WINDOWS AND MIRRORS
Celebrating a diverse world through children's books

GROUNDWOOD BOOKS
We are committed to publishing books for and about children whose experiences of the world are under-represented elsewhere.
Dear Readers,

We are very happy to share with you this sampling from some of our most beautiful and engrossing books — books from around the world, books that take the whole world as their subject. We have borrowed the title for our catalogue from the often-quoted statement that books give children a mirror in which to see themselves reflected, as well as a window through which they can see the wider world. And as our cover art by Mandana Sadat so wonderfully shows, a book can also be a door that children walk through, a door that leads from loneliness to companionship.

You can find out more about the books highlighted in these pages — the awards they have won, the accolades they have received, and of course the generous and talented people who created them — by visiting diversity.groundwoodbooks.com. And do keep in mind that the titles in this catalogue represent just a fraction of our diverse and inspiring list. I do hope you will visit the website to find out more. In other words, our door is open, and we hope you will walk through it.

With thanks,

Sheila Barry, Publisher
Groundwood Books
E: sbarry@groundwoodbooks.com
From there I joined a caravan traveling to India, where it was much warmer. I was introduced to the sultan of Delhi, whom I entertained with my endless stories and knowledge. He asked me to stay and become the judge in his palace. After ten years, he made me the ambassador of India in China.
THE AMAZING DISCOVERIES OF IBN SINA
THE AMAZING TRAVELS OF IBN BATTUTA

Ages 7 to 11

Written by Fatima Sharafeddine
Illustrated by Intelaq Mohammed Ali

The extraordinary lives of two Persian pioneers are told in these beautifully illustrated biographies: Ibn Sina, born more than a thousand years ago and one of the greatest thinkers of his time; and Ibn Battuta who, in 1325, embarked on a pilgrimage to Mecca that would last thirty years and take him through most of the Islamic world.
BLACK FLAME
Written by Gerelchimeg Blackcrane
Translated by Anna Holmwood

Ages 13 and up

Award-winning author Gerelchimeg Blackcrane has written a compelling novel, set in Tibet, Mongolia and China, about the adventures of a fiercely powerful yet lovable Tibetan mastiff that is sure to join the ranks of other much-read classic dog stories.

Without a sound, Mother Mastiff flew forward. Once again the snow leopard made an unexpected move. Instead of relying on its quick reactions to dodge her, it chose to meet her attack. And just as the mastiff sank her teeth into the leopard’s shoulder — with its scent of snowy mountain peaks — the leopard’s paw lodged itself into her back like a steel hook.
BRAVO, CHICO CANTA! BRAVO!
Written by Pat Mora & Libby Martinez
Illustrated by Amelia Lau Carling

Ages 4 to 7

In this sweetly funny picture book, a tiny mouse, Chico Canta, saves his entire family from the clever kitten, Little Gato-Gato, when he uses his quick wits and ability to speak another language. Bravo, Chico Canta! Bravo! is also available in Spanish.
The first book in Deborah Ellis’s riveting Breadwinner series is an award-winning novel about loyalty, survival, families and friendship under extraordinary circumstances during the Taliban’s rule in Afghanistan.

Parvana felt the shadow before she saw it, as the man moved between her and the sun. Turning her head, she saw the dark turban that was the uniform of the Taliban. A rifle was slung across his chest as casually as her father’s shoulder bag had been slung across hers. . . .

The Talib kept looking down at her. Then he put his hand inside his vest. Keeping his eyes on Parvana, he drew something out of his vest pocket.

Parvana was about to squish her eyes shut and wait to be shot when she saw that the Talib had taken out a letter.

He sat down beside her on the blanket.

“Read this,” he said.
Bright Sky, Starry City
Written by Uma Krishnaswami
Illustrated by Aimée Sicuro

Ages 6 to 9

Phoebe helps her dad set up telescopes on the sidewalk outside his store. It’s a special night — Saturn and Mars are going to appear together in the sky. But will Phoebe be able to see them with all the city lights?
She closed her eyes and wished for all the bright lights to disappear. All those blinking, flashing, glowing lights that sent pale fingers up into the sky. She longed for the city lights to go OUT! Just for a while. Just to give the night sky a chance.
“We will rest a while before we go on ...” he said softly. “There is no need to hurry.”
THE CAMEL IN THE SUN
Written by Griffin Ondaatje
Illustrated by Linda Wolfsgruber

Ages 4 to 7

Inspired by a retelling of a traditional Muslim hadith, or account of the words or actions of the Prophet, which the author first heard in Sri Lanka, this is the story of a camel whose cruel owner only realizes what suffering he has caused when the Prophet appears and shows love to the animal.
THE CAT
AT THE WALL

DEBORAH ELLIS
A cat sneaks into a small Palestinian house on the West Bank that has just been commandeered by two Israeli soldiers. The house seems empty, until the cat realizes that a little boy is hiding beneath the floorboards.

