

Ancient Story – Fresh Voice

By Linda Jones

As we begin to examine some of the new influences of Native American Literature, we can look at the spheres where all these authors seem to meet, as though to begin their collective journeys. Settler colonialism affected every facet of life for Native peoples. While we witness both loss and pain in many stories and narratives, we also perceive agency, resiliency, and the enduring connectivity of life. Each word, each story, each book is in itself an action of self-determination. The purpose of this annotated bibliography of modern Native authors is to focus on this story. It is our belief that the novels this bibliography highlights are a life affirming accomplishment for Native people to deliver their own message.

Indian Education for All is a part of our mandated education system. Our goal is to educate all children and in accomplishing this, we are endeavoring to use skilled Native storytellers. We are only searchers – our goal is to compile the clearest speakers that they may reach a generation coming of age.

No Name by Tim Tingle

Synopsis of Novel	Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, Age/Level Appropriate	Connections to other Literature/Novels/Non-Fiction etc./Resources to be Utilized
<p>Bobby Byington is living outdoors in a hole he dug in the backyard. His mother left several weeks ago and both of them are running from the anger and alcoholism of Bobby's father. It is from this hole in the ground that Bobby learns Choctaw wisdom about a warrior called No Name, from Mr. Robinson, a friend of his father.</p> <p>His love of basketball has also given him a Cherokee friend who dispenses wisdom on the court. When a group of white boys challenges the two boys, Johnny's cool head prevails. They make new friends instead of allowing race to decide who they are as players and as people.</p> <p>Through Bobby's actions, his father begins to realize that he is to blame for the ruin of his family. He comes to the recognition that he is the one who has to change, if he wishes to see his family reunite, and change he does.</p>	<p>Tim Tingle is an Oklahoma Choctaw writer and storyteller. His books deal with truth, no matter how unpleasant, but also are infused with the hope that the human spirit, no matter what color the skin, can overcome and live in unity.</p> <p>IEFA Essential Understandings 3 is a valuable key in understanding how Tingle helps his character to grow to forgive his father. The insight given to him through the Choctaw legend of No Name and Whispering Wind facilitates this reconciliation.</p> <p>In <i>No Name</i>, the reading level specifically allows students to access the material. <i>No Name</i> is appropriate for grades 5-7 to read individually or as a read-aloud by instructor in the 4th grade.</p>	<p>Tingle is a prolific writer and this novel is the first in a trilogy, <i>No More No Name</i>, and <i>A Name Earned</i> follow Bobby through further struggles. Other of Tim Tingle's books that are particular interest are those that deal with the Choctaw Trail of Tears, which Tim's grandfather walked. <i>How I Became A Ghost</i>, <i>When a Ghost Talks</i>, <i>Listen</i> and <i>Walking the Choctaw Road</i> are all excellent resources to be utilized in the middle grades.</p> <p><i>No Name</i> can be used to assist the instructor in discussion about bullying, racism and dealing with an abusive home situation.</p> <p><i>StopBullying.gov</i> is an excellent source of information.</p>
Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units	Literary Elements that Instructor will Teach or Review	Overall Recommendation
<p>Health and English Language Arts can be involved in the issues that this book addresses. The themes throughout the novel lend themselves to interdisciplinary reading and writing.</p> <p>Bullying, its causes and interventions, both in the classroom and online, would be a timely topic for the students to tackle.</p> <p>Living in a dysfunctional family is also an issue that needs to be addressed and if done so in a classroom setting can be informational, for students not dealing with this scenario, as well as non-threatening to students who are forced to live with this every day.</p> <p>The PathFinder novels are high interest books written by Native authors that feature Native teens. Many of them can be paired with this book to compare issues that teens face and how to cope with them.</p>	<p>Tim Tingle creates resilient characters in both Bobby and Johnny in this novel. Characterization is a critical literary element that needs to be taught or reviewed to help the student understand the entire story.</p> <p>The study of conflict, especially character versus character or external conflict is prevalent throughout the story. It is this source of conflict that makes Bobby the person that we come to know throughout the novel.</p>	<p>I absolutely love the attitude portrayed in Tim Tingle's writing. He is not afraid to look history or racism in the face and still infuse his characters and story with a sense of hope and purpose in the darkest hours.</p> <p>I am so impressed that in our present climate of disrespect and hatred that any writer can give a glimpse into what could be, if we allowed it. Tim Tingle does just this. I wholly recommend this book to all middle grades students.</p>

