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# **BEST BETS 2006**

## **Reading for Young Adults**

The OLA's Canadian Materials  
Committee picks this annual list.

Books are selected on the basis of  
their literary/artistic merit as well as  
their appeal for young adults.

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# FICTION

**Bell, William. *The Blue Helmet*. Doubleday Canada**

With his single-parent father working two jobs to support the family, Lee is drawn to the dangerous company of a neighbourhood gang. When his initiation almost results in a criminal charge, he's sent to live with his aunt in Toronto and help out in her café, a defacto drop-in centre for the quirky and lonely. As Lee develops an unlikely but endearing friendship with one eccentric customer, he begins to appreciate his new community. When past trauma shatters their world, Lee and his family find a way to put the pieces back together.

**Buffie, Margaret. *Out of Focus*. Kids Can Press**

Bernie, a budding photographer who delights in capturing her alcoholic mother's worst moments, takes charge relocating the family to a neglected lodge in the wilderness.

**Goobie, Beth. *Hello Goin*. Orca Book Publishers**

16-year-old Dylan's display in the school library sparks a censorship controversy. Even more distressing for her is the fact that she is more attracted to her best (female) friend Joc than her loyal boyfriend Cam. Despite her heartache, Dylan keeps her sense of humour intact while she explores new emotions and opportunities. Ultimately, she chooses to follow her heart and trust those she loves with the truth.

**Harvey-Fitzhenry, Alyxandra. *Waking*. Orca Book Publishers**

Ever since Beauty's mother died, she has tried to be invisible, living in a world of nightmarish dreams in order to avoid the questions and gossip that follow her everywhere. Then, an exhilarating new student arrives at school and begins to wake Beauty, bringing her back to life. But she is still haunted by the vision of a mysterious Shadow Lady who inhabits her dreams.

**Huser, Glen. *Skinnybones and the Wrinkle Queen*. Groundwood**

Tamara abandons her foster parents, running away with a cantankerous chain smoking nursing home escapee on a cross country trans border operatic road trip.

**Korman, Gordon. *Born to Rock*. Scholastic**

Once Harvard bound and unabashedly square, Leo suddenly finds himself black-marked at school, minus a scholarship and working as a roadie for a punk band.

**McNaughton, Janey. *Raintree Rebellion*. Harper Trophy Canada**

In this sequel to *The Secret Under My Skin*, 18-year-old Blake Raintree accompanies her aunt to the battered shell of Queen's Park, where a Justice Council is being formed to restore society after the Technocaust. Blake is both fascinated and challenged by the task facing the Council, and soon gets to know her colleagues, as well as vulnerable people in the community. When Blake has the opportunity to find out the identity of her father, she's forced to confront her darkest fears.

**Slade, Arthur. *Meggido's Shadow*. HarperCollins**

When Edward's older brother is killed in World War I, he lies about his age and enlists in the army. After proving himself as a horseman, Edward is sent with the British Cavalry to fight the Turks in the deserts of Palestine. There, Edward finds himself caught between his thirst to avenge his brother and his horror at the reality of battle.

**Stinson, Kathy. *101 Ways to Dance*. Second Story Press**

In this collection of short stories we find again and again the excitement, awkwardness, passion, discomfort, pleasure, and agony of first love and awakening sexuality.

**Toten, Teresa. *Me and the Blondes*. Penguin**

Sophia, or Sophie as she would prefer, is a Toronto teen with a secret past. Just beginning at a new school, she is determined to fit in despite her over-the-top mother and crazy aunts. This time she is going to get in with the "Blondes": the most popular, perfect girls at school. At this school, Sophie is going to be popular, or maybe not.

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The OLA's annual Best Bets evolved from a list put out by the Canadian Materials Committee of the Children's Services Guild. The OLA's Canadian Materials Committee selects books on the basis of their literary/artistic merit as well as their appeal for children and young adults.

## **OLA'S CANADIAN MATERIALS COMMITTEE**

We are a long standing committee with a strong voice in promoting Canadian children's and young adult literature. Our goal is to highlight excellence in children's and young adult literature for the OLA membership and others interested in this area.

Meetings are held a minimum of four times a year at National Book Service (25 Kodiak Crescent in North York). Members discuss and evaluate recent publications by Canadian authors and illustrators. From these discussions, the Committee produces "Best Bets", annual annotated lists of recommended titles. New this year is a young adult list. The list is released each year at the OLA Super Conference.

### **OLA's Canadian Materials Committee Members:**

Dinah Gough (Oshawa Public Library)  
Patrick Gracey (Toronto Public Library)  
Joanne Hawthorne (Toronto Public Library)  
Sandy Laird (Mississauga Public Library)  
Sheilah O'Connor (Toronto Public Library)  
Laura Reed (Kitchener Public Library)  
Cecily Reid (Richmond Hill Public Library)  
Jane Salmon (Barrie Public Library)  
Jennifer Stephen (Vaughan Public Library)  
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