

Métis Booklist



Books
for
all
ages!



The Métis Commission for Children and Families of B.C. has compiled the following selection of books about Métis people, their culture and their history as well as titles written by Métis authors. It is organized based on three school age groups: Primary, Middle and Secondary levels.

MCCF does not endorse any of these books so please be sure to review them prior to sharing them with your children and youth. We cannot assess whether or not the content is something you may or may not be comfortable with.

Check with your local library for copies or look online to purchase copies of your own!

For more information about sources of Métis history and culture please contact:

Métis Commission for Children and Families of B.C.

#1-166 Oriole Road

Kamloops, BC V2C 4N7

Phone: (250) 372-8688

www.metiscommission.com



Métis Book List (Fiction)

PRIMARY SCHOOL AGED

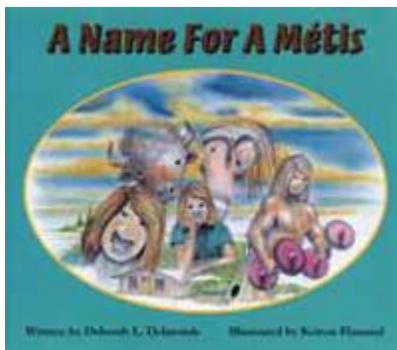
A MICHIF COLOURING BOOK FOR CHILDREN

By: The Métis Resource Centre Inc.

Illustrated by: Sheldon Dawson

Translated by: Rita Flamand

This colouring book presents true and positive images of the Metis people and their history. The text is presented in both English and Michif.



A NAME FOR A MÉTIS

By: Deborah L. Delaronde

What's in a name? A little boy might be known as Great Big Nose because he's so nosy, or Big Ears because he listens so carefully. Yet there's one name that might suit him even better!

ALFRED'S FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

By: Darrell Pelletier

“The Alfred Reading Series is an illustrated five book series for children in Michif, Plains Cree and French, with English subtitles. Through this set of storybooks, which focuses on Alfred and his sister Lisa, the reader will gain an appreciation of contemporary Aboriginal culture. The series includes: Alfred's First Day at School, Alfred's Summer, The Big Storm, The Pow Wow and Lisa and Sam.

AMIKOONSE (LITTLE BEAVER)

By: Ferguson Plain

Amikoonse must discover his identity, in order to achieve his destination in life. With help from ol' owl, Amikoonse takes a journey through the woods to find himself.

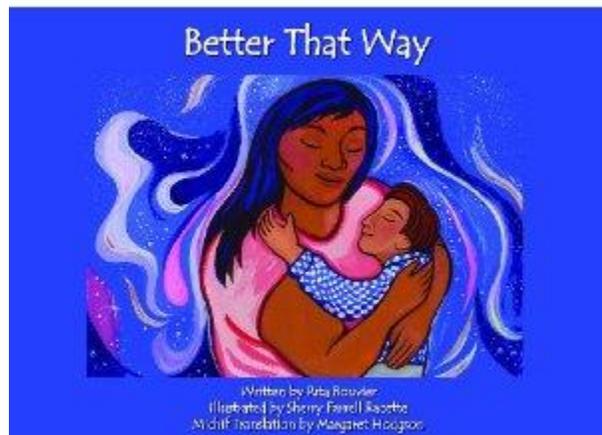
BETTER THAT WAY

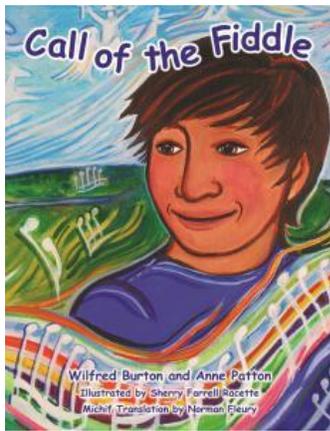
By: Rita Bouvier

Illustrated by: Sherry Farrell Racette

Translated by: Margaret Hodgson

Better That Way captures the essence of growing up. This wonderful poem is beautifully illustrated by Sherry Farrell Racette and translated in Île-à-la-Crosse or Northern Michif by Margaret Hodgson. A narration CD in English and Michif is included.





