yr. old girl is on the run, and she's pregnant too. Fiercely independent and stubborn, she is taken under the wing of the owner of the local café. A novel full of startlingly insights into the rich inner lives of ordinary, yet always extraordinary, people. Winner of 2002 GG award.		Realism
Cameron, Peter (American)	**someday this pain will be useful to you	Quite a brilliant, witty novel about an 18 year old boy who is an awful lot like <i>Catcher in the Rye's</i> Holden Caulfield. Set in New York City, it is told from the point of view of James, who is cynical, vulnerable, funny and articulate as he questions his family, his world, his sexual identity and his future. Insightful and surprisingly enjoyable to read! <i>Note: some mature themes and language</i>	2009	Realism
Canfield, Jack etc. (American)	Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul	A collection of stories on life, love, and learning.		Non-Fiction short stories and poems
Chan, Gillian (Canadian)	The Carved Box	On his way from Scotland to live with his uncle and his family in Upper Canada, 15 yr-old Callum is befriended by a dog with unusual abilities. A story of a boy and his dog, but with a twist. Nice suspense; realistic portrayal of the main character and of the back-breaking labour required to turn forests into farms.	2001	Historical Fiction
Clement-Davies, David (British)	The Telling Pool	Set during the time of Richard the Lionheart's crusade to Jerusalem, this fantasy novel draws on Arthurian legend and is richly detailed. Young Rhodri looks into the Telling Pool and is forced to demonstrate his courage and true heart on a dangerous quest. (350 pgs.)		Fantasy (based on Arthurian legend)
Cormier, Robert	Heroes	After World War II, an 18 yr old boy returns without a face to murder his childhood hero.	1998	Realism
Crew, Linda	Children of the River	A Cambodian girl whose family has recently immigrated to Oregon faces cultural conflicts. Excellent!		Realism
Crossley-Holland, K.	Arthur: The Seeing Stone	Set in the Welsh Marches in 1199. A contemporary take on the Arthurian legends and life in the Middle Ages. Recommended by Philip Pullman, author of <i>The Golden Compass</i> .		Fantasy (based on Arthurian legend)
Czech, Jan	Grace Happens	Fifteen year old Grace, daughter of a movie star, longs for a "normal" life and to know the identity of her father. She goes to Martha's Vineyard to vacation with her mother and finds out the truth. Nice story; quick read.	2005	Realism
Duey, Kathleen (American)	*Skin Hunger	First of a fantasy trilogy, with two alternating plots. In the first, a young farm girl who can communicate silently with animals joins a young man in a dangerous effort to restore magic to their world by collecting songs and stories from an earlier magical age. In the other, a teenaged boy is forced to fight for his survival in order to learn how to use his magical powers in a medieval-style apprenticeship where failure means death. Darkly atmospheric and original. (Second book comes out in Aug.09.)	2007	Fantasy; elements of horror
Ellis, Deborah (Canadian)	The Breadwinner (written for younger readers but still interesting)	Young girl dons boy's clothes to help her family survive brutal Taliban regime (pre-9/11) in Afghanistan. Interesting, topical content.		Realism
Ellis, Deborah (Canadian)	Looking for X	Rebellious young girl, with special needs brothers, seeks to regain her mother's respect. Governor General's Award winner.		Realism
Foon, Dennis (Canadian)	The Dirt Eaters	First of trilogy; fantasy. 15 year old male protagonist, in a compelling story about a post-nuclear war world in which a number of groups, both brutal and peaceful, struggle to rebuild society. Fast-paced, suspenseful and very enjoyable to read. Much better than the title suggests.		Post-apocalyptic Fantasy
Foon, Dennis (Canadian)	Double or Nothing	Story of a boy who gets hooked on gambling. Very realistic and topical. A quick read.		Realism
Fox Mazer, Norma (American)	After the Rain	A girl discovers that there is more to her grumpy old grandfather than she thought.	1987	Realism
Frank, Anne (German)	The Diary of Anne Frank	A Jewish girl, in hiding during World War II, deals with the problems of confinement, war, and growing up. Most have read this by now, but if you haven't, now's your chance!		Non-Fiction, Holocaust Lit
Gallo, Donald (editor)	First Crossing: Stories About Teen Immigrants	Stories written by award-winning authors about teenagers from Venezuela, Romania, Mexico, Ramallah as well as other countries.		Non-fiction short stories
