

Family Sunday Book List

June 2021 Theme: Growing Together

FOR CHILDREN

Thank You, Garden

By Liz Garton Scanlon

A community garden unites children and neighbours in this celebration of all the things that grow there, from flowers and fruits to friendships. In the spirit of her Caldecott Honor-winning picture book *All the World*, this ode to friendship, community, and working together for a better world will have young readers gathering their friends young and old to plant something together.

What Grew in Larry's Garden

By Laura Alery

Grace thinks Larry's garden is one of the wonders of the world. In his tiny backyard next door to hers, Larry grows the most extraordinary vegetables. Grace loves helping him—watering and weeding, planting and pruning, hoeing and harvesting. And whenever there's a problem—like bugs burrowing into the carrots or slugs chewing the lettuce—Grace and Larry solve it together. Grace soon learns that Larry has big plans for the vegetables in his special garden. And when that garden faces its biggest problem yet, Grace follows Larry's example to find the perfect solution.

Siha Tooskin Knows the Nature of Life

By Charlene Bearhead and Wilson Bearhead

Rocks, grass, trees, birds—what can they possibly teach human beings? Paul Wahasaypa knows that Ena Makoochay (Mother Earth) gives us many things. On this compelling nature journey with Ena (his mom), we learn how strength, generosity, kindness, and humility are all shown to us by grandfather rocks, towering trees, four-legged ones, and winged ones, reminding us of the part we have to play in this amazing creation. Join Paul and Ena as they experience the beautiful nature of life.

We Learn from the Sun

By David Bouchard

We Learn from the Sun is an Indigenous rhyming poem based on Bouchard's best-selling book, *Seven Sacred Teachings*. This richly illustrated book by Metis writer David Bouchard and Metis illustrator Kristy Cameron weaves together Woodland style paintings with a rhythmic poem about the spiritual lessons that we can learn from the Sun and the seven sacred teachings.

FOR TWEENS

The Vanderbeekers and the Hidden Garden

By Karina Yan Glaser

While Isa is off at sleepaway orchestra camp, Jessie, Oliver, Hyacinth, and Laney are stuck at home in the brownstone with nothing to do but get on one another's nerves. But when catastrophe strikes their beloved upstairs neighbour, their sleepy summer transforms in an instant as the Vanderbeeker children band together to do what they do best: make a plan. They will create the most magical healing garden in all of Harlem.

The Girl and the Witch's Garden

By Erin Bowman

Mallory Estate is the last place twelve-year-old Piper Peavey wants to spend her summer vacation. The grounds are always cold, the garden out back is dead, a mysterious group of children call the property home, and there's a rumor that Melena M. Mallory—the owner of the estate and Piper's wealthy grandmother—is a witch. But when Piper's father falls ill, Mallory Estate is exactly where she finds herself. The grand house and its garden hold many secrets—some of which may even save her father—and Piper will need to believe in herself, her new friends, and magic if she wants to unlock them before it's too late.

The Brave

By James Bird

Collin can't help himself—he has a unique condition that finds him counting every letter spoken to him. It's a quirk that makes him a prime target for bullies, and a continual frustration to the adults around him, including his father. When Collin asks to leave yet another school, his dad decides to send him to live in Minnesota with the mother he's never met. She is Ojibwe, and lives on a reservation. Collin arrives in Duluth with his loyal dog, Seven, and quickly finds his mom and his new home to be warm, welcoming, and accepting of his condition. Collin's quirk is matched by that of his neighbour, Orenda, a girl who lives mostly in her treehouse and believes she is turning into a butterfly. With Orenda's help, Collin works hard to overcome his challenges. His real test comes when he must step up for his new friend and trust his new family.

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Peacemaker

By Joseph Bruchac

Twelve-year-old Okwaho's life has suddenly changed. While out hunting with his best friend, his friend is kidnapped by marauders from a neighbouring tribe. Okwaho barely escapes back to his village where everyone lives in fear of raids and killings. The five tribes of the Iroquois have been at war with each other for far too long, and no one can even remember what it was like to live in peace. Okwaho seeks only revenge, which will just perpetuate the violence. But before he can retaliate, a visitor with a message of peace, as told in the lore of the Iroquois, comes to him in the woods. The Peacemaker—a vision in white buckskin with a calm demeanour and soothing words—tells the boy that he can convince even the most warlike leaders of the wisdom of peace. Okwaho joins the legions of others who believe and is present when the great treaty creating the Iroquois Confederacy is enacted.

FOR TEENS

Dan Versus Nature

By Don Calame

Shy and scrawny Dan Weekes spends his time creating graphic novels inspired by his dream girl and looking out for his mom as she dates every man in the state of California. Then his mom drops a bomb: she and her latest beau, Hank, are engaged, and she's sending her "two favourite men" on a survivalist camping trip to "bond." Determined to trick Hank into showing his true—flawed—colours on the trip, Dan and his best friend, Charlie, prepare a series of increasingly gross and embarrassing pranks. But the boys hadn't counted on a hot girl joining their trip or on getting separated from their wilderness guide—not to mention the humiliating injuries Dan suffers in the course of terrorizing his stepdad-to-be. With a man-hungry bear on their trail, no supplies, and a lot of unpleasant itching going on, can Dan see his plan through now that his very survival depends on Hank?

FOR TEENS

Starry Eyes

By Jenn Bennett

Ever since last year's homecoming dance, best friends-turned-best enemies Zorie and Lennon have made an art of avoiding each other. It doesn't hurt that their families are the modern day, Californian version of the Montagues and Capulets. But when a group camping trip goes south, Zorie and Lennon find themselves stranded in the wilderness. Alone. Together. What could go wrong? With no one but each other for company, Zorie and Lennon have no choice but to hash out their issues via witty jabs and insults as they try to make their way to safety. But fighting each other while also fighting off the forces of nature makes getting out of the woods in one piece less and less likely. And as the two travel deeper into Northern California's rugged backcountry, secrets and hidden feelings surface. But can Zorie and Lennon's rekindled connection survive out in the real world? Or was it just a result of the fresh forest air and the magic of the twinkling stars?

Powwow Summer

By Nahanni Shingoose

Part Ojibwe and part white, River lives with her white mother and stepfather on a farm in Ontario. Teased about her Indigenous heritage as a young girl, she feels like she doesn't belong and struggles with her identity. Now eighteen and just finished high school, River travels to Winnipeg to spend the summer with her Indigenous father and grandmother, where she sees firsthand what it means to be an "urban Indian." On her family's nearby reserve, she learns more than she expects about the lives of Indigenous people, including the presence of Indigenous gangs and the multi-generational effects of the residential school system. But River also discovers a deep respect for and connection with the land and her cultural traditions. The highlight of her summer is attending the annual powwow with her new friends. At the powwow after party, however, River drinks too much and posts photos online that anger people, and she has her right to identify as an Indigenous person called into question. Can River ever begin to resolve the complexities of her identity—Indigenous and not?