Who Will Tell My Brother by Marlene Carvell

<p style="text-align: center;">Synopsis of Novel</p> <p>In her story, <i>Who Will Tell My Brother</i>, Carvell's protagonist, Evan takes up the battle with the school board, as well as fellow students, that his brother began when he was a high school student. Evan identifies with American Indian heritage and culture and he can't let the schools demeaning mascot remain without a fight. This fight will force people to take sides in a decades old debate concerning offensive Indian mascots. As the violence escalates, Evan is bullied, harassed and threatened. The mixed-race teen is confronted by his own feelings about his culture and his identity and true meaning of 'community'.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, Age/Level Appropriate</p> <p>Marlene Carvell's first novel is the result of her own son's personal experience to rid the school of the use of racially denigrating Indian mascots. She is also the author of <i>Sweetgrass Basket</i>. IEFA Essential Understanding 2 - Carvell's focus on the fact that the diversity of Native peoples must be preserved and that the use of stereotypical or pan-Indian names is in direct opposition to Essential Understanding 2.</p> <p>This book is easily read by 6-8 grade but the subject matter is deep and must be handled intelligently by the instructor.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Connections to other Literature/Novels/Non-Fiction etc./Resources to be Utilized</p> <p>An informed instructor can utilize many resources. Joseph Bruchac's <i>The Heart of a Chief</i> deals with this topic. Students may also research the debate in the media over this ongoing dispute. This would be a perfect place for research into not only mascot names but also ways by which different tribes choose to be shown respect, and why that is critical for the day in which we live. https://www.uslacrosse.org/blog/us-lacrosse-position-statement-on-native-american-mascots The American Psychological Association has a resolution on mascots. A pdf of the document accompanies this bibliography.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units</p> <p>Social Studies and ELA are natural connections for this topic. Where did the practice of using place and people for team building originate?</p> <p>Are there legal issues that can be explored? Any cases brought against sports teams or school entities?</p> <p>In addition – since bullying behavior is a key element in this novel, both disciplines may choose to examine mascots through this lens. This would allow students to see from the point of view of the one of the victims of this marginalizing of Native peoples.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Literary Elements that Instructor will Teach or Review</p> <p>Carvell does a masterful job of using poetic format to tell Evan's story. This would be a great opportunity to look at the different ways that poetry can be used in storytelling. A general study of poetic forms would be in order, as well.</p> <p>Evan is a struggling character and we as the reader are allowed to grow with him. As such, characterization is a key literary element as well as conflict, both internal and external.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Overall Recommendation</p> <p><i>Who Will tell My Brother?</i> is a beautifully crafted story set in poetic structure. However, the message compressed in the pages is a powerful one. The issue of respect for Native peoples and their culture is foremost in this novel. The practice of using names and titles of American Indians as school or team mascots is addressed in a sensitive manner. Marlene Carvell forces the reader to look at the ongoing battle that Native tribes still face today.</p>