CALL OF THE FIDDLE

By: Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton

Illustrated by: Sherry Farrell Racette

Call of the Fiddle completes the trilogy of a young boy as he embraces his Métis heritage and carries on his family's traditions. Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton capture Batoche's history and significance with their words, while Sherry Farrell Racette brings the land and Métis culture to life with her vibrant illustrations. Join Nolin one last time as he hears the rollicking rhythm of the "Red River Jig," learns of tearful memories, and experiences the excitement of jigging at Batoche!

CHRISTOPHER'S FOLLY

By: Beatrice Mosionier

Illustrated by: Terry Gallagher

"The animals teach Christopher a lesson by generously offering their fur or meat for his use as clothing and food. But Christopher becomes greedy and the animals retreat to a place where Christopher is unable to find them..."

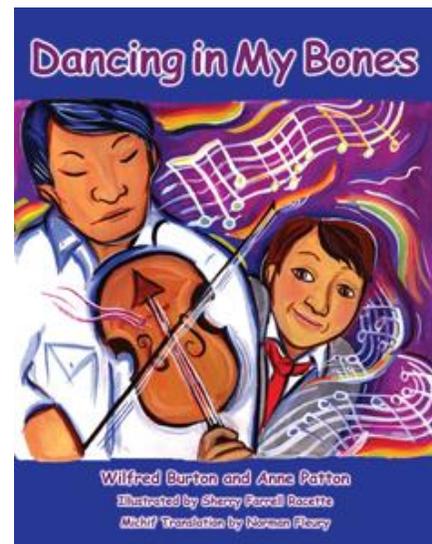
DANCING IN MY BONES

By: Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton

Illustrated by: Sherry Farrell Racette

Translated by: Norman Fleury

Dancing in My Bones, the sequel to the highly successful book Fiddle Dancer, returns us to the story of a young Métis boy named Nolin as he continues to discover his Métis heritage. Lovingly written by Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton and vividly illustrated by Sherry Farrell Racette, Dancing in My Bones will take you on a journey to discover Moushoom's first moose hunt, red lipstick kisses, Uncle Bunny's fiddling, and the return of the "Bannock Jig." But most importantly, by the end of the story, you might feel like you have dancing in your bones!

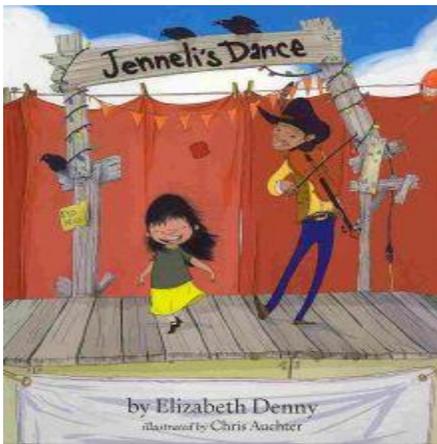


FIDDLE DANCER

By: Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton

Illustrated by: Sherry Farrell Racette

Fiddle Dancer tells the tale of a young Métis boy, Nolin, and his growing awareness of his Métis heritage and identity while his "Moushoom," or grandfather, teaches him to dance. This delightful story captures the importance of Elders as role models, a child's apprehension at learning new things, and the special bond between grandparents and grandchildren. Sherry Farrell Racette provides many beautiful illustrations for the book



JENNELI'S DANCE

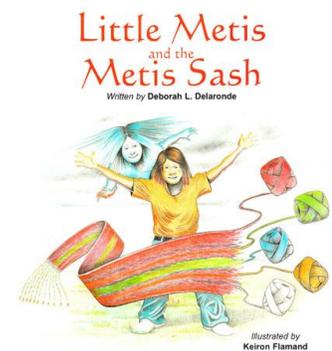
By: Elizabeth Denny and Chris Auchter

Jenneli is a shy young girl who feels that she is nothing special, until she learns about the Metis Red River jig from her Grandma Lucee. Jenneli loved to have fun with Grandma Lucee doing the RedRiver jig, until one day, Grandma Lucee entered Jenneli into the jigging contest at the Lakeside Fair. Jenneli was both horrified and excited, but with Grandma Lucee's encouragement, love and support, Jenneli placed herself doubts and fears aside to dance in the contest. Jenneli's Dance is a story that instills a sense of pride in the Metis culture, and deals with issues of overcoming low self-esteem.

