New Diverse books for reluctant readers

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- LGBTQ+ athletes
- Hi-lo sports novels
- Edgy, diverse YA fiction
- LGBTQ+ romance for teens
NEW JUVENILE & YA TITLES

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Proud to Play
Canadian LGBTQ+ athletes who made history
Erin Silver

Profiles of Canadian LGBTQ+ athletes who made the playing field more inclusive — including 2020 Olympic Summer Games athletes

The 2018 Winter Olympics marked a milestone for LGBTQ+ athletes. Thirteen athletes out of 3,000 competitors were out and proud — nearly double the number who felt comfortable sharing their sexuality four years earlier at the Sochi Games. Many athletes stay closeted for their entire sports careers, often unable to compete at their highest ability because of the shame and self-doubt they feel in not being true to their orientation or identity. But coming out still means facing harassment from fans, teammates, opponents, and the media, and a lack of sponsorship opportunities. While organizations like You Can Play, the Canadian Olympic Committee and Egale Canada have made progress in recent years in promoting inclusivity at the grassroots and elite sporting levels, there is still much work to be done to ensure all athletes feel safe being their authentic selves.

Athletes profiled include swimmer Mark Tewksbury, rhythmic gymnast Rose Cossar, professional hockey player Brock McGillis, speed skater Anastasia Bucsis, pairs figure skater Eric Radford, volleyball players Betty Baxter and Christopher Voth and hockey player Angela James.

Generously illustrated with photographs and given context by an overview of the history of LGBTQ+ athletes in Canada, this book will make all young sports enthusiasts and competitors proud to play.

ERIN SILVER has been writing professionally for almost 20 years. She has a degree in journalism and an MFA in Creative Nonfiction. Her work has appeared in Good Housekeeping, The Washington Post, Today’s Parent, The Globe and Mail and many other national magazines and newspapers. She has also blogged for several media outlets including the Huffington Post. Erin’s picture book, The Slap Shot, was named a finalist in the 2017 CANSCAIP Writing for Children Competition. She also won the bronze medal in the Common Deer Press Uncommon Quest Contest. Erin lives in Toronto, Ontario.
Since the early days of flight, animals have helped researchers learn how to survive in the sky, and their role continues as humanity voyages into outer space. In 1783 a rooster, a duck and a sheep were placed in a basket attached to the first hot-air balloon. In the age of rockets and space travel, many more animals have travelled into orbit, and most have returned safely to earth.

This book tells the stories of 50 trips into space, with details about the animals and the scientists involved. The experiments, often designed by students, originate from many countries. The book offers an appealing introduction to the purposes of space exploration and the possibilities of safe space travel. It encourages young readers to engage in real science like the young people they will read about in this book.

50 Animals That Have Been to Space
Jennifer L. Read with John A. Read

An easy-to-read, highly illustrated book about animals that have gone into space that will grab the attention of any curious young reader.

This book tells the stories of 50 trips into space, with details about the animals and the scientists involved. The experiments, often designed by students, originate from many countries. The book offers an appealing introduction to the purposes of space exploration and the possibilities of safe space travel. It encourages young readers to engage in real science like the young people they will read about in this book.

JENNIFER L. READ grew up in the hills outside San Francisco. A passion for animals led her to a prestigious internship with American Humane’s Film and Television Unit in Los Angeles, California, where she worked on movie sets with wolves, horses and many other animals. Jennifer is now a member of the Junior Bengal Lancers, an equestrian society located in Halifax. She lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with her husband and writing partner John A. Read.

JOHN A. READ’s journey into astronomy began with a small and rickety telescope purchased at the local pharmacy. He found it fascinating to observe the moon and Saturn with its rings with such meagre equipment. He decided to share these views with others. After writing his book, 50 Things to See with a Small Telescope, John retired from a career in corporate finance. He is also the author of 50 Things to See on the Moon. He is now a telescope operator at the Burke-Gaffney Observatory, a board member of the Halifax Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada and is studying astrophysics at Saint Mary’s University. He lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia with his wife and writing partner Jennifer L. Read.
A bumpy ride

Ham also had a rough splash-down but the hammer beacon, green dye and high-intensity light that would aid in his recovery all worked.

Unfortunately, the battering the heat shield had absorbed back to near the hull and water started to pass into Ham’s capsule. A malfunction in the safety valve meant the water had nowhere to go. Ham’s capsule took on abilities of water but was successfully fished out of the sea.