I’ve learned that grooming my fur is as soothing as brushing my hair used to be when I was a girl. I used to love brushing it and looking at the shine of it in the bathroom mirror, no matter how often it made my mom late for work. I don’t think that’s vanity, to admire something beautiful, even if that beautiful thing was me.

I had a good scratch. Then I settled down for a nap. I was feeling so good I almost decided to purr.

Then my nose told me something I hadn’t paid attention to before. There were three humans in the little house. Two of them were soldiers. The third was a boy. And he was hiding.
THE COMPOSITION
Written by Antonio Skármeta
Illustrated by Alfonso Ruano
Translated by Elisa Amado

Ages 5 to 8

Life is simple for Pedro — he goes to school, does his homework and, most importantly, plays soccer. But when the soldiers come and take his friend Daniel’s father away, things suddenly become much more complicated. The Composition presents a situation all too familiar to children around the world and provides food for thought about freedom, moral choices and personal responsibility.

“Will they take you to jail, too?” Pedro asked.
“No,” said his father.
“How do you know?” said Pedro.
“Because you bring me luck,” smiled his father.
Pedro leaned against the door frame, pleased that he wasn’t being sent off to bed as usual. He paid attention to the radio, trying to understand it. When the radio said, “the military dictatorship,” Pedro felt as if all the pieces that had been floating around loose in his head were coming together like a jigsaw puzzle.
GHOST TRAIN
Written by Paul Yee
Illustrated by Harvey Chan

Ages 6 to 10

The story of a young girl who arrives in North America only to discover that her father has died building the railway. This multi-award-winning tale is based on the lives of the Chinese who settled on the west coast of North America in the early 1900s.
Baba Wagué is only four years old when he is sent to the tiny Malian village of Kassar, West Africa, to be raised by his paternal grandparents. Under his grandmother’s patient and wise tutelage, he comes to love his close-knit village community, as he listens to his grandmother’s stories, learns about his own history and traditions, and experiences many hilarious and sobering adventures along the way.
GOOD NIGHT, COMMANDER
Written by Ahmad Akbarpour
Illustrated by Morteza Zahedi / Translated by Shadi Eskandani and Helen Mixter

Ages 7 to 10

This extraordinary little book gives us a glimpse into the world of a young boy who has lost his mother and one of his legs in the Iran-Iraq war.

My heart beats really fast. It’s my fault. I let him take charge. But I say, “If you don’t drop your gun, I’ll shoot.”

He stops crying. “If you don’t drop your gun, I’ll shoot,” he says and begins to count.

I stare at him and take aim as I count one, two...

But then I see that one of his legs is missing. He’s kind of shaking but he’s holding himself up on his crutch, and his gun is still pointing right at me.

“Are you missing a leg, too?” I ask.

He’s mad. “Don’t make fun of me. I’ll show you,” he says as his finger moves up to the trigger.

I say, “Look, look.”

I drop my gun and roll up my pant leg. I open the large clasps, then the small clasps, undo the strap and take off my leg.
I dreamt that **wars** are always **FOUGHT with flowers**...
I DREAMT …
A BOOK ABOUT HOPE
Written by Gabriela Olmos
Illustrated by 12 Mexican Artists
Translated by Elisa Amado

Ages 9 and up

Children whose daily lives are afflicted by violence dream of a different world in this powerful book created by Mexican artists. Royalties from sales will be donated to IBBY’s Fund for Children in Crisis, which supports bibliotherapy projects that use books and reading to help children who have lived through wars, civil conflicts and natural disasters to think and talk about their experiences.
I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE A CHILD
Written by Alain Serres
Illustrated by Aurélia Fronty
Translated by Helen Mixter

Ages 4 to 7

With a very simple text, accompanied by rich, vibrant illustrations, a young narrator describes what it means to be a child with rights — from the right to food, water and shelter, to the right to go to school, to be free from violence, to breathe clean air, and more. The book emphasizes that these rights belong to every child on the planet, whether they are “black or white, small or big, rich or poor, born here or somewhere else.”
I have the right to go to school without having to pay, so that I can learn how birds or planes or poppy seeds fly.
I SEE THE PROMISED LAND:
A LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
Written by Arthur Flowers
Illustrated by Manu Chitrakar
Ages 12 and up
African American writer, griot and blues singer Arthur Flowers and Indian scroll painter Manu Chitrakar combine their very distinctive storytelling traditions in an extraordinary jam session, creating this stunning graphic narrative-style biography of Martin Luther King Jr.
Ages 4 to 7

