DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 251 834 CS 208 674

AUTHOR Haycock, Ken, Ed.; Haycock, Carol-Ann, Ed.
TITLE [Canadian Literature. "Featuring: CanLit."]
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 21p.
AVAILABLE FROM Dyad Services, P.O. Box 4696, Station D, London, Ontario, N5W 5L7 ($30 per year prepaid; $35 per year if billed; back issues and sample copies: $5 per issue).
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Viewpoints (120)
JOURNAL CIT Emergency Librarian; v12 n2 p1-26 Nov-Dec 1984

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescent Literature; *Canadian Literature; *Childrens Literature; Elementary Secondary Education; *Literary Criticism; *Literature Appreciation; Novels; Picture Books; Poetry

ABSTRACT

The feature articles in this journal issue deal with various aspects of Canadian literature. The articles include: (1) a discussion of who's who and what's what in Canadian literature; (2) reviews of worthwhile but overlooked Canadian children's literature; (3) a list of resource guides to Canadian literature and a short quiz over famous first lines of Canadian novels; (4) ideas for teaching Canadian poetry; and (5) annotations of approximately 80 fiction, nonfiction, and picture books by Canadian writers. (FL)

EmergencyLibrarian

VOLUME 12, NUMBER 2 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1984

How To Bluff Your Way Through Canadian Literature — *essential reading for your next cocktail party!*

Appreciating Picture Books For Teaching Art Techniques *and* **"Doing" Poetry For Everyone's Enjoyment**

Children's Books — *looking to the past for those gone but not forgotten* ***and*** *to the future for the best for the 80's*

Dave Jenkinson profiles Jack Batten in this issue, Colin Naslund reviews French language magazines for young people and John Politis evaluates more children's recordings than ever before.
Joan McGrath appraises the latest in children's paperbacks and

***EL welcomes Chris Dewar as our specialist on* Paperbacks for Young Adults**

EL also introduces another first* — *the* Emergency Librarian Bestseller List — *a new regular feature
compiled by Diane Woodman

And, of course, the same quality of articles and reviews plus a designer centerfold.

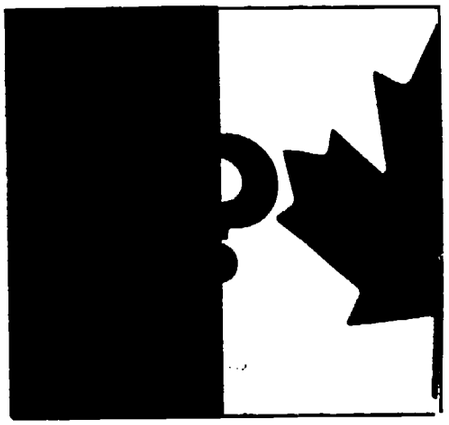
Read on!

FEATURING:
CanLit

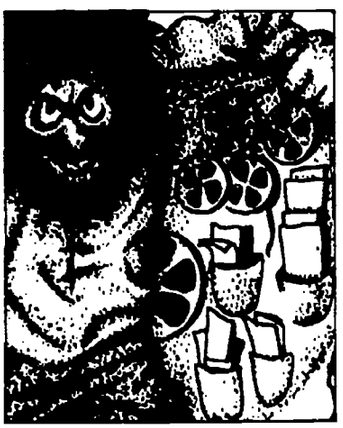
EmergencyLibrarian

VOLUME 12, NUMBER 2 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1984

Chris Dewar with Paperbacks for Young Adults



EL's ultimate CanLit Quiz



Psst ... page 45

EDITORIAL

The Failed Mandate

Oh dear. What does one say about the 1984 annual meeting of the Canadian School Library Association (CSLA)? This was the "biggie" where the recommendations of the task force investigating the financial, legal, and professional implications of establishing a national, independent school library association were to be reported, and presumably debated, and perhaps even resolved. Regrettably, none of this occurred.

EL readers will recall that the membership motion to create a task force was passed at an annual general meeting, rejected by the Executive Council, and passed almost unanimously at another annual general meeting, forcing the Executive into action. The "national task force" consisted of one library school faculty member — it was obvious where the Executive stood, and the results could be anticipated. (Perhaps this is why the President's address continued to refer to the "so-called" task force.)

The conference started out with an information session at which only CSLA and CLA past presidents, and current Executive members, were allowed to speak. The session was held in a small meeting room with few members even able to get in. The overflow crowd barely had room to breathe, let alone debate. Each president was to speak once but the session began with the announcement that the "CSLA Executive Council has unanimously voted in favor of the concept of school librarians remaining as a division of the Canadian Library Association". So much for open debate.

At the annual meeting, voting cards were used for the first time to guarantee that only members voted. Not only were no recommendations brought forward about an independent association, but it was also made clear that the only motion that would be entertained on this subject would be to dissolve the CSLA outright. Members were reminded of the Executive's position and the meeting opened with the statement that those who wanted an independent association were welcome to start their own. The President's Report included the paragraph:

The relationship that CSLA has with CLA has been the subject of a great deal of attention and Executive Council energy during the past few years. This has been so in a number of areas. The so-called Alternative National School Library Association Task Force has kept the "relationship" issue before us, especially so at the Executive Council level, but at the general membership level, too. The issue should be resolved at this Annual Meeting.

But no recommendations were made, no motions introduced, no debate engaged. Nothing was presented for resolution and CSLA members were left with a choice of essentially expressing nonconfidence in its Executive for pre-empting a decision or dissolving the division.

In a rather bizarre turn of events, the great membership debate took place in a closed Executive meeting with no advance warning and no membership involvement. There was "information sharing", but no room for accommodation, compromise, or consensus-building.

Oh, yes. The focus of the annual meeting itself was on fiscal control by CLA, poor financial reporting by CLA (it was reported that a "lengthy portion" of Executive meetings continues to center on this), the high cost of the periodical index published by CLA, the need for CLA to press for teacher-librarians on advisory boards of the National Library, the fact that "executives change" and "memories fade" (even though the CLA Executive Director has been a member of the CSLA Executive since 1976), the attempt by CLA to determine a need for Canadian accreditation of professional library education (it was not mentioned that CSLA is the only divisional affiliation not represented on the study committee), and the "ambitious" CLA continuing education program, with no report on its implications for CSLA's own professional development program and/or why the two were not coordinated. In essence, the same annual meeting concerns that have been expressed for a decade and more.

Obviously, the independent association issue has *not* been resolved.

Ken Haycock

You Don't Have to Read Canadian

The *EL* Namedroppers' Guide Will Do

Marjorie Harris

The publishing season is in full swing: Writers are crisscrossing the country, plugging their latest books on TV and radio talkshows and at promotional blasts. At cocktail parties everywhere, the literati — fueled as much by the new releases as by their dry martinis — are discussing, dissecting and delighting in CanLit. Should you find yourself in the midst of such a gathering, be prepared, with the aid of this handy compendium, to show that you, too, have had your CanLit consciousness raised.

A Few Rules of Thumb

- Never refer to CanLit as CanLit. The term offends authors, academics and, most of all, publishers. (They show up in droves at these events.) But it's okay to think CanLit. Students and journalists do, and there are more of those than anyone else in literary circles.
- Take note of foreign acclaim. We regard our literary stars seriously only when they've been recognized outside the country. The highest accolade possible is a review in the Sunday *New York Times Book Review*. Mordecai Richler, Robertson Davies, Margaret Laurence, Alice Munro and Margaret Atwood are always reviewed, usually with favor. Atwood can be dumped on by every reviewer in Canada and get raves in New York accompanied by long and thoughtful pieces on her oeuvre.
- Use familiar names as often as possible. It's always Peggy (Atwood) or Tiff (Timothy Findley—another *New York Times* favorite since his most recent novel, *Famous Last Words*, was published). It indicates that you know their work or had dinner with someone who was at a reading by one of these artists. Canadian authors read their work out loud a lot and we love listening to them. If you missed the gig at the local high school gym, you can always catch it on CBC's "Morningside."

Who Is on The Bus

The *Who's Who* of Canadian literature is a finite entity that has been likened to a bus. There are only so many seats available. When a new person gets on, someone else gets tossed off. A publishing explosion took place in the mid-to-late '60s, and the publishing industry believes that we started reading more indigenous works, per capita, than they do in the United States. But the size of the bus remained the same in terms of who could be In or Out.

Morley Callaghan (author of *More Joy in Heaven* and, most recently, *A Time for Judas*) considers himself, at 80, classic but neglected. Nonetheless, this writer of short stories and novels with a psychological/moral bent appears on all CanLit courses and will never lose his seat on the bus. Hugh MacLennan (he wrote *Two Solitudes and The Watch That Ends The Night)* is also significant and also feels slighted. He is the *important*, if not widely read, author of very earnest, nationalist novels, who's won five Governor General's awards. These writers of longevity tend to get The Order Of Canada (Morley turned it down when they made him a mere Companion) and the $30,000 Molson Award. W.O. Mitchell's lyric celebrations of life on the Prairies (including *Who Has Seen The Wind?)* assure him of a permanent seat at the age of 69, Robertson Davies (*The Fifth Business, The Manticore*) looks so right at 70 and his intricate, psychological novels are so absorbing that he, too, has tenure.

The real jockeying is among those of the Atwood Generation, as it's affectionately known. Dozens of talented writers emerged in the late '60s and have kept on producing good stuff. Many of them survive on Canada Council grants or as writers-in-residence at universities. Dave Godfrey, Hugh Hood, W.D. Valgardson, Clark Blaise, Mat Cohen and the late Alden Nowlan all published fiction in the late '60s and early '70s. Those who came later in the '70s, Michael Ondaatje, Jack Hodgins, Carol Shields, Leon Rooke and Susan Musgrave, maneuver for position. Matt Cohen is a perfect example. He wrote his first novel, *Korsoniloff*, in 1969. He was considered up-and-coming. He's written eight novels since then, been well reviewed and is still considered up-and-coming. It is a burden all writers of this generation share.