LITTLE METIS AND THE METIS SASH

By: Deborah L. Delaronde

Little Metis is bored and only wishes to help his family with their daily chores in the bush. When a mischievous spirit tries to make trouble, Little Metis finds he helps them much more than he knows.



MY FAMILY

By: Penny Condon

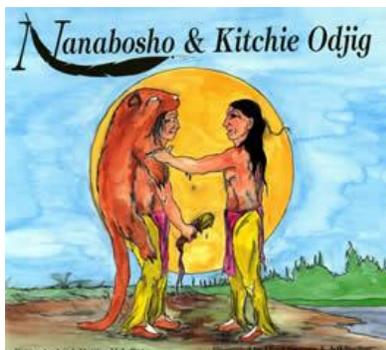
“Written and illustrated by Penny Condon, *My Family* tells the story of a Métis family gathering for a feast. Told from the perspective of a young Métis girl named Kona, *My Family* discusses about the roles of all the different family members while they prepare to have the feast. In the story, readers meet Kona's grandparents, parents, siblings, uncles, aunts and cousins as they each contribute to the family gathering.”

MY KOKUM CALLED TODAY

By: Iris Loewen

Illustrated by: Gloria Miller

A story about loving, caring and devotion between generations of women. The strength grandmothers create, sustaining strong ties between urban and rural Aboriginal families.



NANABOSHO AND KITCHIE ODJIG

By: Joseph and Matrine McLellan

Illustrated by: Jeff Burling

In the time of Nanabosho, what we now call the Big Dipper was known to the Anishinabe as the Great Fisher - Kitchie Odjig. In this legend, Nanabosho meets Kitchie Odjig and learns a valuable lesson about listening to his elders.

NANABOSHO AND THE WOODPECKER

By: Joseph McLellan

Illustrated by: Lloyd Swampy

One day while Nanabosho is out in the woods he sees the Woodpecker using his beak to get food out of a tree. Nanabosho decides to try and get food the same way, but discovers the hard way that it doesn't work for him.

NANABOSHO DANCES

By: Joseph McLellan

Illustrated by: Rhian Brynjolson

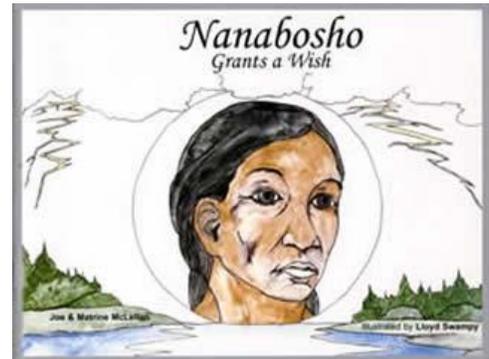
In this legend, Kitchi Manitou presents Nanabosho with a gift of tobacco to be used as an offering before using the other gifts which were put on this earth. Nanabosho, in his hurry to appease his hunger, promptly forgets the tobacco. But he does not forget the advice given by Kitchi Manitou. He lets his hunger gnaw at him while he tries to figure out what to do. The legend tells how the hoop dance started.

NANABOSHO GRANTS A WISH

By: Joseph and Matrine McLellan

Illustrated by: Lloyd Swampy

Nonie wished for snow at her birthday. Ni Mishomis told Nonie be careful what you wish for and then told the story of Nanabosho and granting a wish to four people and one became to greedy and didn't get what he wished for at all. After the story everyone looked outside to see a blizzard! What were they to do?

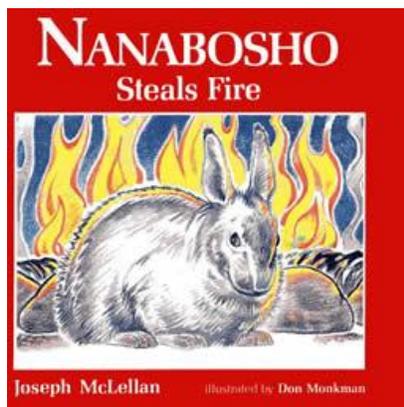


NANABOSHO HOW THE TURTLE GOT ITS SHELL

By: Joseph McLellan

Illustrated by: Rhian Brynjolson

Long ago when Turtle was just a little green creature, he had to hide from everyone because he had no shell. Then one day when Nanabosho wasn't having much luck fishing, Turtle helped out by telling Nanabosho where all the fish were. Nanabosho was so grateful that, as a reward, he fashioned a shell from a round stone to protect turtle from any harm.