Jimmy lives in a small town by the sea where there is just one tiny gym. The owner of the gym suggests that Jimmy start training, and to inspire him, he gives Jimmy a box full of books as well as newspaper clippings about Muhammad Ali — “The Greatest.” Jimmy is swept with admiration for Ali, and he begins to read and run and box like crazy. And as he does so, he makes a great discovery: you don’t have to leave home to be “the greatest.”
For Poni, life in her small village in southern Sudan is simple and complicated at the same time. Stay in school. Beat up any boy who tries to show attention. Watch out for the dangers in the river. But then the war comes. And when soldiers arrive in her village, and bombs begin to rain from the sky, there is only one thing for Poni to do. Run.

Then, without warning, I am awake. I run out of the hut with my hands over my head as if they can somehow shield me from whatever it is falling down upon me. When I look up, the first thing I notice is the moon, fat as a cow’s belly, but what I see next are the planes and the bombs that are falling out of them. So many bombs. It is as though they are coming from everywhere at once, as though the sky is raining down black eggs.
It’s carnival time. The first carnival since Malaika’s mother moved to Canada to find a good job and provide for Malaika and her grandmother. Her mother promised she would send money for a costume, but when the money doesn’t arrive, Malaika has to look elsewhere. A heartwarming story about family, community and the celebration of carnival.
What would it be like to stay in one place — to have your own bed, to ride your own bicycle? Anna wonders.
Now that would be something.
Each spring Anna leaves her home in Mexico and travels north with her family where they will work on farms. Sometimes she feels like a bird, flying north in the spring and south in the fall. Sometimes she feels like a jack rabbit living in an abandoned burrow, as her family moves into an empty house near the fields. But most of all she wonders what it would be like to stay in one place.
SALSA: UN POEMA PARA COCINAR / A COOKING POEM
Written by Jorge Argueta
Illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh
Translated by Elisa Amado

Ages 4 to 7

In this addition to the bilingual cooking poem series, Jorge Argueta brings us a fun and easy recipe for a yummy salsa. A young boy and his sister gather the ingredients and grind them up in a molcajete, just like their ancestors used to do, singing and dancing all the while.
Richly hued illustrations complement these gently moving and poetic accounts of two children’s experiences at residential school and the great loss that they face — a loss that native people have endured for generations because of the legacy of residential schools.
With yellow cedar paddles, they strolled across smooth water.

Reach, dip, pull back…
Reach, dip, pull back…

The only sounds they heard were the whistling birds and their paddles breaking the surface of the lake, surrounding them with ripples.

Circle on… circle on… circle…

Her father sang the paddle song that her grandfather used to sing. His voice traveled across the water, a chant that kept their pace.
Now that Sugriva was king, he ordered Hanuman to leap across the ocean and search for Sita in Lanka.

Rama gave Hanuman his signet ring to give to me, if he found me in Lanka.

And so Hanuman took a deep breath ...
The *Ramayana* — one of the great legends of ancient India — is presented here in the form of a visually stunning and gripping graphic novel. The *Ramayana* was first written in Sanskrit by the poet Valmiki around 300 BC. It contains important Hindu teachings and has had great influence on Indian life and culture over the centuries.
Did Julie like her present?

Sure.

Why are you eating cookies? Didn't you just have cake?

Have an apple. There are apples in the fridge.

I'm still hungry.

Okay. I'm just going to sit outside.

And do what?

I told my mom the party ended early.

On Monday, Julie left a note on my desk thanking me for the UZ tape I got her.

Hien moved to Sudbury the next year.
SKIM
Created by Mariko Tamaki & Jillian Tamaki
Ages 14 and up

Skim is Kimberly Keiko Cameron, a not-slim, would-be Wiccan goth stuck in a private girls’ school. When a classmate’s boyfriend kills himself because he was rumored to be gay, the school goes into mourning overdrive, each clique trying to find something to hold on to and something to believe in. Depression, love, sexual identity, crushes, manipulative peers — teen life in all its dramatic complexities is explored in this touching, pitch-perfect, literary graphic masterpiece.
SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A FOX
Written and illustrated by Danielle Daniel

Ages 4 to 7

In this introduction to the Anishinaabe tradition of totem animals, young children explain why they identify with different creatures such as a deer, beaver or moose. In a brief author’s note, Danielle Daniel explains the importance of totem animals in Anishinaabe culture and how they can also act as animal guides for young children seeking to understand themselves and others.
Sometimes I feel like a bear, strong and confident.
I stand tall and growl and protect those around me.