The CanLit Hit Parade

If you familiarize yourself with this list, you'll have an aura of being well-read and can ward off any potentially deep, analytical conversations. The literati do not discuss this information, they *know* it. They'd rather discuss the advances, both monetary and amorous, being made in their circles.

All you have to do is begin enthusiastically, "Well, I think the best short story (say) in Canadian literature is ... " It's guaranteed that you will be cut short, but respected. Your attempt will have filled in any awkward conversational gaps. Mostly, you'll be able to sip your drink and listen to Peggy, Mordecai or Farley.

Most-Neglected Fine Novel: *Green Water, Green Sky* by Mavis Gallant

(1922 ·), famous for her *New Yorker* short stories. This is one of her two novels (the other is *A Fairly Good Time*). Her specialty is the angst of the expatriate (indeed, she has lived in Paris for 30-odd years). Her volumes of short stories are among the most brilliant by an English Canadian.

Best Volume Of Short Stories Not By Mavis Gallant: either *Dance Of The Happy Shades* or *The Moons of Jupiter* by Alice Munro (1931-). It is always safe to refer to Munro as the star of CanLit. She has refused all offers but one of writer-in-residence, preferring to live in Clinton, Ontario, and get on with writing her sensitive portraits of small-town women. Wise, witty and wonderful are always useful adjectives when commenting on her work.

The Most Impenetrable Novel: *The New Ancestors* by Dave Godfrey (1938-). John Moss, in his *A Reader's Guide To the Canadian Novel*, says of this work: "The more one reads — or rereads, for this novel cannot possibly be comprehended or fully appreciated on the first reading — the more complex and obscure the novel becomes, and yet more is revealed of form, story and theme." It's hard to slip that into a conversation gracefully, but you get the drift.

The Most Neglected Novel of Ideas: *The Imperialist* by Sara Jeannette Duncan (1861-1922). It's a sophisticated political analysis of where we come from historically. Published in 1904, it studies the forces from the United States that threaten to dominate Canada economically and culturally. You can always refer to her as a great prophetess or seer, something a lot of other novelists have not been since then.

Best Volume of Canadian Short Stories Not By a Canadian: *Hear Us O Lord From Heaven Thy Dwelling Place and Dark As The Grave Wherein My Friend Is Laid* by Malcolm Lowry (1909-1957), who was born in England and lived in Mexico for awhile before moving to Dollarton, B.C., where he did most of his writing. Getting the full title is just about enough, and you can counter discussions of his best known work, *Under The Volcano*, a tale of drunkenness, despair and hard living that achieved cult status among the undergraduates, by proclaiming this as your preference.

Most Ambitious Novelist: Hugh Hood (1928-) is in a category by himself. He firmly believes he is Proust and is in the midst of publishing a series — taking in the whole history of Canada and revolving around a number of families — called *The New Age*. Three have been published; there are nine to go. It may take the rest of his life (he's 55), but he will reveal all.

Most Schizophrenic Historical Novel: *Wacousta* by Major John Richardson (1796-1852). It was first published in 1932 and reissued in 1967. It's striking that the rather Gothic, romantic plot, about emigrants from the British Isles and English Canadians, is very wooden. But the material dealing with the Indians is quite fresh.

If you familiarize yourself with this list, you'll have an aura of being well-read and can ward off any potentially deep, analytical conversations.

The Most Coherent Historical Novel: *The Wars* by Timothy Findley. The novel operates on two levels: as a graphic evocation of the atrocities of World War I, and also as a perfect realization of family relationships in Old Toronto Society.

The Most Overrated (Or Underated) Novel in CanLit: The Diviners by Margaret Laurence (1926-). It's either blasphemous, sexually disgusting and obscene, or a profound work of theology. Laurence is the Great Aunt of Canadian Literature, highly regarded by her peer group. She is personally popular, contentious (quit the Writers Union of Canada) and the literati are divided about the extravagance of her talent. It's okay to be confused.

The Most American Canadian Novel: *Beautiful Losers* written by Leonard Cohen (1934-) after he was a poet and before he became a pop singer. This is in the U.S. tradition of such ugly novels as William Burroughs' *A Naked Lunch* and Hubert Selby's *Last Exit To Brooklyn* — raw, gritty views of the darker side of life.

The Best Novel of Immigrant Experience: *The Sacrifice* by Adele Wiseman (1928-), another unfairly neglected novel. No one else in our literature has described so sensitively the isolation, pain and loss of coming to an alien culture.

Most Prolific Canadian Writer: Margaret Atwood (1939 ·). She never seems to leave the typewriter unless it's to attend to her daughter, Jess. (The father and Atwood's co-vivant, Graeme Gibson, is also a novelist; his most recent work, produced in 1983, is *Perpetual Motion.)* Because of Atwood's protean talent, she irritates most of the literati, but they can't ignore her. She is a poet, novelist *(Surfacing, Life Before Man)*, essayist, critic, editor, embracer of causes and travel writer (she can also be found in foreign countries as a writer-in-residence). Atwood is powerful enough to write a funny review of her own book for *The Globe and Mail*, and draw a cartoon strip on occasion that has a fuzzy-haired heroine who looks not unlike herself. Literary types love to mutter such things as "I much prefer her poetry." Or: "She's lost the dazzle of her early novels — Harlequin Romances for people with M.A.s." Success and beauty can be hard to accept.

PUBLISHERS

You should also have a few publishers' names under your belt. The biggest and most Canadian is McClelland and Stewart. It is always on the brink of disaster and somehow has managed to survive for 77 years. The other big publishers of CanLit are Macmillan, General Publishing and Talonbooks. The most aggressive and imaginative of the medium-sized houses is Lester & Orpen Dennys. Its reputation for producing good lists grows by the season. Now it is handling big names, such as Graham Greene (Louise Dennys is his niece) and D.M. Thomas in Canada.

But it was the little houses that kicked off the publishing revolution in the early '70s and produced the Atwood Generation. Most notable was The House of Anansi. It was founded by two writers interested in the avant-garde and not likely to be published by

anybody else. The writers were Dennis Lee (a major poet and editor who now works for M&S) and Dave Godfrey, the novelist. (Godfrey now has his own publishing company, Press Porcépic.) Their supporters included Graeme Gibson and his then-wife Shirley (a poet), Atwood and her then-husband James Polk. It is a small literary pond.

Familiarize yourself as well with Coach House Press (Toronto), Deneau Publishers and Oberon Press (Ottawa), and the tiny houses of quality such as Firefly Books (Scarborough) and Black Moss Press (Windsor).

The latest wrinkle in the commercializing of CanLit is the book packager. Key Porter, for instance. At the helm is Anna Porter (who used to be with M&S, then Seal Books, and is considered one of the most beautiful and bright people of the Canadian literary world). Then there's Madison Press Books, owned by Al Cummings. Book packagers get the authors and have the books designed and put together. Then they let publishers market them.

LITERARY CRITICISM

Most writers and publishers despair that there is no tradition of great literary criticism in this country. We have in our midst Northrop Frye (1912-), one of the giants in this area, but he's either in university quarterlies or in hardback books (*Anatomy of Criticism, The Great Code*). After that, we get to reviewers, The *Globe* has someone considered to be the dean of Canadian reviewers, William French, but no one ranks what he writes as literary criticism. Most newspapers get academics to review heavy books and will haul someone off the sports desk or entertainment pages to do anything else. The attitude is that you can get into journalism by starting with book reviews and then moving on to something better. It is quite the opposite in New York, which explains why it is really serious to get reviewed outside the country.

COMIC RELIEF

The impression you get at literary bashes is that we are not a barrelful of laughs. Untrue. Mordecai Richler (1931-) wrote one of the longest dirty jokes in literature in *Cocksure*. Then you could mention the moment in *St. Urbain's Horseman* when the protagonist, trapped in a bathroom with a malfunctioning toilet, has to get rid of a turd. On a more gentle plane, but scathing in Richler's satiric way, there is the meeting of the Mackenzie King Society in *Joshua Then and Now*. Richler loves to complain about the repressiveness of Canadian society in American magazines, but we did supply him with his mordant sense of humor. Then, Jack McLeod, a crusty academic, took on his own kind in *Zinger and Me*, and revealed that Saskatchewan can be funny. That is some kind of risible achievment. Or you can mention John Metcalf's (1938-) novel, *General Ludd*. It's about writers-in-residence, that occupational hazard

Ours may be the only literary culture without any instantly identifiable heroes or heroines. We have no Hamlet, Huck Finn, Don Quixote or Tess. Whether that's good or bad, it is highly controversial.

and necessity for any Canadian author who wishes to survive. If you want to find out more about survival in academia, read Metcalf's *Kicking Against The Pricks*. It's a very funny look at *anglais* authors of Quebec who seem to get through on generous lashings of gin, red wine and Moosehead beer.

There is, of course, Marian Engel (1933-), famous for *Bear*, a love story between a woman and an animal (a conceit that is pretty funny in itself). Engel's novel *Lunatic Villas* not only identifies Toronto locations — something most Canadian writers avoid with a passion — but also mocks Engel herself, her generation and her situation (a middle-aged, single parent just muddling along). You can always say that she never writes a bad sentence.

You might also refer to Morley Torgov's *A Good Place To Come From*, or Robert Kroetsch's *Studhorse Man*. But the best is last: *Sunday's Child* by Edward Phillips. It's a sophisticated, sly look at the nether side of Montreal's gay world, ironically combined with the WASP upper-middle class. It's only students and journalists, those lovers of all things foreign, who don't see the humor rampant in this country.

MURDER MOST CANADIAN

Canadian crime-fiction writers always used to try to keep their settings anonymous or outside the country. Just waiting for an American movie contract to come along, you might surmise. John Reeves (1926-) changed things with *Murder By Microphone*. It was set in Toronto, at the CBC (home territory for Reeves). Then along came Howard Engel. He used to be married to Marian Engel and has spent a good deal of his life working on literary radio shows for the CBC. His hero, Benny Cooperman, works out of Grantham, but we know it's really St. Catharines, because that's where Howard grew up. Tim Wynne-Jones in The Knot has his hero go to meet his good friend Benny Cooperman for advice. Sometimes things literary get awfully cute.