Galloway, Priscilla	Snake Dreamer	An exciting mystery combining ancient mythology with modern characters. When Dusa sees two doctors on TV claiming to be able to cure the strange condition called "snake dreaming," she heads off to their special clinic hoping to rid herself of the imaginary snakes haunting her. But there is something strange about everything ...		Mystery /Fantasy
Gibbons, Kaye	Ellen Foster	The story of a spunky girl from the American South who overcomes adversity with humour, honesty and determination. First person narrative.		Realism
Giles, Gail (American)	Shattering Glass	A suspenseful, disturbing story about a group of high school boys and how they destroy another boy. Some unexpected twists and grim humour.		Realism
Giles, Gail (American)	*Right Behind You	Kip is 9 when he burns another child to death. After four years in a juvenile ward, he goes back out to the real world with a new name and a fresh start. But is forgiveness possible? A compelling, thought-provoking read. You'll enjoy Kip's self-deprecating sense of humour too.	2007	Realism
Gratz, Alan (American)	Samurai Shortstop	A novel about a 16 yr. old Japanese boy and his friend at an exclusive high school in Japan in 1890. It shows the contradictions found in a Japanese society that is evolving from a medieval to a modern one, And yes, it's also about baseball. Check out the amazon.ca review for more details. (It's much better than its somewhat cheesy title suggests.)	2006	Historical Fiction

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Hickham, Homer H. (American)	October Sky	Boys in dying coal mine town learn how to build rockets. Inspiring, based on true story of Homer Hickham who eventually made it as an engineer for NASA. (There's a sequel too.)		Realism
Holeman, Linda (Canadian)	Mercy's Birds	Grade 10 girl's life is spinning out of control. Selected by NY Public Library as one of its 1998 recommended books for teens. Mother has problem with depression and creepy boyfriend. Highly recommended.	1998	Realism
Holeman, Linda (Canadian)	Raspberry House Blues	16 yr. old Vancouver girl doesn't get along with her adoptive mother, stays with her dad and his new family in Winnipeg. Searches for biological mother and discovers what real family love can be like. Lovely story!		Realism
Holeman, Linda (Canadian)	Search of the Moon King's Daughter	Set in 1830s London and Manchester, a young girl must fend for herself when her mother is injured and her young brother, who is deaf, is sold. Vivid portrayal of the contrasts of Victorian life, with an engaging, determined protagonist. Wonderful supporting characters, drama, suspense, and a hint of romance.	2002	Historical Fiction
Hornby, Nick (British)	Slam	15 yr-old Sam's life is going unusually well: he has a beautiful girlfriend, his mother is working so there's a bit of money for a change, and his teachers have recommended him for art college. And then he discovers that he is about to become a father. Oh yes, and he likes skateboarding ... and talks to a poster of Tony Hawk, who seems to be able to send Sam to the future for glimpses of what is to come. A good take on the rollercoaster emotions that engulf Sam, himself the child of a teenaged mother. By the author of <i>About a Boy</i> , with the same quirky humour.		Realism & Humour
Hrdlitschka, Shelley (Canadian)	Kat's Fall	15 yr. old Darcy has more than his share of troubles, including a mother that is just about to be released from prison. He is an excellent brother to his young sister, who is deaf, but has difficulty with other relationships. A quick but satisfying read about trust and love. 2005 White Pine nominee.		Realism
Hughes, Monica (Canadian)	Blaine's Way	A young man's World War II experiences and how they have changed him.	1986	Historical Fiction
Hughes, Monica (Canadian)	Hunter in the Dark	An 18 yr.-old boy comes to terms with his serious illness during a hunting trip.		Realism
Jansen, Hanna (German author; African experience)	Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with You	The account of a young Rwandan girl's survival during the 1994 genocide. Retold by her adopted mother; translated from the German. At times painful to read, but authentic and compelling.	2006	Historical Non-fiction/Autobiographical