Apple in the Middle by Dawn Quigley

<p style="text-align: center;">Synopsis of Novel</p> <p>Apple, a young mixed-blood Native girl, came into the world 11 minutes before her mother died. Her white father filled with grief, buried himself in a bottle until he met and married her stepmother Judy. The summer that dad and Judy decide to go on a belated honeymoon, they leave Apple with her Turtle Mountain relatives. These are people that she has never met but that can give her what she has longed for, an insight into her mother and her Native heritage. Apple is confused but wants to belong, to be in a place that she can call home. She has never really belonged anywhere and has always felt that no one really understands her. The summer that she spends with her mother's kin, she finds this and more in her Native family.</p> <p>Apple comes to a deep understanding of who she is and what makes her unique.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, Age/Level Appropriate</p> <p>Dawn Quigley is an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe, North Dakota. In addition to her writing, her research and scholarship focus on methods to implement Native American curriculum into grades K-12.</p> <p>In Quigley's book, the reader is primarily focused on Essential Understanding 1 and 3 as the reader is exposed to the differences in language and culture, as well as traditional beliefs and spirituality, throughout the entire United States.</p> <p>This book is an excellent choice for 6th - 8th grade.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Connections to other Literature/Novels/Non-Fiction etc./Resources to be Utilized</p> <p>This novel has a natural tie-in to Gary Robinson's <i>The Son Who Returns</i>, as both books deal with cultural gatherings, traditional ceremonies and finding a sense of belonging in family.</p> <p>Non-Fiction sources could easily be located as source material for the study of Powwow regalia and different types of dances, representing different tribal peoples.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units</p> <p>Multi-disciplinary units can be readily built with Social Studies and English Language Arts. These units would center on the history of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa people and the beginning of what is now known as the Metis, pronounced (may-tee). The language and culture that was created when Chippewa people intermarried with other tribal people as well as French trappers and traders would be interesting and educational for middle grades. Middle grade students need to be aware that a unique culture evolved. Quigley focuses on this culture in the novel.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Literary Elements that Instructor will Teach or Review</p> <p>Apple is a strong, fascinating character who changes throughout the novel, making her an excellent dynamic character study.</p> <p>Characterization as well as setting are strong literary elements important in this story.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Overall Recommendation</p> <p>I loved the sense of humor that Quigley instills in her characters and storyline in this novel. She allows us to see how humor, especially Native humor, allows the human character to cope with pain and sorrow. I highly recommend this book for any Middle grade instruction</p>

Hidden Roots by Joseph Bruchac

<p style="text-align: center;">Synopsis of Novel</p> <p>Bruchac's mystery novel, <i>Hidden Roots</i>, is set in Vermont and it exposes a historical crime perpetrated upon Native Americans. This crime was sanctioned by the government and taken to the highest level, the Supreme Court. Howard is a young boy torn between the deep anger of his father and the fact of life that somehow he is different. His mother, often with bruises and blackened eyes, is not like anyone else's mother, either. The only person that he feels that he can count on is his Uncle Louis, the person he longs to emulate, who is wise and kind. Howard senses that Uncle Louis holds deep secrets, the kind that change your life forever. Bruchac takes us into a horrific time, when to be Indian meant that the government decided your future and your children's future.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, Age/Level Appropriate</p> <p>Joseph Bruchac is an Abenaki author who has written over 120 books. His knack for storytelling and love of American Indian history and culture influences his writing. IEFA Essential Understanding 5 is fundamental to clearly understanding or even grasping how the federal government could just make a legal decision to sterilize hundreds of people without their consent. This is a great novel for grades 6th – 8th as the story is interesting enough to capture a 6th graders attention but also allows for real discussion with older students as well.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Connections to other Literature/Novels/Non-fiction etc./ Resources to be Utilized</p> <p>Bruchac's novel, <i>Hidden Roots</i>, directly leads to discussion and further research and study concerning other verdicts reached by the federal government that threatened and directly affected Native peoples. Robert Conley's <i>Medicine War</i> discusses the effect on Native peoples, as a whole, when they have no say in legal decisions that have the power to destroy their lives. Tim Tingle's book <i>How I Became a Ghost</i> is a good middle grades novel dealing with the Choctaw Trail of Tears, another good study for middle grade students.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units</p> <p>Multi-disciplinary connections would be natural tie-ins with Social Studies beginning with the study of how laws are made and passed. The eugenics program in Vermont and elsewhere in the United States would be a worthwhile research project for class or single student. This is an amazing study as this mindset, called <i>eugenics</i>, led directly to the Holocaust in Europe.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Literary Elements that Instructor will Teach or Review</p> <p>As with most young adult literature, characterization is the key study. Bruchac creates sympathetic characters that allow the reader to feel the pain that the government's eugenics programs forced upon real people. The reader is also a part of the internal conflict of the characters so conflict both internal and external is necessary to analyze this novel.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Overall Recommendation</p> <p>This is probably one of my favorite Bruchac books. I like it so well because he simply brings to light an era of history that we know very little about. He forces the reader to look at lives shattered by inhumane and cruel legislation and does it with great sensitivity. I highly recommend this book as a <u>required</u> read in the middle grades.</p>