You should know that L.A. (Larry) Morse won the Oscar of the crime world, an Edgar, for his novel *The Old Dick* (set in Los Angeles); that Sara Woods lives in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, and writes such terribly English books (*Exit A Murderer*) no one believes she is here; and that Eric Wright, a newcomer, actually uses Toronto locations in *The Day The Gods Smiled*. He, too, is an academic and once wrote a story for *The New Yorker*.

RETURN OF THE NATIVE

Many Canadian writers feel much more comfortable going away to write about Canada. Margaret Laurence went to Africa, Mordecai Richler to England, Marian Engel to Cyprus and Mavis Gallant to Paris. Richler and Laurence came back to live and write in Canada and have seldom been writers-in-residence. Engel came back and she's survived on w-in-r. Gallant returned this fall to be at the University of Toronto. A one-shot deal.

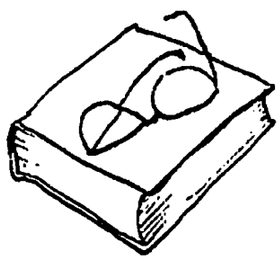
THE GLEN FORD-YVONNE DE CARLO SYNDROME

You might want to get into the contentious issue of just who is, and who isn't, a Canadian writer. Up for grabs in some circles are Malcolm Lowry and Saul Bellow (*Humboldt's Gift*), who was born in Lachine, Quebec but left the country when he was nine months old. He lives and works in Chicago. But Brian Moore (1921-) tops the list. He's one of the great novelists of this century and any country would gladly scoop him up. But can we? He was born in Ireland, lived in Canada long enough to acquire a passport and write *The Luck Of Ginger Coffey*, then moved swiftly to Malibu, California. He returns regularly to collect awards, be a writer-in-residence and see his buddies. They include Kildare Dobbs (1923-) and Richard Wright (1937-), both of whom write fine novels and have never been writers-in-residence. Dobbs (*Running To Paradise*) survives on travel writing, while Wright (*The Weekend Man*) worked for years as a teacher at a boys' school. The burden of staying at home.

THE TEST OF A TRUE BLUFFER

Last but not least, you should know that ours may be the only literary culture without any instantly identifiable heroes or heroines. We have no Hamlet, no Huck Finn, no Don Qui-Quixote, no Tess. Now this can be a good thing (leaves room for the future; no stifling images or ancient archetypes to buck) or a bad thing (nothing to fall back on; nothing for future generations of novelists to react against). It's a controversial topic. And if you can come up with a convincing argument either way, you'll leave the literati in stunned, silent admiration, and go to the head of the CanLit class.

- *Marjorie Harris is a freelance writer living in Toronto.*



Too Soon Forgotten: Worthwhile Yet Overlooked Novels For Children

Sheila Egoff

Not all fine books achieve a wide popularity. Indeed, sometimes their very special qualities limit them to a small but appreciative audience. In English children's literature, for example, I think of T.H. White's *Mistress Masham's Response*, T. Kendrick's *Great Love for Icarus* and, more recently Lucy Boston's *Children of the House*, among others. But Canadian children's literature seems to have more than its fair share of forgotten or neglected books. With a smaller body of literature than a country of comparable population, such as Australia, or even smaller countries, such as Norway or Sweden, this is a matter of some concern. We cannot afford to lose even one book that has something to say to children and that says it well. The following titles are my choices of such worthwhile, yet overlooked novels, listed in order of original publication date, with some thoughts on why they should be given more attention by those who select and publicize children's books. Lists are like anthologies; they never manage to please everyone. So perhaps the readers of *Emergency Librarian* would like to submit their own suggetions for inclusion — or exclusion.

Marshall Saunder's *Beautiful Joe* (1894) was certainly not neglected in its day. Within ten years of publication, this purported autobiography of a homely, mistreated little dog became an international bestseller. Like its English model, Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty*, it can rightly be described as a "hanky" story. Why try to revive such an obvious piece of sentimentality? Chiefly, I think because *Beautiful Joe* can still remind us of one of the chief aims of literature, which is to arouse motion — here, that of pity. In an age when so much of children's literature is curiously devoid of such a quality (there are few books such as Virginia Hamilton's *Sweet Whispers, Brother Rush)*, a book that can set the tear ducts flowing for an unselfish reason is surely not to be despised. And anyway, there are still children who like a good cry.

L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* remains our best-known children's book. Montgomery herself felt that *Emily of New Moon* (1923) and its sequels, *Emily Climbs* and *Emily's Quest* were her finest works, and I heartily agree with her. Montgomery experts consider the trilogy to be highly autobiographical and this belief may account for their intensity and realism. I think that the Emily books could still be considered as part of the mainstream of today's children's literature in their portrayal of a lonely girl's struggle against entrenched adult attitudes and beliefs. While Montgomery's Anne is really a cousin to Kate Douglas Wiggin's *Rebecca of Sunny Brook Farm* (1903), her Emily is kin to modern female protagonists in such books as Jane Gardam's *A Long Way to Verona* and Mollie Hunter's *A Sound of Chariots*. Emily, too, wanted to be a writer.

We have many fine animal stories but none show the mystical bonding between child and animal as well as *Sajo and Her Beaver People* (1935) by George Stansfeld Belaney, otherwise known as Grey Owl. *Sajo* is really a love story — the love of the little Indian girl, Sajo, for her beaver pets and the love of the beavers for one another. As backdrop is the northern Ontario wilderness — complete with forest fire — participating as emotionally in the story as do the Alpine mountains in Joanna Spyri's *Heidi*. *Sajo* has other points in common with Heidi — motherless children with a fierce attachment to their environment, tribulations to be suffered and overcome, and a feeling of a child's desolation in the face of adult actions, no matter how necessary. But *Sajo* has a tighter, more dramatic plot, interspersed with authentic animal lore. It would seem that only a lack of acquaintanceship with the book has led to its neglect.

As our first genuine writer of fantasy, Catherine Anthony Clark held a special place in our literature for many years. That time now seems over, since not one of her books is listed in the current *Canadian Books in Print*. If only one of her books were to be reprinted, I would make a special plea for *The One-Winged Dragon* (1955). It has Clark's usual delicate combination of the real and the unreal, the natural terrain of British Columbia peopled with Indian spirits, all of which act as a background for her not too obtrusive moral values. But *The One-Winged Dragon* has an additional dimension in its appreciative look at Chinese mythology and culture which should make it a natural for our multi-cultural society. It also has a feisty girl protagonist.

Farley Mowat's *The Black Joke* (1962) has never been as popular as *Owls in the Family, Lost in the Barrens* or *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be*. The ingredients of the story are fairly common — brave seafaring boys pitted against dastardly villains, a fine schooner shipwrecked but brought safely to port. It is all high adventure and told with Mowat's usual ebullience. Its set-

ting is unusual, though — the Depression of the 1930's in the outports of Newfoundland. The harsh economic facts of period and place are deftly woven into a larger-than-life tale. It deserves a new look.

When William Stevenson's *The Bushbabies* was published in 1965, it was recognized as an outstanding book. It was even suggested for an award. It was not eligible for a Canadian Award, however, because it was published in the United States and it was not eligible for the Newbery Award because it was written by a Canadian. But it has quite disappeared now, and one can only wonder why. The real bushbaby in the story is the tiny African lemur. The other two — the white girl Jackie and the African headman, Tembo — are really innocents abroad in a racist society. Abroad is the Kenyan jungle through which they are making a dangerous trek to return the lemur to the place where he was first captured. Dangers pile upon dangers, but through it all is the growing friendship and understanding between white and black, the elder and the younger, and the experienced and the inexperienced. In its delicate probing of these relationships, it is certainly a book for the 1980s.

David Walker's *Pirate Rock* (1969) appeared to have more ingredients for popularity than his earlier *Dragon Hill* (1963) which was a very special book indeed. *Pirate Rock* had a stronger plot, a simpler style and a more carefully delineated setting — the bay of Fundy — than *Dragon Hill*. Indeed, its plot seems right out of James Bond, or at least John Buchanan, as three young people (two boys and a girl) foil a Nazi plot. This latter aspect may seem to date the book, but Walker adds a higher moral dimension to the story as the boys debate the betrayal of a personal trust for a larger cause. The conclusion is left to the reader.

There is no word for good-bye in Ojibway. John Craig's *No Word for Good-bye* (1969) is a bitter-sweet story of the friendship between an Indian boy and a white boy whose natural interests in the out-of-doors have drawn them together. Since the rather loose plot involves the subject of Indian land claims, *No Word for Good-bye* is the most socially and politically relevant book on this list. But its message is neither strained nor shrill. John Craig is a craftsman; the incidents are convincing, the protagonists both adult and young, are realistically portrayed, and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

In 1976, Myra Paperny's *The Wooden People* won the first Canada Council award for a children's novel in English. The adage, "the first shall be last", applies here, for the book has hardly been heard of since. It perhaps has some minuses from a child reader's point of view. It is set in the 1920s in a small town in northern Alberta and its plot is rather episodic. Still, it has a family of very believable children who manage to hide their artistic puppetry skills from a seemingly authoritarian father.

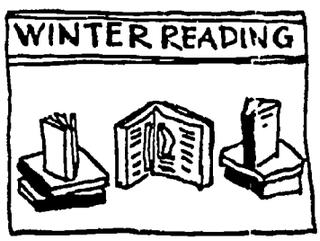
Very good novels have been written for children by Canadians but unless you, the reader, buy them and promote them to teachers and students they will indeed be soon forgotten.

This aspect of the story is resolved altogether happily, but it is what happens on the way to the end that is important. In its subtle look at racial discrimination rather than persecution, its childlike view of adult authority, and its glimpse of small-town prairie life, it has the charm and perspicacity of Fredelle Maynard's *Raisins and Almonds*.