The chimp was a little wobbly and dehydrated with a small bump on his nose but otherwise in good health. However, his good temperment was lost at sea. At the press conference following his recovery, Ham screamed and shouted his way to reporters and refused to go anywhere near the Mercury capsule for photos.

Chimp Training School

Ham and Enos (page 28-30) went to chimp acclimation training at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico. Here, the chimps learned to sit, in chairs and wear special suits for progressively larger vessels of time. A chimp was put in each suit and trained to respond to their refires. The chimp tests were used to test the support systems and to ensure that they were in good condition. The chimps would be able to return to the support systems during the flight. The tests involved observing, providing that some chimp was in the suit, that the chimps could be killed. This test would be extended, in case the chimps could not be used. The chimps would be able to perform under all flight circumstances.

Heaviest Animal

At 13.5 kilograms, Ham was the heaviest animal to be sent on an experimental space flight.

28 Moths and flies

6/27/83. The third space shuttle flight (Dubbed STS-7) was the ESSP Shuttle Student Experiment Project (ESSP). STS-7 and McDonnell, the experiment involved studying the insect's activities with a video camera in a closed environment to study their activities. The flight was on a mission to study walking and flying moths. The flight was a mission to study walking and flying moths. The flight was on a mission to study walking and flying moths. The flight was a mission to study walking and flying moths.

29 Space Bees

In 1964, a colony of 10,000 honeybees flew into orbit. Even the queen bee came along for the ride. This was a scientific experiment to determine if there were any differences in the honeybees made by bees in space. A colony of bees was kept in an identical container on Earth.

Despite being in space, the bees managed to make honeycombs. There were some minor differences between honeycombs constructed in space and those made on the surface. For example, the cells made in space had cells that were angled differently. The queen's honeycomb was also larger and had thicker walls than those constructed on the surface. The queen laid 35 eggs during her time in space. bees, though not enough upon return to Earth. Scientists could not be sure why the eggs didn't hatch. This is definitely a mystery when further study is required.

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Ed doesn’t look like a football star. But can he play like one?

Ed Warnicki used to play football in the park with his dad and dream of being a great receiver. Now, at fourteen, Ed secretly wishes he could play for his Calgary High Mustangs team. But he worries that he’s too tall, too skinny and too insecure — the exact opposite of star quarterback Tyrone Jackson. Wanting to contribute to the school’s football team in some way, Ed accepts the job of waterboy. Tyrone teases Ed about his build, his old bike and his obvious crush on Tyrone’s girlfriend and school sports reporter Zara, and one day at practice throws a ball right at Ed’s head. Ed’s instincts kick in and he makes a decent catch! So when the team’s top receiver gets injured, Ed joins the team as back-up receiver. Getting annoyed that Zara seems to prefer Ed’s company to his own, Tyrone won’t pass to Ed, and even calls a play he knows could get Ed hurt. But the big game against their rival team puts school pride and Ed’s confidence on the line. Will Tyrone throw to Ed? Can Ed catch a crucial pass and make his dreams of being a football hero come true?

ERIC HOWLING is the author of ten books, including Head Hunter, Red Zone Rivals, Hoop Magic, Kayak Combat, Drive, and Run and Gun in the Lorimer Sports Stories series. His books have been shortlisted for the Hackmatack Children’s Choice Book Award, named Resource Links Year’s Best and picked as CCBC Best Books selections. Eric lives and plays sports in Calgary, Alberta.
Rugby Rivals

Mike Levitt

When opponents become teammates, Sam needs to prove he knows what rugby is all about.

Sam’s grandfather Pops always taught Sam that the most important aspects of rugby are sportsmanship and teamwork. Things are not great at home, with Pops having Alzheimer’s and Sam’s mother trying to make ends meet, but Sam’s struggles really begin when his school is shut down and he transfers to Rosedale Heights. Sam feels like he’s alone against the world trying to prove himself — and failing. He has trouble fitting in with the snobby Rosedale team, especially Bittner, who resents Sam’s presence. In an act of retaliation, Sam breaks a teammate’s nose, and he knows he’s lost sight of what rugby is supposed to be about. When Sam scores the winning try in a game, he wonders if it was for his own glory or for the team. All seems lost when, set up by Bittner, Sam gets kicked off the team under suspicion of stealing. Can Sam prove his innocence and get back in play for the highly anticipated England game? And can he play the kind of rugby that will make Pops proud?