Feral Nights by Cynthia Leitich Smith

<p style="text-align: center;">Synopsis of Novel</p> <p><i>Feral Nights</i> unleashes a new world on an unsuspecting reader. Smith introduces the reader to a wild world where humans are not always what they seem, a world where shapeshifters can change from human to animal and back again. Yoshi is a free-spirited werecat who gets into his share of trouble but nothing like when he goes hunting for his missing sister, Ruby. He meets a possessive werepossum named Clyde and his beautiful human friend, Aimee. Initially, the fight is on between Clyde and Yoshi but when the three stumble on the possibility that Ruby may have fallen prey to an underground kidnapping ring, they must work together. New friends, both shapeshifter and human must aid in the struggle against a race of vampires and demons whose specialty is hunting werespecies. Yoshi's sister Ruby is definitely not the only one running for her life.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, Age/Level Appropriate</p> <p>Cynthia Leitich Smith is a young adult author of mixed blood belonging to the Muscogee Creek Nation. Most of her novels, including this one deals with teens of mixed blood dealing with the problem of becoming adults in a hostile world. Where her other books are set in the real- world both her series <i>Tantalize</i> and now the <i>Feral Nights</i> series are both fantasy based books series. IEFA Essential Understanding 2 allows students to see the diversity and variety among individual American Indians. Interestingly, Smith uses the idea of shapeshifting to force the reader to look at identity of Indian people in a unique, new way. This novel is appropriate for upper middle grades for either independent reading or as a choice of books in a literature circle setting</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Connections to other Literature/Novels/Non-Fiction etc. Resources to be Utilized</p> <p>This series is almost an offshoot of the <i>Tantalize</i> series, with several of the same characters appearing in this new set of novels.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units</p> <p>Shapeshifter or Transformative fantasy is very popular, especially with middle grade students. John B. Kachuba writes a fascinating look at the phenomena of this ancient idea held by many Native tribes that humans can indeed change into animal form. His book <i>Shapershifters: A History</i> is informative for the instructor to begin research on this subject.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Literary Elements that Instructor will Teach or Review</p> <p>This would be an excellent novel for the ELA instructor to teach Joseph Campbell's <i>The Hero's Journey</i>. The instruction in plot outline, rising and falling action and climax is clearly delineated in this novel and would need to be taught as a discrete skill to middle grades students, 7th and 8th grade level.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Overall Recommendation</p> <p>This is one of my favorite books of Cynthia Leitich Smith. The characters are interesting and the plot line moves quickly. Young teen readers will get hooked on the story and will definitely want to read the other books in the series.</p>

The Middle Five by Francis La Flesche

Synopsis of Novel	Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, Age/Level Appropriate	Connections to other Literature/Novels/Non-Fiction etc./ Resources to be Utilized
<p>Francis La Flesche tells the story of the 'universal boy' in his book "The Middle Five." He imparts to the reader the struggles of a group of young Omaha Native boys sent to survive between two cultures, in the boarding school era. He shares the thoughts about how children, especially boys, whether Native or non-Native, all have the same inner being. The Middle Five is a great story of the brotherhood that the Indian boarding school experience fostered for some, even under the worst of circumstances. The friendships formed life bonds that sustained these children through the hard times and gave them joy in the best of times. The book is a great testament to the strength of the human spirit, in an era of testing and trial.</p>	<p>Francis La Flesche was born about 1857 and was the son of a French trader and an Omaha mother. His life was devoted to the study of his people.</p> <p>IEFA Understandings – A clear grasp of the Assimilation Period in Essential Understandings 5 will help the instructor make this period of time clear for students</p> <p>This novel is appropriate for any Middle School grade level. It is an easy read for upper level grades and can be used by instructors teaching grades 5 and 6 with help.</p>	<p>Other connections to this work would be: <i>My Name Is Seepeetza</i> by Shirley Sterling, <i>I Am Not a Number</i>, by Jenny Kay Dupuis <i>Away From Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences 1879-2000</i> edited by Archuleta, Child and Lomawaima</p>
Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units	Literary Elements that Instructor will Teach or Review	Overall Recommendation
<p>This novel lends itself to a great number of inner-disciplinary units, as the study of the boarding school era is a natural tie-in for History and Geography. The book is filled with questions that will need answers in the middle grades minds.</p> <p>What tribes were effected? Where did the children go? Did any families or tribes try to hide their children? Did different tribes react differently, thinking that this might be a good thing for their children?</p>	<p>Since this book deals with the growth of character, it is only natural that characterization and conflict are two main literary elements that an instructor will need to focus on in the use of this novel.</p> <p>Studying the ability for strong relationships to grow amidst challenges, is also a great way to begin to look at conflict in the younger grades.</p>	<p>I loved this book. Despite the fear and basic mistrust of the young boys for the situation in which they found themselves, they formed a brotherhood. With little or no guidance, they puzzled through the different roles that required them to be both 'white men' and yet to be responsible members of their own people.</p>