The 1960s saw a dramatic decline in what is termed the "adventure story" in favour of books with "social relevance". When Joan Clark's *The Hand of Robin Squires* appeared in 1977, critics rejoiced over it as "a captivating mystery", "a fast-moving story that has no pretensions about it", "a good read." The critics seemed to be saying that they welcomed a book without social significance, at least as a change from the usual problem-oriented fare. For the first year after its publication it seemed equally popular with children. And why not? It certainly has a page-turning plot. On Oak Island in the 18th century, a truly villainous pirate is found storing treasure rather than digging it up. Now the reader knows why Oak Island is still a haunt for treasure-seekers. The details of the inventive, underground chamber are based on research, but this in no way impedes the flow of the hair-raising events experienced by the two boys, one English and one Indian. The first flush of enthusiasm for this Canadian *Treasure Island* seems to be over, but it will be too bad if it too falls into the pit of oblivion.

Very good novels have been written for children by Canadians but unless you, the reader, buy them and promote them to teachers and students they will indeed be soon forgotten.

- *Sheila Egoff [illegible] authority on children's literature and professor emeritus at the University of British Columbia School of Librarianship.*



Bibliography

Clark, Catherine Anthony. *The One-Winged Dragon*. Macmillan, 1955. Not one of Catherine Anthony Clark's books is listed in the current *Canadian Books in Print*.

Clark, Joan. *The Hand of Robin Squires*. Clarke, Irwin, 1981. Also in paperback; also an educational edition.

Craig, John. *No Word for Good-Bye*. PMA Books, 1969. Paperback.

Grey Owl (pseud.) *Sajo and Her Beaver People*. Macmillan, 1977. Laurentian Library Paperback.

Montgomery, Lucy Maude. *Emily of New Moon*. McClelland & Stewart, 1925. Canadian Favourite Series Paperback. Also Seal Books.

Mowat, Farley. *The Black Joke*. McClelland and Stewart, 1962. Paperback. Also a text edition.

Paperny, Myra. *The Wooden People*. Little, 1976. Out of print.

Saunders, Marshall. *Beautiful Joe*. McClelland & Stewart, 1972. Canadian Favourite Series Paperback.

Stevenson, William. *The Bushbabies*. Houghton Mifflin, 1965.

Walker, David. *Pirate Rock*. Scholastic-Tab, 1974. Paperback.

A Canlit Quiz

Kevin Harrington

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . ." There are few readers who don't instantly recognized the first sentence of a Dickens novel. Do these 10 first sentences tell you what Canadian novel is suggested?

First Sentence of the Novel	Author/Title of the Novel
A. "My lifelong involvement with Mrs. Dempster began at 5.58 o'clock p.m. on the 27th of December, 1908, at which time I was ten years and seven months old."	___ Atwood: *Surfacing*
B. "In the daytime her frail and ever-so-lightly hump-backed mother, or so they described her to blind Danile before they rushed them off to be married, used to take Hoda along with her to the houses where she cleaned."	___ Beresford-Howe: *Book of Eve*
C. "I can't believe I'm on this road again, twisting along past the lake where the white birches are dying, the disease is spreading up from the south, and I notice they now have sea-planes for hire."	___ Craven: *I Heard the Owl Call my Name*
D. "The doctor said to the Bishop, 'So you see, my lord, your young ordinand can live no more than three years and doesn't know it.' "	___ Davies: *Fifth Business*
E. "Northwest of Montreal, through a valley always in sight of the low mountains of the Laurentian Shield, the Ottawa River flows out of Protestant Ontario into Catholic Quebec."	___ Engel: *Bear*
F. "Toward noon, Florentine had taken to watching out for the young man who, yesterday, while seeming to joke around, had let her know he found her pretty."	___ Findley: *The Wars*
G. "In the winter, she lived like a mole, buried deep in her office, digging among maps and manuscripts."	___ Hemon: *Marie Chapdelain*
H. "The real surprise — to me anyway — was not really what I did, but how I felt afterwards."	___ MacLennan: *Two Solitudes*
I. "The door opened, and the men of the congregation began to come out of the church at Peuikouka."	___ Roy: *The Tin Flute*
J. "She was standing in the middle of the railroad tracks."	___ Wiseman: *Crackpot*

• *Kevin Harrington is Head of Library Services at Agincourt Collegiate Institute in Scarborough, Ontario.*

Ten Best * Guides to Canadian Literature for the Teacher-Librarian

Kevin Harrington

1. *Survival*, by Margaret Atwood. House of Anansi, 1972.
2. *Women in Canadian Literature*, edited by M. G. Hesse. Borealis, 1976.
3. *A Reader's Guide to the Canadian Novel*, edited by John Moss. McClelland & Stewart, 1981.
4. *Another Time*, by Eli Mandel. Press Porcepic, 1977.
5. *Canadian Fiction: An Annotated Bibliography*. by Margery Fee and Ruth Cawb... Peter Martin, 1976.
6. *An Introduction to Teaching Canadian Literature*, by Alice K. Hale. Atlantic Institute of Education, 1975.
7. *Spotlight on Drama: A Teaching and Resource Guide to Canadian Plays*. Writers' Development Trust, 1981.
8. *The Canadian Novel Here and Now: Critical Articles...*, edited by John Moss. NC Press, 1978.
9. *Taking Stock: The Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel*, edited by Charles Steele. ECW Press, 1982.
10. *Starting The Ark in The Dark*, by Ian Underhill / *The Country of the Young*, by Don Gutteridge. University of Western Ontario, Faculty of Education, 1978.

* ***Criteria***

- most relevant to 'CanLit' courses, especially in high school.
- written in a style that is popular rather than scholarly.
- emphasis on contemporary literature, especially the 20th century.
- providing thematic and regional interpretations.
- incorporating teaching and study methods.

On "Doing" Canadian Poetry

Fran Newman

Recently I received a last-minute summons to cancel my morning library schedule and take over for the principal in Grade Eight. This will sound familiar to teacher-librarians in small schools! There were not written daybook instructions — I discovered later that he had left oral directions with the students for his math and spelling. It is interesting that no one mentioned this when I announced that we would be having something different — a poetry "write-in". The response from the students was very positive, paper was handed out, motivation provided and results at the end of the double period ranged from good to excellent:

How to Eat with Chopsticks

First grab both of them,
one in each hand,
holding them with three fingers.
No that's wrong. Try grabbing
both chopsticks with one hand . . .
now what?
Just do it like this:
ask for a knife and fork.
Mike Bustos

Dear Child-to-be,

I hope you like diapers,
because you're going to have lots of them,
and I hope you like toys and rattles
because you will have them too;
but most of all I hope
you like love because that's what you will get most of.
Robert Van Drie

Everyone felt satisfied at the end of the class.

How did this come about? The other Grade Eight teacher had told me earlier that he did not "do" poetry and by all means I should use the time for it. Thus the class had experienced no poetry lessons that year but the previous year I had taught them Language Arts and we had listened, enjoyed and written so often that this class felt very comfortable with the subject. There was no threat; each child had experienced success before and knew that, even though today they might not be wonderful, their efforts would be valuable. Isn't this a worthwhile goal for any class?

How many classes in your school are poetry happy? And how many are poetry deprived?

How many classes in your school are poetry-happy? And how many are poetry-deprived? We have a small staff — ten teachers, and two of us regularly "do" poetry. For the rest, it is incidental, totally ignored or absolutely dreaded. Perhaps this is not a true representation; I would hope it is not. It all depends on the staff, of course, and their exposure to the subject earlier. I was fortunate to be taught high-school English in my small Alberta town by a lady called Miss Sellon. She is still there in my mind, quoting Shakespeare and Shelley and Keats. We had no opportunity to write poetry with her, and I did not begin until I was in my mid-thirties. But last summer, when we attended a performance of "Macbeth" at Stratford, Nicholas Pennell and I both quoted "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow creeps in this petty pace from day to day ... " Now *that's* teaching!

Not everyone was that fortunate, and for some teachers and librarians, a real effort must be made. The obvious questions are: how to get started and how librarians can help. Many teacher-librarians are part-time, like myself, and can begin in our classrooms as well as in the resources centre. Full-time teacher-librarians certainly have a role. And even if you are fulfilling the requirements of encouraging poetry happiness yourself, are you doing enough to help those staff members who are not at ease with the subject? For the very take-them-by-the-hand teachers, there is a book called *Poetry Power Pack* which I wrote for Scholastic — which explains five easy poetry lessons for each school month. It is a little sister to the larger poetry unit that they have made available. But anyone can begin a worthwhile unit on poetry by getting together a group of books and reading them aloud to children for their enjoyment.

My focus is Canadian. And you ask: is there enough material? We wondered that when I first began to search out poems for a children's anthology. I browsed through readers, old and new, the adult poetry section of many libraries and countless periodicals and came up with more than enough. The result was *Round Slice of Moon*. It is an excellent collection because it has selections on so many areas of interest to children and the authors range from a four-year-old to adults, both famous and unknown. There is humour, a good starting point for any program; animal and bird poems are plentiful; adventure and narrative poems of interest to middle and older classes are there, as well as descriptive poems,

and so many of the poems can be the starting point of interesting discussions.

Look also for *Mysterious Special Sauce* published by the Canadian Council of Teachers of English. The authors are all children; the poems are set in sequence by age, beginning with a six-year-old writing about his friend George and ending with an ode to McDonald's from which the title is taken. Read that poem first!

Sunflakes and Snowshine was written because I could not find Canadian poems about our seasons and months. And if you haven't seen Mary Blakeslee's *It's Tough to be a Kid* then you have to order it immediately. The title says it all. Lola Sneyd's *The Asphalt Octopus* is good for younger children. Sean o'huigan kept a Grade 5 class enthralled when I read his *Scary Poems for Rotten Kids*. Older classes will find much to identify with in *Dear Mom, Dear Dad*. You already have Dennis Lee; if you are lucky, you have on your shelf an old but very good book by Jean Little called *When the Pie Was Opened*. There are other books that are not always first rate but usually you can find several that you like. The books mentioned will form a core that will provide children with many valuable experiences.

Have you ever wondered why Canadian adult poets are world-famous but children's poets (aside from Dennis Lee) are so scarce? Canadian publishers like Scholastic and Annick say that poetry doesn't sell. If every teacher-librarian decided to buy at least one Canadian poetry book each year, perhaps we could alter that situation. Look at your poetry shelves. How many books are American? When you do purchase a worthwhile book that is Canadian, share it with your staff. Watch for reviews in publications like CM; *Canadian Materials for Schools and Libraries* and note books with good comments. Ask the representatives at book displays to show you their Canadian books. If they don't have any, ask why. Do the same at book stores.