Johnston, Julie (Canadian)	In Spite of Killer Bees	A real gem! The plot concerns three sisters ranging in age from 14 to 18. Their mother has run off, and their father is dead. They are on their own and living well below the poverty line when they arrive in Port Desire for their grandfather's funeral, hoping for an inheritance. The inheritance proves to be much less – and by the end, much more – than they hoped for. GG award nominee; winner of Mr. Christie's book award. Looks a bit juvenile, but isn't. Highly recommended.	2002	Realism
Larbalestier, Justine (Australian)	Magic or Madness	The first of a trilogy about a girl who, after living 15 years in the Australian outback with her mother, is sent to live with her grandmother, who has some nasty habits. Fantasy, with some good suspense.	2005	Fantasy
LeGuin, Ursula	Tehanu	Sequel (written years later) to the <i>Earthsea</i> trilogy.	1990	Fantasy
Little, Jean (Canadian)	Little by Little	Autobiography of Canadian children's author who overcomes the obstacles she faces as she loses her sight.		Autobiography
Lohans, Alison	No Place for Kids	A story about two girls on the run after the death of their mother and their father's descent into drugs and alcohol. Honest and direct, this story follows the two sisters' journey through enclaves of urban homelessness in Winnipeg and Regina as they travel to their aunt's in Vancouver.		Realism
Lynch, Chris	Inexcusable	Keir is a high school senior about to graduate. He knows that he's a good guy but he's being accused of something that good guys just do not do. A story about truth, lies and responsibility. Not for the faint-hearted but very realistically presented. National Book Award finalist.	2005	Realism
Mac, Carrie	*The Droughtlanders (first of a trilogy)	Futuristic fantasy about a utopian Keylander society that controls the weather in order to live well, while the rest of the population endures perpetual drought. The teen protagonists must find their way to Triskelia where a group of rebels is gathered and their destiny awaits. Interesting characters and a fairly complex plot.	2006	Post-apocalyptic Fantasy
Major, Kevin (Canadian)	Hold Fast	A teenage boy and his cousin flee an oppressive father to search for freedom and a sense of family.	1978	Realism
Marchetta, Melina (Australian)	** Jellicoe Road	17 yr.-old Taylor is the reluctant leader of her boarding school dorm. Not only must she deal with the rivalry among the Townies, Cadets, and the Jellicoe School students, but she needs to work out the connection between her mother dumping her at age 11, her mentor Hannah, a mysterious stranger who once whispered something in her ear, a boy in a tree who is haunting her dreams, 5 kids who lived on Jellicoe Road eighteen years ago, and the maddening and magnetic cadet she once ran away with. Along the way she has help from an eclectic group of very loyal friends of both genders, so this is not just a girl's book! Very suspenseful, intense, and completely absorbing; you will have trouble putting this book down.	2006	Realism
Marsden, John (Australian)	So Much to Tell You	A young girl's journal entries are her "voice" as she struggles to come to terms with personal tragedy.	1987	Realism
Marsden, John (Australian)	Letters From the Inside	Letters between two girls in very different circumstances.	1991	Realism
Marsden, John (Australian)	Tomorrow, When the War Began (series)	A group of teens are caught in the middle of a war. Set in Australia.	1993 - 1999	Adventure

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Marsden, John (Australian)	Winter	Another great book by Marsden, this time about a girl who returns to her home 12 years after being orphaned at age 4. Very strong-willed and independent, she unravels the mystery of her mother's death. Suspenseful, and well-written. At only 150 pages in length, a quick but satisfying read.	2000	Mystery
Marsden, John (Australian)	Checkers	A quick but suspenseful read. Narrated from the psychiatric ward, a young girl explains how her seemingly perfect life spun out of control. (Under 150 pages.)	1996	Realism
McCaughrean, Geraldine (British)	*The White Darkness	A young girl goes on an odyssey to Antarctica. She is forced to confront a number of harsh realities while she struggles to survive in the beautiful and bleak landscape with the help of her constant companion, Titus, a long-dead member of the failed Scott expedition. An original, unpredictable, highly imaginative story that keeps you turning the pages for more. Lots of awards too!	2005	
McClintock, Norah (American)	Password: Murder	17-year-old Harley faces the nightmare of his father's death, in a car accident in which Harley was the driver. But he is visited by a ghost who assures him that murder was the cause of death. Harley and his best friend Rat try to solve the mystery.		Mystery