If I Ever Get Out Of Here by Eric Gansworth

Synopsis of Novel	Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, Age/Level Appropriate	Connections to other Literature/Novels/non-Fiction etc./ Resources to be Utilized
<p>Lewis "Shoe" is a bright Native teen placed in an advanced class, full of white students. No one wants anything to do with him because he is Indian, and so begins Lewis's journey as he struggles to learn who he is and where he fits in. He desperately wants to make a friend and George, a new military transfer student, seems to be his only hope. To Lewis's delight, George is a huge Beatles fan, as is he, and they become close friends. For the first time, Lewis seems to 'belong' at school. Unfortunately, a white bully named Evan, whose family donates large sums of money to the school, takes an active dislike to him, simply because he is Native American. Lewis can get no help from the authorities and so he is forced to take matters into his own hands. He learns that help often comes to us in unlikely ways but also help comes to us in the people we surround ourselves with and love, our family.</p>	<p>Eric Gansworth is an enrolled member of the Onondaga Nation. He grew up on the Tuscarora Indian Reservation. He is currently a professor of English at Canisius College in Buffalo, New York.</p> <p>IEFA Essential Understandings both 2 and 4 are critical to the grasp of this novel. Through conversations on tribal history with Louis, George comes to an understanding of how treaties were made and their purpose.</p> <p>This novel is a great class discussion book or for independent reading for 7th or 8th graders. Gansworth uses language that might make this novel problematic for younger readers.</p>	<p>Although this is a 'coming of age' book that deals with teenage angst and wanting to be a part of the crowd, Gansworth's second novel <i>Give Me Some Truth</i> honestly looks at the problems faced in the teen years by being of 'mixed blood' or being light enough to pass as a white person. This confusion that allows the Native protagonist, Carson, to pass for white, adds to the confusion about who he really is, not just what he looks like.</p> <p>Several books also share this common theme. Instructors may use these novels to spark discussion on cultural identity as well as examining crucial issues of personal identity in the teen years.</p> <p>The non-fiction PBS special on the Native American influence on rock and roll is especially powerful. <i>RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World</i>. If students wish to evaluate the influence that music has had on our world this is a great connection.</p>
Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units	Literary Elements that Instructor will Teach or Review	Overall Recommendation
<p>Again, Social Studies, as a discipline can be easily integrated into the study of this novel. The entire concept of 'treaty' is a fascinating research topic. The study of treaties, how they were made, changed and broken, will spark great discussion and study.</p> <p>This novel also has a direct tie-in to Music as the Beatles and the era that they lived and performed is fascinating, and almost a foreign world to a middle grades student.</p>	<p>Gansworth has created dynamic characters living in real-life situations. The study of setting, where we come from and how it affects who we are as individuals is a large part of this book. Lewis, living in poverty and George, with no real roots, because of his military background are polar opposites in a large part because of the setting in which they live.</p>	<p>For a novel for the middle grades, I thought that this book had it all! Friendship, family ties, generational poverty, civil disobedience and racism.</p> <p>Gansworth takes us into the lives of those teens that deal with issues that call for intense discussion and close examination of our own views about the world around us. Socratic Seminars would work well with some provocative topics raised throughout the book.</p>