If you are a teacher-librarian involved in co-operative planning, plug in a poem or two to fit any unit of study. Plan a language-arts unit and include a poetry session — centres work well here. If you are aware of teachers who do not "do" poetry, take their class for a visit to the 800s and delve into the treasures there. If another staff person is poetry happy, take his or her class while a deprived class (and teacher) benefit from the former's expertise and enthusiasm.

While there are some natural poets in your school, the majority of children will begin to write fairly well only after having been exposed to many hours of listening. Most primary poetry is rhymed but all children need to hear and understand that free verse is language especially chosen to say something in a different, interesting and valuable way. It is interesting that few children can rhyme easily and there is no reason why they should be made to do so. When they begin to write, they will form paragraphs. They will need assistance to set the words in a meaningful, poetic way on the page....There will generally be a few talented children in the group; print their finished work on chart paper or overheads so all may see how it is writtten. Once poetry writing is underway, collect several to make into an anthology. Or take the best poem each child has written and have the collection made into a book called *The I Can't Believe Kids Wrote This Poetry Book*. Send it home with a space for parents to comment.

Canadian publishers like Scholastic and Annick say that poetry doesn't sell. If every teacher-librarian decided to buy at least one Canadian poetry book each year, perhaps we could alter that situation.

The teacher-librarian is in a unique position to encourage young authors. She or he can make a section in the resource centre for student work to be displayed and loaned. (Always ask for an "About the Author" page.) The student council can be approached to sponsor poetry contests. The winning and good poems can be made into another book which will become popular as part of the collection. You might be fortunate enough to get a poem like this one:

Hallowe'en and Harvest Moon

Full harvest moon,
October late afternoon;
The sky silhouetted with black wicked witches,
The ground disguised by circling leaves.
The night falls black with cloud,
The air with scent of pumpkins;
The pond mist rises to our curious noses.
My costume: a sheet of white,
Two holes cut out for eyes.
With bag in hand, a shroud,
I beg Hallowe'en delights.
Janelle Ring, Grade Seven

You can sponsor a Young Authors' Conference for your students and those in neighbouring areas. Invite a poet to come and give a reading to interested students. Publish poems in your local newspaper, take some to Education Week displays and watch for contests in children's magazines. Set up a poetry bulletin board for young authors' work. Suggest an old-fashioned elocution contest in one class or more, with a book of poetry as a prize. See if an interested school board consultant would co-ordinate a district-wide poetry anthology.

Watch for good ideas at professional days, in teaching magazines and at other workshops. Begin a file to share with staff members. Have volunteers or older students make a subject index of your Canadian poetry so that you can easily find one to fit any topic being studied. Keep a watch for poems in places like *Canadian Children's Annual* and magazines, both adult and for children.

If you are involved with enrichment programs, it is even more important to make sure these children get the opportunities to use and enjoy language. As their lives become more

technological, they will need to know their aesthetic capabilities and that computers can be wonderful for playing with words.

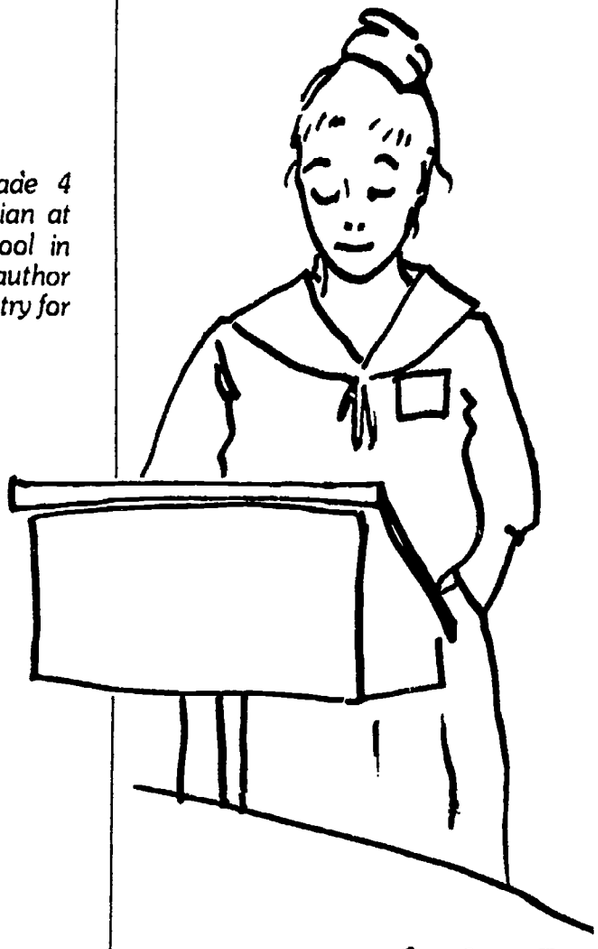
Just last week, I had some children in an enrichment group write poetry after having been motivated by other authors and after I had suggested some patterns they might try. In the first poem below, I took out the word "for" in the last line. In the second one, Cathryn had written about a goldfinch and I suggested a red bird might be better. The rest is as I received it:

Where do spiders dwell?
Maybe,
when they warp their webs
in dewy places, well hid,
it's home.
Leslie Chambers
Grade Four

The clumsy cardinal
stumbled over a branch
that fell in the snowstorm
at the front of my house,
then blazed away
like a flame of fire.
Cathryn Hansen
Grade Four

Now *that's* poetry!

- *Fran Newman is a Grade 4 teacher and teacher-librarian at Spring Valley Public School in Brighton, Ontario and the author of several collections of poetry for children.*



R. Carter

14

Canadian Books for Canadian Kids — Books of the 80s —

Lois Harper

Pictures — a thousand words

Day, Shirley, *Ruthie's Big Tree.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1982. Ruthie valiantly tries to save the old willow tree when the neighbour wants to cut it down. *K-3*

Day, Shirley. *Waldo's Back Yard.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1984. Mr. Tester does not get along with the children next door, until he needs help and Elizabeth saves his life. *K-3*

Fernandes, Eugenie. *A Difficult Day.* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1983. Even children have "difficult days"! *K-3*

Galloway, Priscilla. *When You Were Little and I Was Big.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1984.
Daughter and mother change places as the daughter describes the mother she would like to have. *K-3*

Harrison, Ted. *A Northern Alphabet.* Montreal: Tundra Books, 1982.
Each vivid painting of a northern scene features objects beginning with one letter of the alphabet and is bordered by names of northern places beginning with the same letter. *K-8*

Moak, Allan. *A Big City ABC.* Montreal: Tundra Books, 1984.
Paintings of the Toronto scene illustrate each letter. Information is given about location of each picture. *K-6*

Munsch, Robert. *David's Father.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1983.
Another priceless Munsch book. David's father just happens to be a giant (and scary). *K-6*

Munsch, Robert. *Jonathan Cleaned Up, Then He Heard a Sound* or *Blackberry Subway Jam.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1981.
A subway enters Jonathan's highrise and passengers disembark, leaving a mess behind. Jonathan visits City Hall to ask why and develops an ingenious plan to solve the problem. *K-6*

Munsch, Robert, *Murmel Murmel Murmel.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1982.
What do you do with a baby you find down a hole in the sand when you are only five years old? *K-3*

Munsch, Robert. *The Paperbag Princess.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1980.
Elizabeth uses clever psychology to outwit a dragon to save her prince. *K-8*

Munsil, Janet. *Dinner At Auntie Rose's.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1984.
For every child who has been given 'marching orders' when the family goes out for dinner. *K-8*

Pitman, Al. *One Wonderful Fine Day For a Sculpin Named Sam.* St. John's, Nfld.: Breakwater, 1983.
Sam cannot understand why the other fish don't like him. He finally meets Sara, another sculpin who thinks he is beautiful. *K-6*

Spray, Carole. *The Mare's Egg.* Toronto: Firefly, 1981. A simpleton tries to hatch a horse by sitting on top of a huge pumpkin. *K-8*

Stinson, Kathy. *Red is Best.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1982. A child explains why she likes red. "I can jump higher in my red stockings." *K-3*

Wallace, Ian. *Chin Chiang and the Dragon Dance.* Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1984.
This year, Chin Chiang is to help his grandfather with the Dragon Dance. When the time comes, he finds someone to help him overcome his fear of making a mistake. *K-6*

Waterton, Betty. *Pettranella.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1980. A pioneer girl loses the flower seeds that her grandmother has given her. She finds them later in a surprising place. *K-6*

Wynne-Jones, Tim. *Zoom At Sea.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1983. A gentle book about a cat's visit to Maria. She turns a crank and the sea mysteriously comes into the room. *K-3*

Zola, Meguido. *Only the Best.* London: Julia MacRae Books, 1981. A father, searching for the perfect gift for his newborn child, discovers that giving oneself can be the best gift of all. *K-6*

Non-fiction Winners

Climo, Lindee. *Chester's Barn.* Montreal: Tundra Books, 1982. Chester has a farm on Prince Edward Island. He lovingly looks after his animals as he feeds and tends them. *K-6*

Gryski, Camilla. *Cat's Cradle, Owl's Eyes: A Book of String Games.* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1983.
Step-by-step illustrations help to solve the intricacies of 21 string games. Notes on the sources of the games are fascinating. *K-8*

Hacker, Carlotta. *The Book of Canadians: An Illustrated Guide To Who Did What.* Edmonton: Hurtig, 1983. Short biographies of many famous and not-so-famous Canadians. Many photographs. *Grades 4-8*

Lee, Dennis. *Jelly Belly.* Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1983. Lee wins again with humorous, rhyming poems for young children. *K-6*

Linton, Marilyn. *The Maple Syrup Book.* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1983.
These questions (and more) are answered. What is this wonderful food we pour over pancakes? How and when was it discovered? *Grades 4-8*