McClintock, Norah (American)	Mistaken Identity	16 yr. old girl finds out that her father isn't who she thought he was. She is forced to unravel the mystery herself, and encounters danger along the way.	1995	Mystery
McKay, Sharon E. (Canadian)	Esther	The adventures of an 18 th century teenager who survives a number of calamities including a shipwreck, an arranged marriage, and a stay at a convent. Based on the historical Esther who was the first Jew in New France.	2004	Historical Fiction
McNaughton, Janet (Canadian)	Catch Me Once, Catch Me Twice	A young girl and her friend in Newfoundland during World War II.	1994	Realism
McNaughton, Janet (Canadian)	The Secret Under My Skin	Wonderful futuristic novel about a society (probably the Maritimes) recovering from environmental degradation. Hard to put down; highly recommended.		Post-apocalyptic Fantasy
McNaughton, Janet (Canadian)	To Dance at the Palais Royale	A Scottish girl immigrates to Canada and begins a new life. Set in the "roaring twenties" in Toronto.		Historical Fiction
McNaughton, Janet (Canadian)	An Earthly Knight	Set in 1162, 16 yr. old Lady Jeanette, daughter of a minor Norman nobleman, is chosen as a potential bride for the heir of the King of Scotland. She meets a mysterious young man said to have been kidnapped by fairies. A beautifully woven story set in a magical, medieval world about a young woman with an independent spirit.		Fantasy
Medline, Elaine (Canadian)	That Silent Summer	A young girl spends the summer with her eccentric aunts and uncle and learns about herself.		Realism
Mori, Kyoko (Japanese)	Shizuko's Daughter	A young Japanese girl is forced to deal with the loss of a beloved mother.	1993	Realism
Myers, Walter Dean (African-American)	The Beast	17 yr. old boy leaves Harlem to attend a prep school in Connecticut. When he returns home, he sees the "beast" that preys on the dreams of the friends he left behind. (See the excellent amazon.ca summary for more.)		Realism
Myers, Walter Dean (African-American)	The Glory Field	The story of several generations of one African-American family, beginning with young Muhammad's journey from Africa in 1753 and ending with a 1990s family reunion on the plantation where he was a slave. This series of stories shows how a member of each generation comes of age by taking a stand against oppression.		Historical Fiction
Na, An (Korean-American)	A Step from Heaven Wait for Me	A young girl from Korea struggles to adjust to life in California. Told from her point of view as she grows from a child to an adolescent. A "tale of both tragedy and triumph" and multiple award winner. As her senior year in high school approaches, Mina yearns to find her own path in life but working at the family business, taking care of her little sister (who is deaf), and dealing with her mother's impossible expectations are as stifling as the southern California heat, until she falls in love with a young man who offers a way out. (amazon.ca)		Realism
Ness, Patrick	**The Knife of Never Letting Go (first in the Chaos Walking series)	A page-turner about Todd, the youngest member of his all-male society, who is only days away from becoming "a man". All the men can read each other's thoughts, called Noise, making private thoughts impossible. Todd doesn't question the mysterious disappearances, or even the absence of women, who have all apparently died as a result of the Noise germ, until he suddenly finds himself running for his life. He and his dog Manchee (he and Manchee can read each other's thoughts too) are joined by a girl who helps him to unravel at least some of the mystery by the end of the book. At times violent and disturbing, it's a fascinating read.	2008	Fantasy
Nix, Garth	Lirael (final book in series: Abhorsen)	Sequel to Sabriel; could be read on its own. Dark fantasy with elements of horror. Two main characters, one 14-17 year old girl, 17 year old Prince with heroic qualities and realistic insecurities. Good suspense.		Australian (SWC)
Nix, Garth (Australian)	Sabriel	An 18 yr.-old girl journeys through death to find her father and faces evil along the way.		Fantasy Adventure
Oppel, Kenneth (Canadian)	Dead Water Zone	Science fiction story of 16 yr. old Paul's search for his brother in Watertown, a polluted slum. But there's something terribly wrong with the water ... Along the way he also meets Monica, and the plot thickens. A suspenseful, quick read.		Science Fiction