NANABOSHO STEALS FIRE

By: Joseph McLellan

Illustrated by: Don Monkman

Long ago, by the shores of the great water to the east, lived an old man who kept the fire for himself. For fear that someone will steal his fire; he remained on constant watch inside his wigwam.

RELATIVES WITH ROOTS

Written and Illustrated by: Leah Dorion

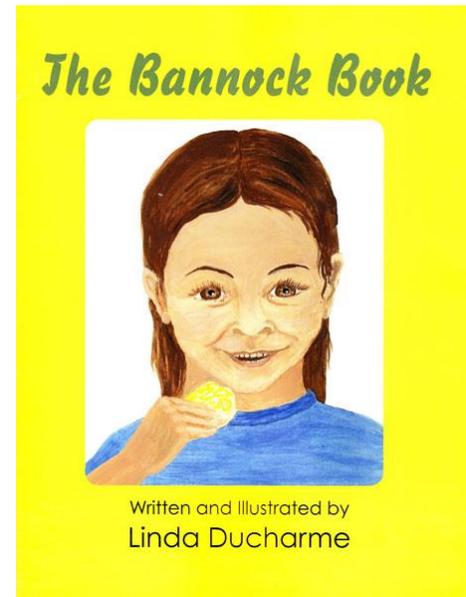
Translated by: Rita Flamand

Relatives With Roots: A Story About Métis Women's Connection to the Land is a heartfelt story about a Métis grandmother who takes her granddaughter out into the bush to teach her how to pick traditional medicines. As the granddaughter learns the traditional beliefs and stories about how the Métis people use the plants for food and medicine, she feels happy to be a Métis child with access to such wonderful cultural knowledge. This charming and vibrant book introduces young readers to key concepts in the traditional Métis worldview while focusing on the special relationship between a young Métis girl and her grandmother. *Relatives With Roots* is the second in a series of children's books relating to traditional Métis values by Leah Marie Dorion.

THE BANNOCK BOOK

Written and illustrated by: Linda Ducharme

A young Metis girl helps her mother bake bannock for grandfather, who has diabetes. This is a lively and warm hearted story that helps young readers understand diabetes and the importance of eating well.



THE BIRTH OF NANABOSHO

By: Joseph McLellan

Illustrated by: Jim Kirby

The traditional oral legend describing the birth of the Ojibwa trickster and protector. With a practiced storytelling technique, the author weaves the legend into the contemporary story he is also telling. In this story, two children visit their grandparents to hear legends and stories. But first they must help with the chores after supper, and having done that, the legend of how Nanabosho was born into this world begins.

THE DREAMCATCHER POOL

By: Jane Chartrand

Heyden helps his Grandmother build a dream catcher pool and learns about his culture. Includes Legend of the Dream Catcher (as related by an Algonquin elder).

THE GIVING TREE: A RETELLING OF A TRADITIONAL MÉTIS STORY

Written and Illustrated by: Leah Dorion

Translated by: Norman Fleury

This charming story richly steeped in Métis culture, focuses on the boyhood reminisces of Moushoom as he describes finding the “great giving tree” with his mother and father. This vibrantly illustrated children's book is a beautiful retelling of a traditional Métis story. Both Leah Dorion and the Gabriel Dumont Institute are very pleased to share this story with the Métis and larger communities since it emphasizes Métis core values and beliefs including strength, kindness, courage, tolerance, honesty,

respect, love, sharing, caring, balance, patience, and most of all, the important connection with the Creator and Mother Earth. This resource also includes a Métis values chart, and an accompanying narration CD in English and Michif.

THE STORY OF THE RABBIT DANCE

By: Jeanne Pelletier

Illustrated by: J. D. Panas

Translated by: Rita Flamand

In this charming story for young children, Métis trapper Jacques witnesses the creation of the “Rabbit Dance.” Written by Jeanne Pelletier, illustrated by J.D. Panas, and translated in Michif- Cree by Rita Flamand, this book also contains an accompanying narration CD in English and Michif-Cree.