Maloney, Margaret C. *The Little Mermaid.* Toronto: Methuen, 1983. Laszlo Gal has again done beautiful illustrations to accompany the sad but triumphant story of The Little Mermaid. *Grades 4-8*

Muller, Robin. *Mollie Whuppie and the Giant.* Richmont Hill, Ont.: North Winds Press, 1982.
This is the retelling of an extraordinary fairy tale. The heroine is clever, brave, strong and resourceful. *K-8*

O'Huigin, Sean. *Scary Poems for Rotten Kids.* Windsor: Black Moss Press, 1982.
Focuses on the scary and monstrous episodes in an ordinary child's lifetime. *K-8*

O'Huigin, Sean. *Well, You Can Imagine.* Windsor: Black Moss Press, 1983.
An omnibus edition from *The Trouble With Stitches and Poe-Tree: An Introduction to Experimental Poetry* plus some new poems. *K-8*

Raffi. *Baby Beluga Book.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1983. Based on Raffi's popular album *Baby Beluga*, the book contains lyrics, music, illustrations and information appropriate to each of the album's 13 songs. Children will learn about belugas and how to create their own music. *K-3*

Sneyd, Lola. *The Asphalt Octopus.* Toronto: Simon & Pierre, 1982.
A book of humorous poetry that your students will love. *K-8*

On Growing Up

Alderson, Sue Ann. *The Not Impossible Summer.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1983.
Vacationing on a Gulf Island with her writer mother, Jenny learns what it is to teach an adult to read, to look after animals and to make and keep friends. She finds that many things are hard, but not impossible. *Grades 4-8*

Chetin, Helen. *The Lady of the Strawberries.* Agincourt, Ont.: Book Society, 1982.
Ten year old Jessica loves the Alberta farm where she lives with her father and little brother, but she misses her mother who has retuned to Toronto. *K-8*

Craig, John. *Ain't Lookin'.* Toronto: Scholastic-Tab, 1983. Originally titled *Chappie and Me.* John Craig describes his summer with Chappie's Coloured All Stars, a black team of superb baseball players. He tells of the prejudice that existed in the 1930s. For senior students. *Grades 7-8*

Doyle, Brian. *Up to Low.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1982.
Tommy goes with his father and his father's hard-drinking friend to the old farm at Low, in the Gatineau Hills. This is a comedy, a first love story and an account of growing up. *Grades 4-8*

Halvorson, Marilyn. *Cowboys Don't Cry.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1984.
When Shane Morgan inherits his grandfather's farm near Calgary, his relationship with his rodeo-loving father deteriorates. He tries to make new friends and a home for himself and his dad. *Grades 4-8*

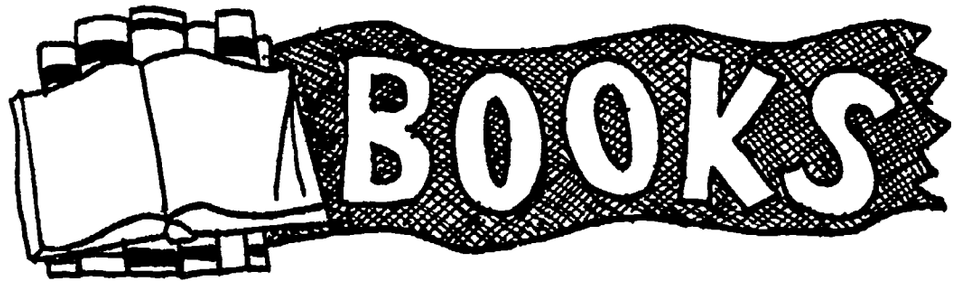
Harris, Dorothy Joan. *Don't Call Me Sugarbaby!* Toronto: Scholastic-Tab, 1983.
A teenage girl faces the problem of diabetes with anger and then with courage. *Grades 4-8*

Hughes, Monica. *Hunter in the Dark.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1981. A sensitive novel in which 16-year-old Mike Rankin must first force his over-protective parents to acknowledge the truth, that he has leukemia. On a solitary hunting trip Mike faces his own mortality. *Grades 7-8*

Hughes, Monica. *My Name is Paula Popowich!* Toronto: Lorimer, 1983.
Paula is upset because she doesn't look like her mother. When they move from Toronto to Edmonton, she finds that her father was Ukrainian. She begins to understand her mother's need for happiness and she learns about her Ukrainian heritage. *Grades 4-8*

Mackay, Claire. *The Minerva Program.* Toronto: Lorimer, 1984.
Minerva who is a 'klutz' in Phys. Ed. is a whiz at math. When she is picked to do a special computer course, she quickly learns how to program. When she is accused of changing her exam mark, she develops a program to catch the real perpetrator. *Grades 4-8*

McNeil, Florence. *Miss P and Me.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1982. Story of the problems of a girl who wants to be a dancer, but whose talents lie elsewhere. *Grades 4-8*



Morgan, Allen. *Beautiful Dreamer.* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1983.
A young Vancouver girl tries to prove to her family that she can contribute to the family finances. *Grades 4-8*

Reid. Malcolm. *Salut, Gadou!* Toronto: Lorimer, 1983.
Students in Quebec City fight to save their clubhouse "Monde des Jeunes". When the owner cuts down their huge elm tree the battle lines are drawn. *Grades 4-8*

Richmond, Sandra. *Wheels for Walking.* Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1983.
Sally is driving her friend's car on an icy mountain road when she has a terrible accident. A moving, unsentimental look at the life of a quadriplegic. For senior students. *Grades 7-8*

Smucker, Barbara. *Amish Adventure.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1983.
A twelve-year-old boy from Chicago is a passenger in a car that strikes an Amish buggy in Waterloo. He learns about farming and about himself from the Amish farmer who takes him in. *Grades 4-8*

Truss, Jan. *Jasmin.* Toronto: Groundwood Books, 1982.
As the eldest in a large family, Jasmin's burdensome responsibilities and fear of school failure prompt her to run away 'forever' to the wilderness near her home. *Grades 4-8*

Yee, Paul. *Teach Me to Fly, Skyfighter.* Toronto: Lorimer, 1983.
These four stories are based on the experience of four Chinese children in Vancouver. Some are second-generation Canadians, others are recent immigrants. The differences in their attitudes are focal points in the book. *Grades 4-8*

Yerou, Aristides, and Dickson, Barry. *The Friendship Solution; My Father's Ghost.* Toronto: Lorminer, 1984.
These two stories describe incidents in the lives of Greek childben in a Toronto neighbourhood. *Grades 4-6*

Calling All Science Fiction Fans

Hughes, Monica. *Beckoning Lights.* Edmonton: Le Bel, 1982.
When a spaceship lands and her brother and father are kidnapped by the 'creatures', Julie is able to help by using mental telepathy. *Grades 4-8*

Hughes, Monica. *Guardian of Isis.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1981.
In this sequel to *Keeper of the Isis Light* it is 2136 A.D. Life has gone backward rather than forward. The president has frightened people with 'taboos' that keep them in one valley. Jody N'Kumo questions everything and is banished. He must find Guardian to help his people. *Grades 4-8*

Hughes, Monica. *The Isis Pedlar.* Toronto: Fleet Publishers, 1982.
Sequel to two earlier books, it tells how the people on Isis are almost led to annihilation by a smooth-talking visitor. *Grades 4-8*

Hughes, Monica. *The Keeper of the Isis Light.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1981.
For sixteen years Olwen has lived on the planet Isis with only Guardian to look after her. What will happen when eighty space colonists land? *Grades 4-8*

Hughes, Monica. *Ring-Rise, Ring-Set.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1982.
The Ice Age has returned because a ring of ice particles has formed around the world. Space scientists work feverishly to dispel the ring. *Grades 4-8*

Hughes, Monica. *Space Trap.* Toronto: Groundwood, 1983.
Three children explore a maze and are stolen away to another planet. All are caged like zoo animals and sent to a zoo, a home as a pet and a laboratory as a specimen. *Grades 4-8*

Martel, Suzanne. *The City Under Ground.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1982.
This is a re-issue in paperback of Martel's excellent science fiction novel. An entire city lives underground in the year 3000. One venturesome boy discovers a way to the outside world which he has never seen. *Grades 4-8*

Humour

Alderson, Sue Ann. *Comet's Tale.* Edmonton: Tree Frog Press, 1983.
By the author of the Bonnie McSmithers series. Wanda, Willy, and Walter II win over Aunt Tweedle, capture crooks, and save the city pound. Children will enjoy the dog named Transzigidy who loves rosehip soup and chocolate. *K-6*

Bradbury, Raymond. *The War at Fort Maggie.* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1982.
Have you ever been on a disastrous field trip? You will enjoy the way this book is written with tapes, notes taken by students who are reporting on the trip. *Grades 4-8*

Duncan, Frances. *The Toothpaste Genie.* Toronto: Scholastic-TAB, 1981.
What would you do if a grumpy purple genie came out of your toothpaste tube? He does like to grant wishes. . . *Grades 4-8*

Howard, Mary. *Could Dracula Live in Woodford?* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1983.
When Sam, a sheep dog, moves to another town, she thinks she will never find a friend. The neighbour girl, who walks Sam and who ultimately can hear what Sam is thinking, leads them into a mystery-adventure. *Grades 4-8*

Korman, Gordon. *Bugs Potter Live at Nickaninny.* Toronto: Scholastic-TAB, 1983.
Bugs Potter goes with his parents on a wilderness camping trip. In spite of the isolation, Bugs mounts a rock concert. *Grades 4-8*

Korman, Gordon. *Our Man Weston.* Toronto: Scholastic-TAB, 1982.
"How could anything possibly 'come up'?" Tom demanded of his innocently smiling twin, Sidney. "This is a vacation paradise. There are no plots, no crimes, no murders, no spies, no great wrongs that need righting. No one will be doing anything illegal. There will be no reason for you to

investigate anything." Hah! *Grades 4-8*

Korman, Gordon. *The War With Mr. Wizzle.* Toronto: Scholastic-TAB, 1982.
Mr. Wizzle, the computer expert, makes many unwanted changes at MacDonald Hall. *Grades 4-8*

Palmer, C. Everard. *A Dog Called Houdini.* Toronto: Scholastic-TAB, 1980.
A dog that disappears whenever the dog catcher tries to find him causes hilarity in a small northern community. *Grades 4-8*

Stren, Patti. *Mountain Rose.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1982.
Mountain Rose is so big that she needs a zip code of her own. She becomes a champion wrestler. *K-6*

Wilkins, Mike, *Harold Greenhouse to the Rescue.* Toronto: Scholastic-TAB, 1982.
This is the second unwanted adventure of Harold Greenhouse. Harold and W. Duckworth-Street III attempt to rescue their parents who have been kidnapped and taken to Greenland. K-8

Fantastic!