MIKE LEVITT has played, coached, and refereed high-school rugby. He wrote the curriculum for his school district’s grade 11 rugby course, had a newspaper column in the Williams Lake Tribune, and has had short stories published in British Columbia Magazine. This is his first sports novel. He lives in Kamloops, British Columbia.

Also in the Sports Stories series

Replay
Steven Sandor
978-1-4594-0381-9
paper, $9.95
The Comeback
Alex O’Brien

Soccer is the best medicine

On the surface, fourteen-year-old Chris is pretty average, playing hockey and having friends. But underneath it all, Chris is depressed, full of self-blame and negative thoughts. He quits his hockey team, feeling he has let them down, but his psychologist suggests that he should pick up another sport. Chris starts playing soccer, and the positive benefits of sport start to take effect: he is motivated and has fewer self-doubts. But former hockey teammate Trent is on the team, and his suspicions about Chris and his emotional state threaten Chris’s acceptance and recovery. When Chris and Trent are chosen for a team to play in a summer tournament, Chris decides to keep his depression a secret. But will rumour and stigma about his condition make him relapse and turn his own team against him?

ALEX O’BRIEN left a career in human resources to write novels, scripts and songs. He has been a finalist and winner of several writing competitions. He is the author of the Lorimer sports story The Playmaker. Alex lives in Parry Sound, Ontario.

Also in the Sports Stories series

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David Starr
978-1-4594-1231-6
paper, $12.95

Tournament Fugee
Dirk McLean
978-1-4594-2255-5
paper, $12.95
Easy Out

Steven Sandor

When playing out of your league, do your best to be the best

Westlock is an hour north of Edmonton, a prairie town with a long baseball history. But registrations are down, and there are only enough kids in town to fill one team. So Mo Montpetit’s team is entered into the Baseball Alberta AA league. All the kids registered will be playing rep ball. No tryouts needed.

Mo’s dad is a baseball legend in Westlock. And that’s Mo’s problem. Mo isn’t very good. He can’t hit a rep-level fastball. And as the season starts, the strikeouts and errors mount. The Westlock team loses game after game. How can these kids, not ready for rep ball, compete in a league well above their heads? And how can Mo step out of his dad’s long shadow?

STEVEN SANDOR is an award-winning magazine editor, author and sports broadcaster. He edits Avenue Magazine in Edmonton. He has written the five Sports Stories novels Called Up, Stick Pick, Trolled, Replay and Playing for Keeps, and the teen novels Crack Coach and Spin Out. He lives in Edmonton, Alberta.

Also in the Sports Stories series

Sliding Home
Joyce Grant
978-1-4594-1284-2
paper, $12.95

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Reading Level: Grade 3.8
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128 pages
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epub: 978-1-4594-1489-1, $8.95
Themes: Parental Pressure, Competition, Small Towns, Sportsmanship
January 2020 publication
A conflict resolution series for kids

Ages 9–14

Consent
Deal with it because it’s your body, your choice!

Keisha Evans and N.B. Gonsalvez
Illustrated by Jenny Chan

A timely new resource to help kids understand and resolve conflicts stemming from issues of consent

Consent isn’t just about sex. From an early age, kids are taught to respect personal space. They learn to express themselves about how they feel. As much as they need to be taught that kissing, hugging and touching are sometimes appropriate and sometimes not, it is important that they consider that consent is needed for commonplace interactions like borrowing things, sharing possessions, or giving away someone’s secrets. And that consent cannot be assumed, even if it has been given at a different time.

This illustrated book offers information, quizzes, comics and real-life situations to help kids think critically about what consent is, and what it looks and sounds like when it is given or not given. Considered from the viewpoints of those who are in a position to give consent, those who are in a position to be given consent, and witnesses to conflict around consent, this issue is identified, examined and put into a context that kids can understand and use to navigate issues of personal rights and emotional safety.

KEISHA EVANS has been supporting and advocating for children, youth and their families for more than twenty years. She is a child and youth counsellor and works to teach children about body safety and respecting boundaries. Keisha lives in Oshawa, Ontario.

N.B. GONSALVEZ is the author of My Parts Are My Parts, Your Parts Are Your Parts, a picture book about consent. She lives with her family in Whitby, Ontario.