LI SAENNCHUR FLESHII DI MICHIF (THOMAS AND THE METIS SASH)

By: Bonnie Murray

Illustrated by: Sheldon Dawson

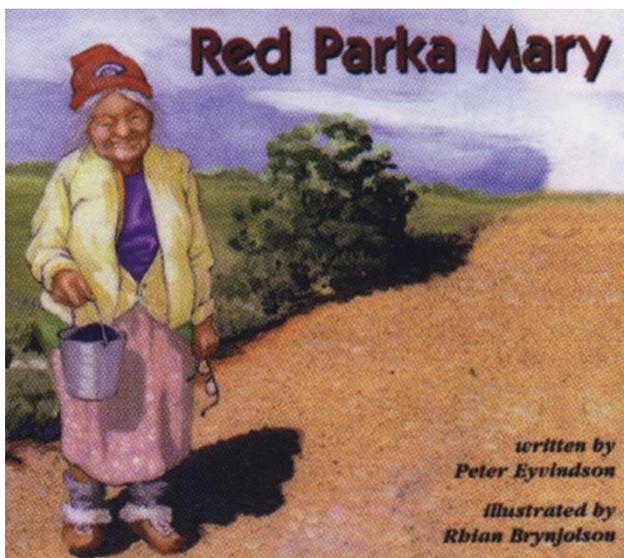
Translated by: Rita Flamand

This is the third book in the Michif Children's Series. A school art project unexpectedly teaches Thomas about his Metis culture. Written in English and Michif.

PEPERE PLAYED THE FIDDLE

By: Linda Ducharme

“We worked hard by daylight/’Til all the chores were done/Then everyone would gather/To have a lot of fun./Pepere played the fiddle/Memere danced the jig./Mon nook kept the rhythm/With spoons that weren’t too big.” Youngest readers and listeners are invited to this 1940s-era house party (which could take place today) of fiddling, spoon-playing, foot-tapping and dancing. In English with Michif words sprinkled throughout, Pepere Played the Fiddle is a celebration of Métis life and culture.”



RED PARKA MARY

By: Peter Eyvindson

Illustrated by: Rhian Brynjolson

Why is the little boy so afraid when he walks past his neighbour’s house? In this heartwarming story, the boy learns that a wise and wonderful new friend may be only a smile away.

THE FIDDLE DANCER = LI DAANSEUR DI VYAELOON

By: Wilfred Burton

Illustrated by: Sherry Burton

Translated by: Norman Fleury and Anne Patton

While spending time with his grandfather or "Moushoom", Nolin discovers his Métis heritage. 'Fiddle Dancer' weaves a childhood story rich in Métis culture and language. This delightful story captures the importance of Elders as role models, a child's apprehension at learning new things, and the special bond between grandparents and grandchildren."

THE MÉTIS ALPHABET BOOK

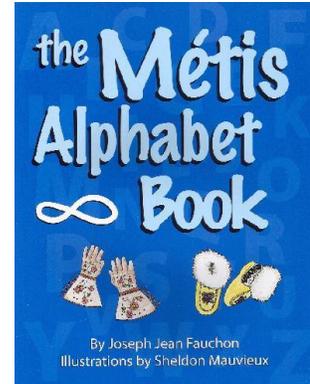
By: Joseph Jean Fauchon

Illustrated by: Sheldon Mauvieux

Translated by: Norman Fleury

The Métis Alphabet Book is a unique addition to the creative genre of children's alphabet books. Emerging Métis author Joseph Jean Fauchon highlights historical figures, significant events, places of interest and other aspects of Métis identity for young readers. Sheldon Mauvieux illustrated the book.

This book now features a Michif-Cree translation provided by Norman Fleury.



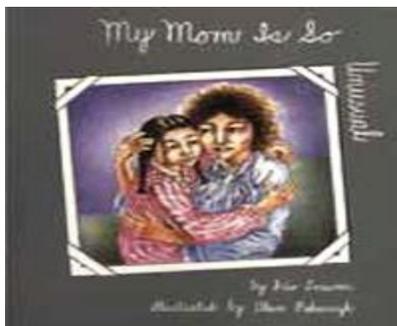
THE RED SASH

By: Jean E. Pendziwol

Illustrated by: Nicolas Debon

The Red Sash is the story of a young Metis boy who lives near the fur trading post of Fort William, on Lake Superior, nearly 200 years ago. His father spends the long winter months as a guide, leading voyageurs into the northwest to trade with native people for furs. Now it is Rendezvous, when the voyageurs paddle back to Fort William with their packs of furs, and North West Company canoes come from Montreal bringing supplies for the next season. With preparations underway for a feast in the Great Hall, the boy canoes to a nearby island to hunt hare. But once there, a storm begins to brew. The boy helps land the canoe, which has been torn by rocks and waves. Then he saves the day as he paddles the gentleman across to Fort William in his own canoe, earning the gift of a voyageur's red sash.