Hutchins, Hazel, J. *The Three and Many Wishes of Jason Reid.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1983.
With the help of a magic glove, Jason becomes a star baseball player. How Jason uses his last wish is important for the whole community. *K-6*

Kellerhals-Stewart, Heather. *Stuck Fast in Yesterday.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1983.
Jennifer, while visiting the museum becomes lost in a storeroom and falls into a time warp. She becomes part of a family in the early 1900s. Grades 4-8

Lunn, Janet. *The Root Cellar.* Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1981.
Twelve-year-old Rose finds adventure and excitement when she is transported back in time to the American Civil War. *Grades 4-8*

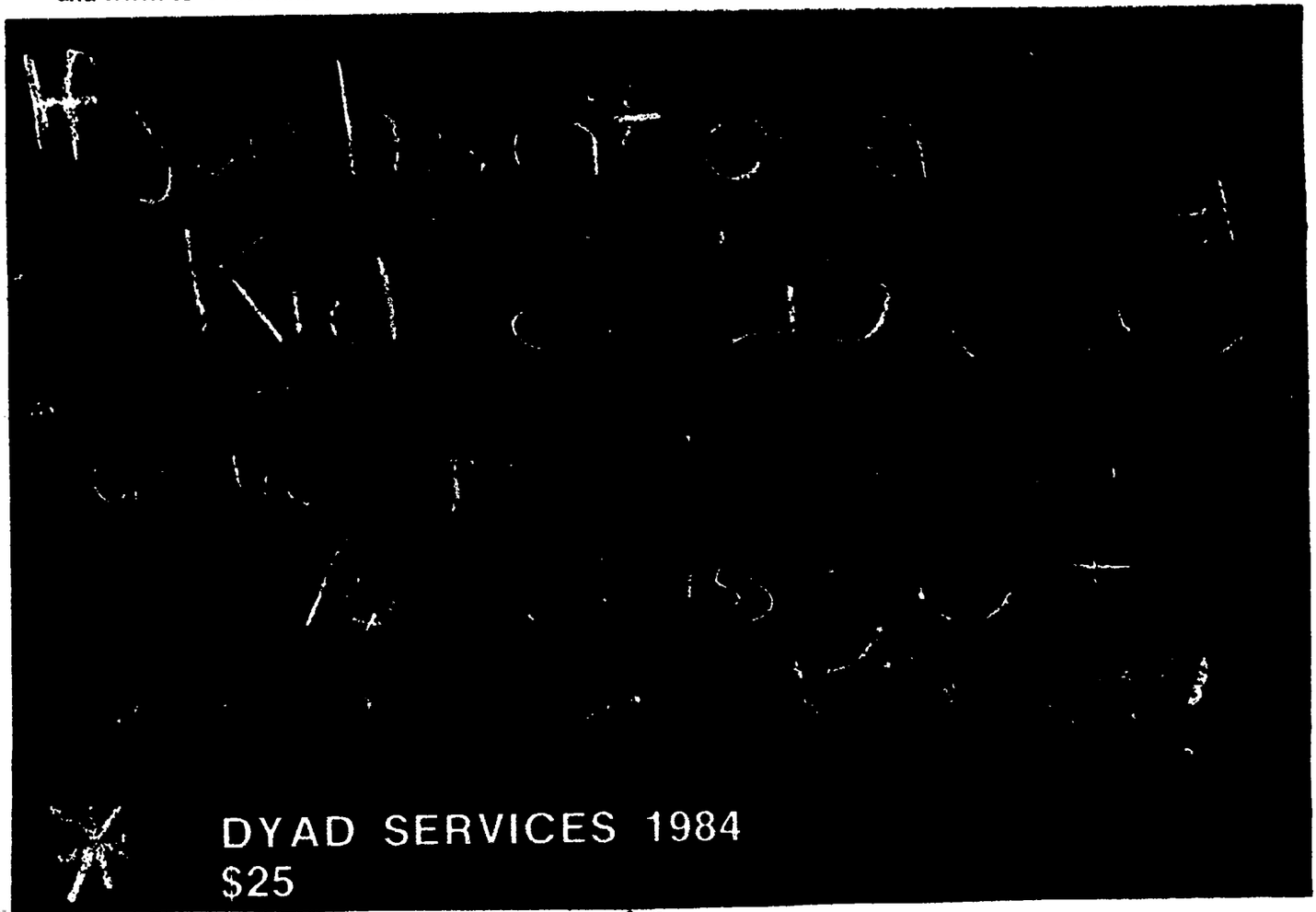
Sullivan Nick. *The Seventh Princess.* Toronto: Scholastic-TAB, 1983.
This fantasy abounds with kings, witches, dwarfs, and spells. Jennifer on her way to school in the bus finds herself suddenly carried along in a driverless carriage. She is brought to Eladeria and faces magic and fear. *Grades 4-8*

Walsh, Ann. *Your Time, My Time.* Victoria, B.C.: Press Procepic, 1984.
Elizabeth is 'stuck' in a small town near Barkerville. When she discovers a ring in the graveyard, she is transported to the 1870s. While in the time warp, she falls in love for the first time. *Grades 4-8*

Trial and Turmoil

Bilson, Geoffrey. *Death Over Montreal.* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1982.
Jamie and his parents come to Montreal from Scotland in the early 19th century. They find the city in the grip of a choiera epidemic. Their new life is more precarious and eventful than he had expected. *Grades 4-8*

Bilson, Geoffrey. *Goodbye Sarah.* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1981.
This perceptive story not only documents the Winnipeg strike of



1919, but also shows how children are affected by essentially adult problems. The close friendship of Mary and Sarah is eventually ruined because their fathers have opposite political views. *Grades 4-6*

Brockmann, Elizabeth. *What's the Matter Girl?* Toronto: Harper & Row, 1980.
A girl's love for her uncle is challenged when he returns wounded from the Second World War. For senior students. *Grades 7-8*

Cameron, Silver Donald. *The Baitchopper*. Toronto: Lorimer, 1982.
Three boys are involved in attempts to organize a union for fishermen. The conflict increases when a boat is cut adrift by a 'baitchopper'. *Grades 4-8*

Hamilton, Mary. *The Tin-Lined Trunk*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1981.
Two hungry street urchins are sent to Canada by Dr. Barnardo. This is the story of their survival. *Grades 4-6*

Hewitt, Marsha, and Mackay, Claire. *One Proud Summer*. Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1981.
Set in Valleyfield, Quebec, it tells the story of a 13-year-old girl's participation in the fight of employees to organize a textile union during the summer of 1946. *Grades 4-8*

Hudson, Jan. *Sweetgrass*. Edmonton: Tree Frog Press, 1984.
A sensitive story of a 15-year-old Blood Indian girl, who longs to be married but must prove herself to her father. She survives gun battles and smallpox. *Grades 4-8*

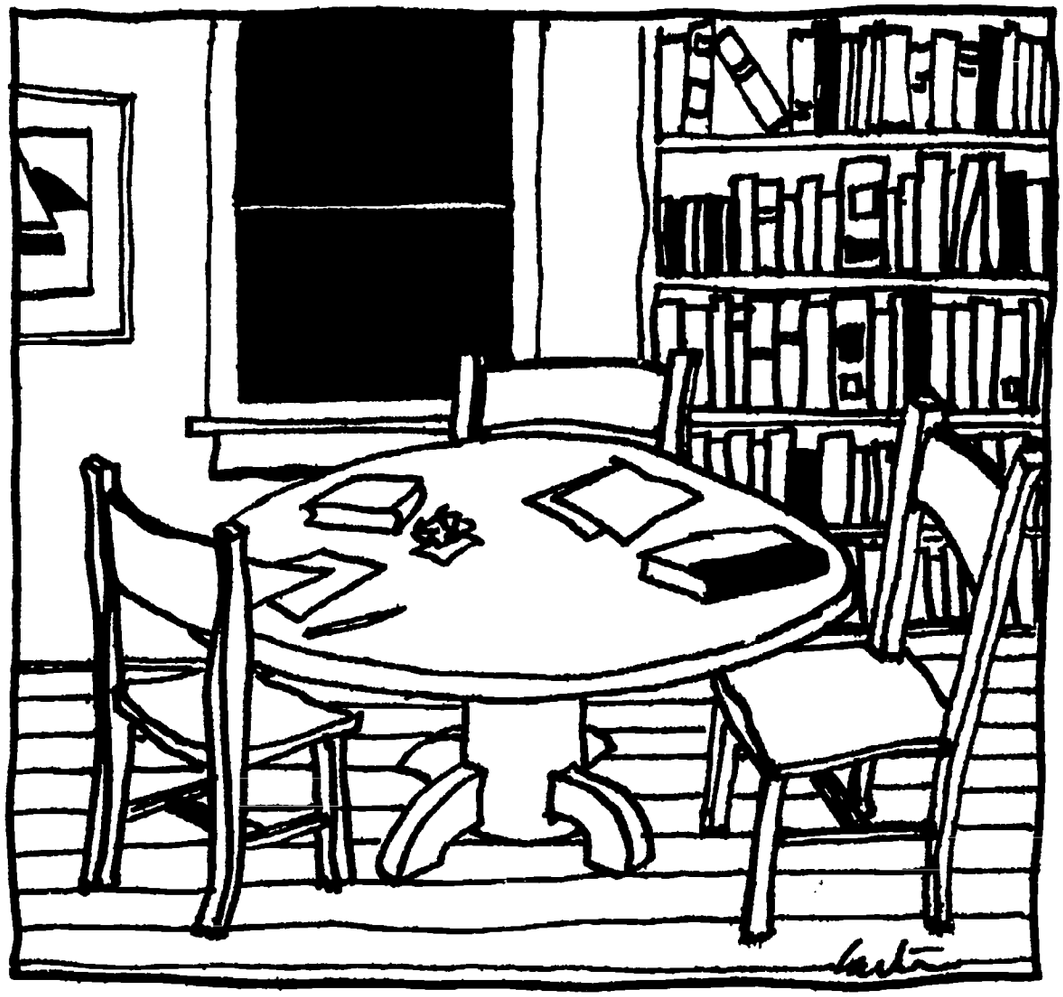
Hunter, Bernice Thurman. *That Scatterbrain Booky*. Toronto: Scholastic-TAB, 1981.
A nostalgic look at a hard-luck family during the Great Depression, through the eyes of a spunky young girl. A fictionalized autobiography. *Grades 4-8*