JENNY CHAN is an illustrator, designer and developer working with The Public Studio. The Public Studio is a community-centered, social justice design studio that works alongside non-profits, grassroots organizations, and people trying to change the world for the better. Jenny lives in Toronto, Ontario.
P.K. Subban

Fighting racism to become a hockey superstar and role model for athletes of colour

Catherine Rondina

A biography of Canadian hockey defenceman P. K. Subban, which focuses on his determination, his experience with racism and his support for charities for children

Born in Canada to parents who emigrated from the Caribbean, P.K. Subban is a remarkable athlete and role model. A talent on the ice, playing for some of the best teams in the NHL, P.K. has set records and won the Norris Trophy, the highest honour in hockey for a defenceman. Often the centre of controversy, at one time named one of the most hated hockey players in the NHL for his outspoken attitude, he is the pride of many fans across Canada and a hero to young athletes of colour. His stand against racism relies more on actions to support others than on relating his own experiences. He is known to have made the largest donation to charity by a Canadian athlete in history, and works to build an understanding between at-risk youth and law enforcement across North America. P.K.’s story has evolved into an incredible family story of three first-generation-born-in-Canada brothers who, starting with P.K., all were drafted into the NHL. P.K. and his siblings were brought up to work hard to make their dreams come true by a father who taught in one of the toughest neighbourhoods in Toronto. A philanthropic thinker, a media favourite and a force to be reckoned with on the ice — this is P.K. Subban.

Catherine Rondina is a writer, educator, library assistant and sports fan. She writes award-winning nonfiction for children, and her previous Lorimer Recordbook on hockey star goalie Carey Price won the 2019 Silver Birch Non-Fiction award. Catherine lives in Richmond Hill, Ontario.

Other Recordbooks

Carey Price
Catherine Rhondina
978-1-4594-1276-7
paper, $12.95
* Winner! 2019 Silver Birch Award
No One’s Baby

Wanda Lauren Taylor

To make decisions for the future, you have to find out the truth about your past

Adopted by Caucasian parents, biracial teen Lizzie feels like she never belonged. After the death of her father, Lizzie starts acting out: dating, staying away from home for days and giving up her plans to continue her education. When Lizzie discovers she is pregnant, she is faced with the difficult choice of having a child or getting an abortion. This leads Lizzie to want to find her own birth mother. After running away from home, Lizzie ends up in Kingston, where she tracks down an older woman named Ruth who sheds light on the circumstances surrounding Lizzie’s birth.

WANDA LAUREN TAYLOR is an author, filmmaker, editor and educator. With a background in social work and advocacy, Wanda lectures on social justice and human rights issues, and has worked for organizations helping marginalized populations. She is a former CBC TV producer and the author of books that include Birchtown and the Black Loyalists, which has been listed as one of the top Black history books for young readers by Today’s Parent Magazine and by the Canadian Children’s Book Centre, and the SideStreets novel Ride or Die. Wanda lives in Toronto, Ontario.

Also in the Sidestreets series

Ride or Die

Wanda Lauren Taylor

978-1-4594-1249-1

paper, $12.95
Ace of Hearts

Myriad Augustine

Alvin is ready for romance, but he may never be ready for more

Everyone around Alvin seems to be obsessed with one thing — sex. Alvin finds it uncomfortable to think and talk about it and he knows he isn’t ready and may never be. His friends, however, think that all Alvin needs is to hook up with the right guy, so they identify three of the most eligible guys in school and start a plan to set Alvin up with each one. First there’s Allistair, a boy with strong ambitions to become a gay leader in politics. Second is Rowan, a trans boy who mysteriously misses classes. Third is Jesse, the popular rich kid known for wild parties and breaking hearts. But the closer Alvin gets to being physical with someone, the more he’s uncertain that this is for him and he begins to wonder if he’s asexual. Can Alvin find the love that’s right for him?

MYRIAD AUGUSTINE is a queer, non-binary, intersectional feminist. They founded and co-run the Wheelhouse, a nonprofit designed to be a supporting resource for people facing barriers of accessibility. This is their first teen novel. Myriad lives in Toronto, Ontario.

Also in the Real Love series

What Makes You Beautiful
Bridget Liang
978-1-4594-1411-2
paper, $14.95

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Reading Level: Grade 4
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January 2020 Publication
Northern Star (Sports Stories)
Lorna Schultz Nicolson

Inspired by the career of NHL star Jordin Tootoo, this book follows one exceptional player's journey towards hockey greatness.