MIDDLE SCHOOL AGED



MY MOM IS SO UNUSUAL

By: Iris Loewen

Illustrated by: Alan Pakarnyk

"My mom and I live alone. That makes our family different from the families of my friends," explains a young girl telling of a family life in a single-parent home.

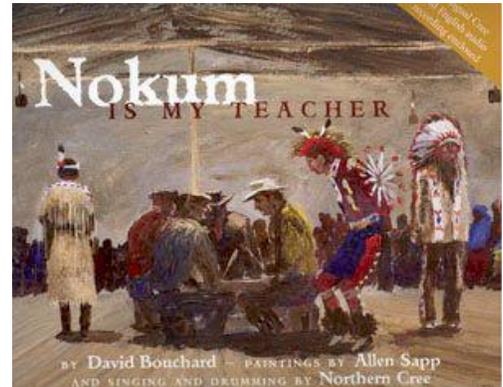
NOKUM IS MY TEACHER

By: Dave Bouchard

Illustrated by: Allen Sapp

Recorded by: Northern Cree Singers

"A young Aboriginal boy turns to his grandmother—his Nokum—to convey his disillusionment with the school system of the “white world,” where the answers are not found in the “the wispy, tender birch” or “on a snowy path in darkness on a starlit night.” Nokum patiently allows the boy to express his frustrations before she gently and humbly leads him toward recognition of the value of “white world” learning. With Nokum’s help, the boy sees how school learning need not be at odds with—but rather, augment—the knowledge he derives from his traditional Cree lifestyle." (CM) Accompanied by a bilingual Cree and English audio recording inserted into pocket of text.



SPIRIT OF THE WHITE BISON

By: Beatrice Mosionier

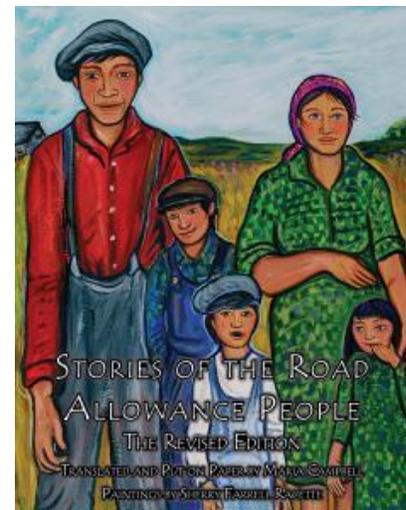
Illustrated by: Robert KaKayGeesick

“Reliving an era in Canadian history through the eyes of White Buffalo is a unique experience. When White Buffalo was born, bison herds roamed the Prairies untouched by human predators except for survival purposes. The arrival of Europeans with their rifles and the railway altered the pastoral life of the buffalo forever.”

STORIES OF THE ROAD ALLOWANCE PEOPLE

By: Maria Campbell

Maria Campbell’s highly-acclaimed *Stories of the Road Allowance People* is the quintessential collection of traditional Michif stories. Since it was first published in 1995, this treasured resource has given voice to Métis Elders and has informed both Métis and non-Métis about the traditional Michif worldview.



STORIES OF OUR PEOPLE: A MÉTIS GRAPHIC ANTHOLOGY

By: Norman Fleury, Gilbert Pelletier, Jeanne Pelletier, Joe Welsh, Norma Welsh, and Janice DePeel

Illustrated by: Carrie Saganace

Stories of Our People is a graphic novel anthology which includes the storytellers’ original transcripts, prose renditions of the transcripts, and five illustrated stories. This community-based book is steeped in the Michif-Cree language and culture. Métis stories seamlessly blend characters and motifs from Cree, Ojibway and French-Canadian traditions into an exciting, unique synthesis. Métis stories are an invaluable treasure because they tell familiar stories in interesting ways while preserving elements of storytelling that have become rare to the Métis’ ancestral cultures. Stories of Our People includes stories

about the three Métis tricksters (Wiisakaychak, Nanabush, and Chi-Jean), werewolves (Roogaroos), cannibal spirits (Whiitigos), flying skeletons (Paakuks), and the Devil (li Jiyaab).