Hunter, Bernice, Thurman. *With Love from Booky*. Toronto: Scholastic-TAB, 1983.
Growing up in Toronto just after the Great Depression, Booky describes the hillarious scrapes she gets into and her warm family ties. Sequel to *That Scatterbrain Booky*. Grades 4-8

Martel, Suzanne. *The King's Daughter*. Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1980.
Set in the 17th century, the story tells of the adventures of an orphan girl sent by the King of France to marry a Canadian settler. *Grades 4-8*

Montero, Gloria. *Billy Higgins Rides the Freights*. Toronto: Lorimer, 1982.
Thirteen year old Billy Higgins joins the jobless men crowding Vancouver streets. When they vote to ride the freights to Ottawa to demand jobs, Billy climbs aboard. *Grades 4-8*

• *Lois M. Harper is Assistant to the Co-ordinator of Learning Resources for the Scarborough (Ontario) Board of Education.*



Picture Books and Art Techniques — A Study Guide —

Pamela Maki-Carolli

Picture books are often used only by the youngest children, and librarians, parents, teachers, and children themselves are often unaware of the usefulness and appropriateness of picture books for other purposes. Picture books can be used, however, as a method of studying art techniques in not only the primary grades, but higher grade levels as well.

The effective use of picture books can help the child:

- to appreciate the significance and function of reading
- to develop an interest and discrimination in reading
- to begin to appreciate the artistic qualities of book illustrations
- to appreciate the support and enhancement that illustrations provide to the story line
- to appreciate the fact that everyone does not view things in the same way
- to develop visual awareness, sensitivity, and appreciation
- to become more observant and more critical in the compositon of visual arts
- to develop the ability to express personal experiences and feelings in visual forms
- to develop the freedom of thought necessary for creativity
- to become familiar with art terminology as it is represented in illustrations, such as texture, shapes, line, balance, movement, centre of interest, medium, and space.

Selection of Titles

The titles suggested here do not constitute a comprehensive list, but rather are a representative sample, and some are not technically classed as picture books. Many of the books are award winners so as to encourage children to become familiar with awards and the books that have won them. Various interpretations of a single technique have been selected to support the goal that children realize there are different ways of looking at line drawings or collage. Several titles with illustrations by the same illustrator, such as Ann Blades, were included to allow children familiarity with a particular illustrator and to study the development of an illustrator.

Advance Planning

Prior to embarking on this unit of study, the classroom teacher and teacher-librarian worked closely together to ensure that the students viewed the library as an extension of the classroom learning environment.

This particular unit lasted several weeks and took place in both the library resource centre and the classroom. The length of time spent on the unit was determined by individual circumstances and the number of illustrators and interpretations covered.

To help the students to experience the importance of illustrations to a story, the same story was read twice to them. The first time the illustrations were not shown, and the second time the children viewed the illustrations while the story was being read. The students were asked which they enjoyed more and why. During this discussion the role of the illustrator was explained and how the artist transmits a message through illustrations.

Next, Margaret Laurence's *Six Darn Cows*, with illustrations by Ann Blades, was read to the students. Following the reading, the children discussed how the story made them feel and what they experienced while listening and viewing the illustrations. Many of the students said they felt a little scared when the two children were alone in the woods. This was an ideal time to investigate what evoked that feeling from the illustration. During this discussion, the students were introduced to correct terminology commencing with the medium used, the use of space and balance of the illustration (children dwarfed by the tall, lean trees), use of color, expression, centre of interest, and the contribution that the shape and line of the trees made to the illustration.

Once this initial illustration was considered, the students turned their attention to the next illustration and were asked to describe the mood. Their response — that it was less scary — prompted a discussion of the differences between the two illustrations. The use of space and balance (the trees aren't as tall, the children are not dwarfed by the trees), use of color, (greater use of white, illustration not as dark), and the use of line, shape, and

expression which contributed to altering the mood were highlighted. To sum up this investigation, the story was reread while the students experienced the story and illustrations with new insight.

As a follow-up to *Six Darn Cows*, the students were exposed to several other books illustrated by Ann Blades. Discussions focussed on the interpretation of the illustrations, differences and similarities, medium, and use of color. Throughout the discussions, student comments were encouraged — it was important to provide a sense that there is no right or wrong interpretation. The goal was to help the students develop their own visual awareness, to become more critical in the compositon of visual arts.

The goal was to help the students develop their own visual awareness, to become more critical in the compositon of visual arts.

Other illustrators and art techniques can be introduced in a similar way. Appropriate terminology, comparison of the effectiveness and use of media, and different interpretations can be examined as they are encountered. For example, the collage technique can be discussed as it is used by Elizabeth Cleaver and then as used in collage compositons by other illustrators. It is important to highlight the differences of interpretation, story line enhancement, and compositon of the collage.

Slides of the illustrations and filmstrips of the books can be used effectively for close group study. To expose children to other examples of art techniques, slides of classical art works such as those of Picasso, Van Gogh, and Rembrandt can be examined using the terminology and criteria employed with the study of the illustrations.

When children are exposed to this area, they develop an appreciation of illustration and a preference for particular illustrators' styles. They begin to recognize the art work of particular illustrators and, if allowed freedom of expression in their work, they will experiment with different techniques and refine them to their own ability. Thus, as an extension and side benefit to this cooperative unit of study, the children begin to place a greater emphasis on illustrating their own stories and books.

- *Pamela Maki-Carolli is a former school librarian who is now Head of the Central Children's Branch of the London Public Libraries in London, Ontario*

Recommended Titles

Collage and Mixed Media

Cleaver, Elizabeth. *The Miraculous Hind*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973.

Cleaver, Elizabeth. *Petrouchka*. Macmillan of Canada, 1980.

Lee, Dennis. *Wiggle To The Laundromat*, illustrated by Charles Pachter. New Press, 1970.

Newfelt, Frank. *Princess of Tomboso*. Oxford University Press, 1960.

Pasternak, Carol, and Sutterfield, Allen. *Stone Soup*, illustrated by Hedy Campbell. Canadian Women's Educational Press, 1974.

Suddon, Alan. *Cinderella*. Oberon Press, 1969.

Toye, William. *How Summer Came To Canada*, illustrated by Elizabeth Cleaver. Oxford University Press, 1969.

Toye, William. *The Loon's Necklace*, illustrated by Elizabeth Cleaver. Oxford University Press, 1977.

Paintings

Harrison, Ted. *Children of the Yukon*. Tundra Books, 1977.

Kurelek, William. *Lumberjacks*. Tundra Books, 1974.

Kurelek, William. *Prairie Boy's Summer*. Tundra Books, 1975.

Lim, John. *At Grandmother's House*. Tundra Books, 1977.

Vincent, Felix. *Catlands/Pays de Chat*. Tundra Books, 1977.

Watercolours

Anfousse, Ginette. *The Flight*. Women's Press, 1975.

Blades, Ann. *A Boy of Tache*. Tundra Books, 1973.

Blades, Ann. *Mary of Mile 18*. Tundra Books, 1971.

Itani, Frances, *Linger By The Sea*. Brunswick Press, 1979.

Laurence, Margaret. *Six Darn Cows*, illustrated by Ann Blades. James Lorimer, 1979.

Lunn, Janet. *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*, illustrated by Laszlo Gal. Methuen, 1979.

Macklem, Michael, *Jacques The Woodcutter*, illustrated by Ann Blades. Oberon Press, 1977.

Stren, Patti. *Bo, The Constrictor That Couldn't*. Green Tree, 1978.

Waterton, Betty. *Pettranella*, illustrated by Ann Blades. Douglas and McIntyre, 1980.

Waterton, Betty. *A Salmon For Simon*, illustrated by Ann Blades. Douglas and McIntyre, 1978.

Photography

Allinson, Beverley. *Groaning Ups*. Methuen, 1977.

Crayon

Campbell, A.P. *Albert The Talking Rooster*, illustrated by Andrea Campbell. Borealis Press, 1974.

Singer, Yvonne, *Sara And The Apartment Building*, illustrated by Ann Powell. Kids Can Press, 1975.

Pencil Crayons

Vivenza, Francesca. *Geranimal, Daddy Lion, And Other Stories*,, illustrated by Frank Newfeld. Groundwood Books, 1978.

Line Drawings

Allinson, Beverley. *Mandy And The Flying Map*, illustrated by Ann Powell. Women's Press, 1973.

Allinson, Beverley. *Mumbles And Snits*, illustrated by Ann Powell. Women's Press, 1975.

Arnold, Les. *Harry Paints The Wind*, illustrated by Rosemary Devries. Applegarth Follies, 1975.

Cohen, Matt. *The Leaves of Louise*, illustrated by Rikki. McClelland and Stewart, 1978.

Gervais, Charles, *How Bruises Lost His Secret*, illustrated by Patrick Ryan. Black Moss, 1975.

Howard-Gibbon, Amelia Frances. *An Illustrated Comic Alphabet*. Henry F. Walck, 1967.

Kilbourne, Frances. *The Recyclers*, illustrated by Ann Powell. Women's Press, 1979.

Stren, Patti. *Hug Me*. Harper & Row, 1979.