How I Became a Ghost by Tim Tingle

Synopsis of Novel	Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, Age/Level Appropriate	Connections to other Literature/Novels/Non-Fiction etc./ Resources to be Utilized
<p>Isaac's family and tribe is at peace living contentedly until Isaac first hears of the 'treaty talk'. He begins to see the future events that will happen to his people, his family and himself. Tingle tells the story of the Choctaw Trail of Tears from the viewpoint of a young man, one who we know, as the story begins, will die. As his family is forced to leave their homeland at gunpoint, Isaac learns the real lessons of sacrifice. He and his best friend, Joseph, take on the armed forces and frigid weather to save Naomi, a young Choctaw woman from slavery by the soldiers.</p> <p>When a wolf kills Isaac, the ghosts of all the Choctaw who have gone before, appear to him and give wisdom and comfort.</p> <p>Tingle has given us a hero and a story of truth and bravery. We can learn important lessons from this brutal time in history.</p>	<p>Tim Tingle is an Oklahoma Choctaw who is both an experienced writer and storyteller. His retracing of his great-grandfather's footsteps in the Choctaw Trail of Tears resulted in the novel, <i>Walking the Choctaw Road</i>. Every year he retells the stories taught to him to crowds up to 90,000 people.</p> <p>IEFA Essential Understanding 5 is necessary for students to realize the travesty of the relocation of tribal people throughout the United States.</p> <p>The relatively easy reading level makes this a wonderful book for even 4th and 5th graders while the subject matter allows for deep learning on an upper grades level.</p>	<p>Tim Tingle's second book in the trilogy, <i>When a Ghost Speaks, Listen</i> takes us deeper into the research behind the leadership of the Choctaw tribe at this time in history. Chief Pashmataha and Mushulatubbee were famous leaders who were cheated and misled by Andrew Jackson.</p> <p>Several websites allow students to research the different removals and the effects upon Native people. WWW.ZUNAL.COM/WEBQUEST.PHP?W=17397</p> <p>The Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian hosts a website of teacher resources as part of their Native Knowledge 360° initiative. Look under the Subject tab for Government and Civics for the digital lesson "American Indian Removal: What does it mean to remove a people?"</p>
Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units	Literary Elements that Instructors will Teach or Review	Overall Recommendation
<p>History, Geography and Science disciplines can all work together to create thematic units connected to this novel. Historically, there are more tribes in the United States that were forced to make some sort of journey away from their home, including the Salish from the Bitterroot Valley. A study of removal and forced assimilation would be extremely informative to middle grade students.</p> <p>Geographically, these tribes, where they came from and the land that was forced upon them, in many cases, was entirely unfamiliar to them. The study of where they began and where they are now is a logical follow-up to the historical study.</p>	<p>Conflict, of all four types, plays a major role in the study of this novel. Isaac has internal conflict about his role to play with his family and people. The Choctaw people are involved in Character versus Authority or Society with the United States government.</p> <p>If an instructor is using Geography as a learning tool, then the study of setting is also critical.</p>	<p>This book really has so much to say and so much that needs to be heard by every middle school student. It beats with the heart and blood of both the young and old who were forced to make that march and others like it. It is filled with a sense of family bonds and blood ties between the people. This binding between the people is such that even in death, they never say good-bye.</p> <p>Tingle writes a novel filled with the hope of the Choctaw people who marched--the hope that they would see their children and grandchildren live in peace.</p> <p>This novel is one that every 6th -8th grader should read and research subject matter related to the events.</p>