WHERE THE RIVERS MEET

By: Don Sawyer

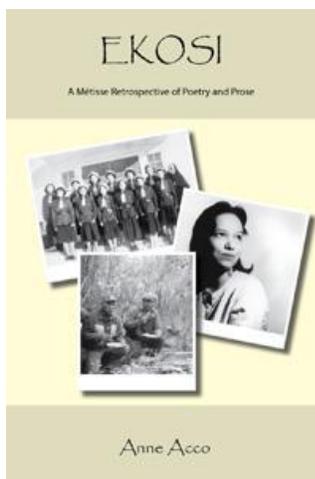
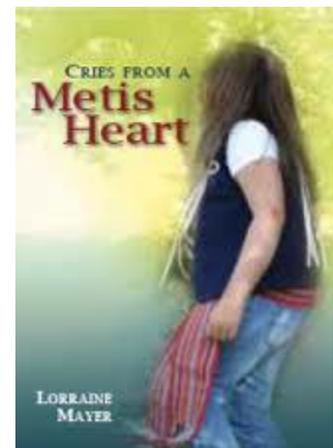
Where the Rivers Meet is Don Sawyer's first novel. He uses interior B.C. as the imaginary setting for a story that illustrates the conflict between reality on the reserve (poor housing, limited opportunity, individual apathy or anger) and community bafflement with the values of the world outside the reserve. Nancy's spirit quest for self-confidence and strength through struggle is the high point of the book, and this section is compelling and believable. The young girl timidly visits an elder, Cecile Schmidt, who teaches and guides her through a series of rituals that turn Nancy from an embittered teenager into a clear-eyed and far more mature young woman. The sweating process, the immersions, meditation, fasting, running and, most of all, the solitary communing with animals, birds and spirit forces in the forest create in Nancy a strength to find her rightful place in a world that is different from her grandparents', yet is essentially the same in that the individual must fit in and find the self-knowledge to cope with the pressures imposed by society.

SECONDARY SCHOOL AGED

CRIS FROM A MÉTIS HEART

By: Lorraine Mayer

Sometimes you have to draw upon your history to escape your past. In her hard-hitting debut, Lorraine Mayer uses poetry and prose to entwine two stories – one following her struggle to be recognized as a Métis woman, mother and academic, the other seeing that struggle in terms of the Métis people and their quest for recognition.



EKOSI: A MÉTISSÉ RETROSPECTIVE OF POETRY AND PROSE

By: Anne Acco

Anne Acco's *Ekosi* is a highly personal, self-reflective poetry and prose anthology. *Ekosi*, which means "that's all" or "the end" in Cree, is an aptly-named title for this collection since Anne shares with the reader a lifetime of memories from her childhood in Cumberland House, Saskatchewan to her days in a far-away boarding school to vacations in Trinidad, her husband's homeland. Grounded in the Cree/Métis community of Cumberland House, Anne pays homage to her family, her community, and her Métis culture, which has guided her throughout her life. Anne's evocative prose vignettes and poetry will leave readers with a keen appreciation for the reflective, spiritual, and eclectic mind of a well-travelled writer.

GOOD FOR NOTHING

By: Michel Noel, Michel and Shelley Tanaka

"The year is 1959, and 15-year-old Nipishish is kicked out of residential school, told by the principal that he's a good-for-nothing who, like all Indians, can look forward to a life of drunkenness, prison, and despair. Nipishish returns to the Métis reserve in northern Quebec where he was born, but feels even more isolated..."

HALFBREED

By: Maria Campbell

Maria was a strong and sensitive child who lived in a community robbed of its pride and dignity by the dominant culture. At 15 she tried in vain to escape by marrying a white man, only to find herself trapped in the slums of Vancouver--addicted to drugs, tempted by suicide, close to death. But the inspiration of her Cree great-grandmother, Cheechum, gives her confidence in herself and in her people, confidence she needs to survive and to thrive.