Paterson, Katherine	Jacob Have I Loved	A woman recalls her turbulent adolescence in 1940s Maine and her intense jealousy of her twin sister. Sometimes recommended for younger readers, but I think there's a lot here for older readers too. Complex characterization and a very well-crafted story.		Realism
Poulson, David A. (Canadian)	Last Sam's Cage	Eddie Slater, a boy who has already run afoul of the law, runs away from an abusive stepfather and hides out at the Calgary Zoo. He meets a mysterious man who changes his life. A very good read.	2004	Realism

Author	Title	Comment	Publ.	Genre
Rowling, J.K.	Harry Potter (series)	No description needed!		British
Ryan, Amy Kathleen	Shadowfalls	Great story of a 15 yr. old girl and how she deals with the death of the older brother she idolized. She spends some time with her grandfather in Wyoming where she comes face to face with a grizzly and meets a handsome guy with a dangerous smile. Beautifully descriptive with a compelling story.		2005
Salinger, J.D.	Catcher in the Rye	Holden Caulfield seeks to discover meaning in his life. A classic, recognized by some critics as the first novel written for young adults.	19	Realism
Scrimger, Richard (Canadian)	From Charlie's Point of View	With the help of his friends, Charlie, a blind teenager, has to prove that his father is not guilty of bank robbery. Of course they have a number of adventures along the way and find out that all is not as it seems. Easy reading but nicely quirky, with very humorous, witty dialogue.	2005	Humour
Shusterman, Neal (American)	**Antsy Does Time	Very funny book about high school student Anthony Bonano, who, when he finds out his friend is dying, decides to give him a month of his life. As Antsy himself admits, that's when things get seriously weird. Sample chapter title: Recipes for Disaster from the Undisputed Master of Time, Live on Your TV Screen. A surprisingly thoughtful, fun read.	2008	Humour
Slade, Arthur (Canadian)	Tribes	An intriguing story about the very unique Percy Montmount, Jr. and his last year of high school. Can't say much more without giving too much away. If you want to read something a little different, check this one out.		Realism
Slade, Arthur (Canadian)	Megiddo's Shadow	A sixteen year old Saskatchewan boy enlists in the British army during WWI and ends up in Palestine. Note: Megiddo is his horse!	2006	Historical Fiction
Smith, Alexander McCall (British)	The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency	First in a series of 5 books (and counting). Set in Botswana (Africa). 35 yr. old Mma Ramotswe solves cases ranging from missing husbands to suspected murder. NOT your typical suspenseful mystery; "smart & sassy" with "the power to shock, amuse or touch the heart". Charming.	1998 - 2009	Detective Fiction
Spinelli, Jerry (American)	Stargirl	Not my favourite, but it appears on an awful lot of reading lists for me to ignore. Story about a boy in Arizona and his feelings about the very unusual girl that shakes up the status quo of their school. A nice message – the value of non-conformity.		Realism
Stratton, Allan (Canadian)	Chanda's Secrets *Chanda's Wars	A gutsy 16 yr. old African girl is forced to deal with the AIDS epidemic on a personal level. Prose is quite easy to read, however it does contain "mature subject matter" as well as coarse language. 2005 White Pine nominee. The sequel to the above but it's twice as good! Chanda is struggling to raise her little brother and sister after her mother's death. A visit to her relatives' remote rural village has disastrous results. With a troubled young tracker as her ally, she must fight to save her family in the midst of a brutal civil war. Exciting and heart-wrenching, it's a great story of family love, courage, forgiveness and hope. Includes an afterword by Lt.-Gen. Roméo Dallaire. 380 pages.		Realism
Taylor, Cora (Canadian)	On Wings of a Dragon On Wings of Evil (sequel)	The lives of an imprisoned woman and a girl forced to work for the evil Queen's household intersect in this work of fantasy. Has fairy tale qualities, as well as romance, adventure, and suspense. A wonderful story, with powerful heroes and heroines, as well as enduring friendships. Can't give too much away, but the dragon-girl and her dragon are back, and interesting facts emerge about the human characters as well. Just as good as the first book.		Fantasy
Tolkien, J.R.R. (British)	The Lord of the Rings (trilogy)	Fantasy; hobbits and wizards battle evil. (Doesn't everyone know what this is about?!)		Fantasy