Sometimes I feel like a deer, sensitive and kind.
I listen to the sounds in the distance and prance throughout the forest.

Sometimes I feel like a porcupine, innocent and curious.
I have a big imagination and know how to protect myself.
Chuck threw the ball, and it soared through the air. It spiraled down the field, floating, spinning. Everyone waited. Everyone watched as the ball dropped right into the hands of Chuck’s teammate as he stepped into the end zone.

Chuck smiled and raised his arms. Touchdown. Victory.
THE STONE THROWER
Written by Jael Ealey Richardson
Illustrated by Matt James

Ages 5 to 9

Chuck Ealey grew up in a segregated neighborhood of Portsmouth, Ohio. Against all odds, he became an incredible quarterback. But despite his unbeaten record in high school and university, he would never play professional football in the United States.
Prompted by the sometimes illogical and perplexing actions of folktale characters, master storyteller Rui Umezawa revisits eight popular Japanese folktales, delving beneath their sometimes baffling plot lines to highlight the psychological motivations behind the characters’ actions.

As if she can feel his stare, she turns to him.

Tamiya sees a face that does not belong to Ume. Scars slide across delicate features and dead skin. A black tongue hangs limply from her mouth.

“We will be together now always,” Oiwa says hoarsely, and she smiles horribly.
Tokyo went into his backyard where nothing was growing. Not even a weed.

He looked at the ground and wondered where to plant the seeds. A little bug crawled slowly across the bricks before disappearing into a crack.

Tokyo had an idea. He lifted a brick, and underneath was cool, sandy soil. He made three holes with his finger, dropped one seed into each, and quietly made his wish. Then Tokyo covered the seeds with dirt.
Tokyo lives in a small house between giant buildings with his family and his cat, Kevin. For years, highways and skyscrapers have been built up around the family’s house where once there were hills and trees. Will they ever experience the natural world again?
TWO WHITE RABBITS
Written by Jairo Buitrago
Illustrated by Rafael Yockteng / Translated by Elisa Amado
Ages 4 to 7

In this moving and timely story, a young child describes what it is like to be a migrant as she and her father travel north toward the US border.

“Where are we going?”
I ask sometimes, but no one answers.
In Nova Scotia, in 1946, an usher in a movie theater told Viola Desmond to move from her main-floor seat up to the balcony. She refused to budge. Like Rosa Parks, who many years later, in 1955, refused to give up her bus seat in Alabama, Desmond’s act of refusal awakened people to the unacceptable nature of racism and began the process of bringing an end to racial segregation in Canada.

Her ticket in hand, Viola found the perfect seat, right down close where she could see real good. But then she felt a tap on her shoulder. She looked up into the face of the usher.

“You have a cheap upstairs ticket,” she said. “You have to go up to the balcony.”

“Well,” said Viola, “that cashier must have made a mistake. I’ll just go on and buy me a main floor ticket then.”
And if Beto and Antonieta, who own a cute parrot that they couldn’t bear to leave at home, come too, because Jack mentioned it to them, then for sure their mother, Juana, might send along a pineapple, some mangos and a passion fruit.
If it is just a few days until your birthday, and your mother says you can invite anyone you like to come over to play, be careful! If you don’t watch out, you might soon be having the craziest party ever, with people and food from around the world.
In 1770, the slave Esperança Garcia bravely penned a letter to the governor of Piauí state, in Brazil, describing how she and her children were being mistreated and requesting permission to return to the farm where the rest of her family was living. Although she never received an answer, she is remembered today for being the courageous slave who wrote the first letter of appeal in Afro-Brazilian Brazil.
I can't lie. The priests did not treat my family so badly. I learned a lot from them — most important, how to read and write. I became an educated slave.

I was lucky. Where I am now, very few women know how to read. It's even worse for women slaves — most can't even recognize their own names.
It is the early 1990s in Moscow, and political change is in the air. But Dasha is more worried about her own challenges as she negotiates family, friendships and school without her mother. Just as she begins to find her own feet, she gets word that she is to join her mother in America — a place that seems impossibly far from everything and everyone she loves.
My name is Dasha. I am twelve years old.
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Illustrated by Intelaq Mohammed Ali
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