Half-Breed offers an unparalleled understanding of the Métis people and of the racism and hatred they face. Maria Campbell's story cannot be denied and it cannot be forgotten: it stands as a challenge to all Canadians who believe in human rights and human dignity

IN SEARCH OF APRIL RAIN TREE

By: Beatrice Mosionier

Two young sisters are taken from their home and family. Powerless to change their fortunes, they are separated, and each put into different foster homes. Yet over the years, the bond between them grows. As they each make their way in a society that is, at times, indifferent, hostile, and violent, one embraces her Métis identity, while the other tries to leave it behind. In the end, out of tragedy, comes an unexpected legacy of triumph and reclamation.

MERE OBSERVATIONS

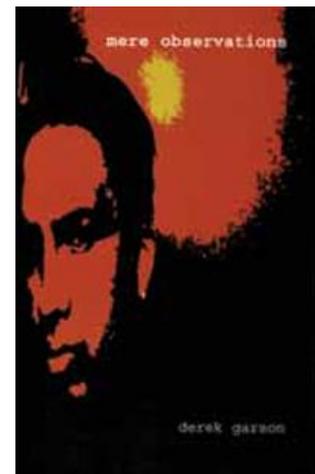
By: Derek Garson

A young urban Métis explores poetry in a fresh and gripping form, from lyric poetry to narrative scenes.

METIS SPIRITS

By: Deborah L. Delaronde

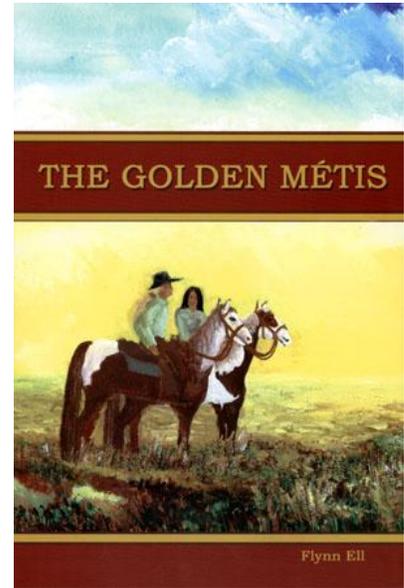
Do you believe in ghosts? In *Metis Spirits*, Deborah Delaronde shows once again how the history of the Metis winds through the experiences of today. Her first collection of short stories for young readers weaves magic through time to show how we all can be guided by the spirits of our past.



THE GOLDEN METIS

By: Ell Flynn

In 1883, a Metis man travels the Dakotas as a skilled horseman and buffalo hunter. At a time when ‘mixed bloods’ are viewed with suspicion, he passes as a white man – but not every time. This action/adventure story is also a reflection of a changing way of life for the Metis people.



STORIES OF THE ROAD ALLOWANCE PEOPLE

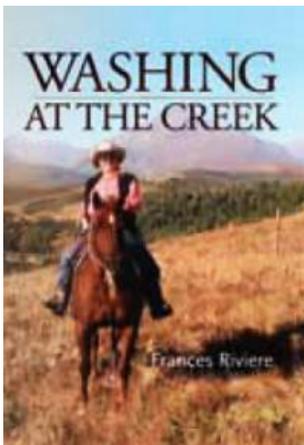
By: Maria Campbell

Maria Campbell’s highly-acclaimed *Stories of the Road Allowance People* is the quintessential collection of traditional Michif stories. Since it was first published in 1995, this treasured resource has given voice to Métis Elders and has informed both Métis and non-Métis about the traditional Michif worldview.

THE METIS PRINCESS

By: Annette St. Pierre

Romance and suspense are in store for Martha, a young Métis woman who learns that being accepted doesn’t have to mean abandoning her identity.



WASHING AT THE CREEK

By: Frances Riviere

Frances Riviere was born during the Depression and raised in rural Alberta, the daughter to a stoic mother and an itinerant Métis father. As a memoir of her early years, *Washing at the Creek* is both a clear-eyed document of a hardscrabble life in the ’30s and ’40s and a deep exploration of family tensions, great challenges and growing strength.

WHITE EAGLE SPEAKS– REFLECTION OF LIVES AND PASSING THOUGHTS

By: Leonard Carriere

The late Leonard Carriere’s poetry celebrates Métis culture and one man’s enlightening travels.