LORNA SCHULTZ NICHOLSON is the author of many sports novels, and hockey non-fiction books. She lives in Edmonton, Alberta.

Willie O’Ree (Recordbooks)
Nicole Mortillaro

This book traces the early life of the NHL's first black player, Willie O’ Ree, in Fredericton, New Brunswick, his journey to the NHL, highlights from his hockey career, and his work encouraging diversity in the NHL.

NICOLE MORTILLARO is the author of several hockey books for children, including the Recordbooks Something to Prove and Jarome Iginla. She lives in Toronto, Ontario.

Jordin Tootoo (Recordbooks)
Melanie Florence

This biography explores the struggles and accomplishments of the most recognized role model for young Aboriginal and Inuit people today. Jordin Tootoo is the winner of the 2012 American Indian Youth Literature Award.

MELANIE FLORENCE is a proud Cree. She is a full-time journalist and children’s writer based in Toronto, Ontario.
Run and Gun
Eric Howling
Griffin Finch is struggling to stay on the school’s basketball team. In an effort to get better at it, he spends the summer playing streetball in a hardscrabble neighbourhood. As his hoop skills improve, he convinces Fly Davis, a streetball star, to apply to his school and join his team. Fly agrees but opposing ideas on how to play basketball lead to a standoff between Fly and Coach. What happens next puts Griffin’s love for the game and his loyalty towards his friends to the test.
978-1-4594-1459-4
Paper, $12.95

Taking the Lead
Karen Spallford-Fitz
As the captain of his school track team, Jonas only plays to win. Things go wrong during a race and he takes his anger out, quite unfairly, on his teammates. The school coach strips him of his captaincy and kicks him out of his team. However, it is not until Jonas meets Darren — a vision- and mobility-impaired teen who wants to run a 5k race — that he begins to realize the true meaning of the word sportsmanship and what it takes to be a real winner.
978-1-4594-1463-1
Paper, $12.95

Dressed to Play
Jennifer Manuel
Fourteen-year-old Jordan lives to play basketball but the boys in her school give her a hard time, hinting that she is less of a girl by being strong and athletic. As the teasing increases, Jordan has thoughts of giving up the game. How does she battle her dilemma? Does her love for the sport eventually win?
978-1-4594-1467-9
Paper, $12.95

If I Go Missing
Brianna Jonnie with Nahanni Shingoose
Art by Nshannacappo
A powerfully-illustrated graphic novel for teens about the subject of missing and murdered Indigenous people.
978-1-45941451-8
Paper over boards, $24.95

Powwow Summer
Nahanni Shingoose
Part Ojibwe and part French, River struggles with her identity. Having just finished high school and turned eighteen, River travels to live with her father and her grandmother at their family’s reserve. Her eyes open to a whole new world as she learns about the lives of the people in her community. River makes new friends and discovers a deep connection with her cultural heritage through her grandmother. Summer seems to pass enjoyably until things go horribly wrong at the annual powwow afterparty. As her identity is called into question again, River finally begins to understand what it takes to truly belong.
978-1-4594-1415-0
Paper, $14.95

Spin Out
Steven Sandor
Ben Cheng had a great life — wealthy parents, lots of friends and fame as an online racecar driver, until his dad left and turned his life upside down. Living in a small apartment with his mom and being teased as the new kid in school whose fall from grace is a popular subject of gossip, Ben only has his online persona to hold on to. It is only his virtual life where everything is unchanged and he still reigns supreme until even that starts spiralling out of control. What will Ben do to get his life back on track?
978-1-4594-1455-6
Paper, $12.95

We Three
Markus Harwood-Jones
Looking for friends at summer camp, Jassie finds twice the love and acceptance she ever hoped for. But is the world ready to accept the love of a trio? What will Jassie do to convince her partners that their love can survive in the real world?
978-1-4594-1471-6
Paper, $14.95

Righting Canada’s Wrongs: Africville
This illustrated book tells the story of Africville — the community founded by African Nova Scotians on the Bedford Basin in Halifax in the late 1800s. The community was lively and vibrant but racist attitudes prevented people from getting well-paying jobs in the city. In the 1960s, the City of Halifax decided to demolish Africville and use the land for industrial development. The book documents how the city destroyed Africville and much later apologized for it — and how the spirit of the community lives on.
978-1-4594-1358-0
hardcover, $34.95
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