Turner, Megan Whalen	The Thief (first in a trilogy) The Queen of Attolia (second) The King of Attolia (third)	A young thief is released from prison and embarks on a quest to steal a sacred treasure from another land. Seems a bit slow for a while, but picks up in the middle and has a very nice twist. Set in a fictional time and a fictional place and reads like an adventure/mystery with a hint of fantasy. More of the adventures of Eugenides, the Queen's Thief. Witty, with very appealing characters. It's worth reading the first two just to get to this one!! Fascinating characters, nicely unpredictable plot.	1996 2006	Adventure & Mystery
Venkatraman, Padma	**Climbing the Stairs	Written in beautiful, lyrical prose, the plot revolves around 15 year-old Vidya, a young girl living in British-occupied India before and during WWII. Forced to adjust to a new and more traditional home, she struggles against the limitations imposed on her by uncaring relatives. Deals with issues of caste, women's rights, India's independence and Gandhi's non-violence movement.	2008	Historical fiction
Walters, Eric (Canadian)	Shattered	15 yr. old Ian somewhat unwillingly starts working at a centre that feeds the homeless. He meets a mysterious man who was once a soldier in Rwanda. Deals with homeless issues as well as the post-traumatic stress experienced by soldiers. Prologue by Lt. Gen. Roméo Dallaire. A must read.	2005	Realism
Werlin, Nancy	Black Mirror	Mystery thriller. 16 yr. old Frances must try to go on with her life after the suicide of her brother. She is a quiet girl who likes art class but doesn't seem to fit with the other students, some of whom encourage her to become involved in a charitable group at school. But all is not what it seems. (Note: a little bit of crude language)	2001	Mystery/Thriller
Westerfeld, Scott	*Midnighters (trilogy)	"A thrilling combination of fantasy, science fiction, and horror" that is fast-paced and original. Five teens confront the ancient evil that threatens them in a world that only exists at the stroke of midnight. They each have special powers – one is a math genius who helps to protect the group with math and thirteen letter words, as well as some very unique weapons.	2004-5	Fantasy & Science Fiction & Horror

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Wilton Katz, Welwyn (Canadian)	Come Like Shadows	A tale of mystery and fantasy. 16 yr old girl lands dream job in Stratford production of Macbeth, but an actress playing one of the witches is killed at the first rehearsal. Set in Stratford and Scotland.	1993	Mystery & Fantasy
Wilton Katz, Welwyn (Canadian)	Out of the Dark	A young boy deals with a personal tragedy against the backdrop of the first Viking settlement in North America.		Realism & Fantasy
Ye, Ting-Xing (Canadian)	Throwaway Daughter	Abandoned on the steps of a Chinese orphanage and adopted by a Canadian family, a young girl is haunted by the cold fact that she was unwanted. She spurns her Chinese heritage until she makes a trip to China and makes a dramatic discovery.		Realism
Yolen, Jane & Coville, B. (American)	Armageddon Summer	Narrated by two main characters alternating back and forth. A group of Believers is led to a mountaintop to await the end of the world. Interesting treatment of a religious cult, family dynamics.		Realism
Yolen, Jane & Harris, R. (American and Scottish)	Queen's Own Fool: A novel of Mary Queen of Scots	The story of Mary Queen of Scots told from the perspective of her court jester (a young girl), a traveling player that Queen Mary befriends in France. Historical fiction.		
Zusak, Markus (Australian)	The Book Thief	It's about, among other things, a girl, some words, an accordionist, some fanatical Germans, a Jewish fist fighter, and quite a lot of thievery. Narrated by Death, this is an unusual but unforgettable book about people living in Nazi Germany from about 1935 to 1943. Both brutal and beautiful, and well worth reading. Highly recommended.	2006	Realism
Zusak, Markus (Australian)	I am the Messenger	19 yr. old Ed has little to do except share a run-down apartment with his faithful yet smelly dog, drive his taxi, and play cards and drink with his amiable yet similarly washed-up friends. Then, after he stops a bank robbery, Ed begins receiving anonymous messages marked in code on playing cards and his life begins to change. Zusak's style and characters are edgy and the plot has its dark moments. Young Adult fiction award-winner. (caution: contains crude language and adult situations)	2005	Realism

*recently added to list
** new to list (Aug09)

Questions? Contact me at kelley.hindrichs@dsbn.edu.on.ca