Son Who Returns by Gary Robinson

Synopsis of Novel	Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, Age/Level Appropriate	Connections to other Literature/Novels/Non-Fiction etc. / Resources to be Utilized
<p>"Our history is in our blood," Mark's Nana tells him. Mark describes himself as four kinds of brown: Mexican, Filipino, Chumash and Crow. Gary Robinson writes a wonderful coming of age book about finding your place in the world, no matter what your color or race.</p> <p>Mark, wanting to get away from his white stepmother and an unwanted move to Texas, visits his Chumash Nana for the summer. He is introduced to the world of competitive powwow dancing and learns to appreciate the beauty of the connection to his own culture that this brings. His half-brother, Adrian, along with his entire family, help him to prepare to compete in one of America's largest tribal gatherings.</p> <p>When insulted by another competitor, Charley, who calls him an 'apple' Indian, red on the outside and white on the inside, Adrian advises him to ignore it. Mark decides that dancing will define him rather than being angry at the rudeness on the part of Charley.</p>	<p>Gary Robinson is a writer and lecturer of Choctaw and Cherokee descent. He has written much non-fiction dealing with American Indian issues but <i>Son Who Returns</i> is part of the PathFinders series, a series that he helped to launch. These books are novels that feature Native American teens as main characters and plots that are relevant to the culture today.</p> <p>Teachers should stress IEFA Essential Understanding 2 and 6. Diversity and historic perspective of Native people both play an important role in the study of this novel.</p> <p>This book is age appropriate for 5th – 7th grade and can be used with older students, as it is of high interest.</p>	<p>Many good non-fiction resources may be paired with this novel. Any fiction or non-fiction that deals with dancing or regalia would be suitable for research in this area.</p> <p><i>Over a Century of Moving to the Drum</i>, by Johnny Arlee provides information on local traditions. The book was published by SKC Press and should be available locally.</p>
Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units	Literary Elements that Instructor will Teach or Review	Overall Recommendation
<p>Celebration, family kinship, and brotherhood is at the heart of this novel and the meeting of many tribal nations. Social Studies instructors may assign research into the different types of dance traditions and gatherings.</p>	<p><i>Son Who Returns</i> really requires the instructor to teach or review all of the major literary elements. The characters and their interactions are a good focus for middle grades. The setting of the tribal gatherings and background schema about powwows themselves are critical spheres of study and discussion.</p> <p>Conflict between the races such as the conflict between Mark and his stepmother as well as conflict between competitors, could to be explored.</p>	<p>Gary Robinson's book <i>Son Who Returns</i> is an impressive mixture of tension between characters and the hope that the protagonist embraces by accepting his role in his extended family. I love the fact that Young Adult American Indian literature is filled with support of family, determination to embrace the culture but also to face with courage any outside attack. I highly recommend this book for all middle grade students.</p>

The Night Wanderer by Drew Hayden Taylor

<p style="text-align: center;">Synopsis of Novel</p> <p>Tiffany feels that she has the right to be angry. Her mother has abandoned her and left her with only her father and grandmother, to live with another man. On top of this, she has to give up her bedroom to a complete stranger to help make ends meet. It doesn't help that her own boyfriend lives on the 'white' side of the lake and doesn't understand anything about life on the Otter Lake Reserve, or her Native heritage.</p> <p>Monsters that only come out at night and family misunderstandings compound her already confusing life. A night encounter with their strange and possibly evil boarder will change her life forever.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Biography of Author, Tribal Affiliation, IEFA Essential Understandings Taught, and Age/Level Appropriate</p> <p>Drew Hayden Taylor is an Ojibwa author, filmmaker, lecturer and playwright. He is a member of the Curve Lake First Nations. <i>The Night Wanderer</i> is his first young adult novel.</p> <p>IEFA Essential Understanding 2 is especially interesting when studying Montana tribes in comparison to Canadian First Nations. The idea of 'identity' is key to clearly educating our students.</p> <p>This book is a remarkable novel for both independent reading or for a whole class study. I would recommend it for upper middle grades 7th and 8th as the protagonist does deliberate the possibility of committing suicide than continuing to live in her situation.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Connections to other Literature/Novels/Non-fiction etc. / Resources to be Utilized</p> <p>There are several directions that an instructor may choose to take with this novel. Research into the Anishinabe culture and their attempt to keep the language viable in their tribe would be a great comparison with our own tribal cultural battle to infuse the language in all areas of education.</p> <p>Tiffany's contemplation of suicide leads to study of signs and statistics of teen suicide, especially among Native teens.</p> <p>The study of creatures or monsters in Native tribes would also be appropriate for upper level middle students.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Multi-Disciplinary Connection/Thematic Units</p> <p>Exploring race relations is a natural theme for this book as well as family dynamics. Students may learn from reflecting and engaging in discussion on communication among family members.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Literary Elements that Instructor will Teach or Review</p> <p>Literary Elements that are necessary for an instructor to focus on will be both characterization and conflict. The tension between Tiffany, her father, missing mother and boyfriend moves the story forward. The conflict that her grandmother feels at the loss of language and culture as well as their mysterious border will make for great discussions about the different types of conflict.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Overall Recommendation</p> <p>I cannot give a higher recommendation for this book for young adults. It is exciting, as a story, but more than this, the sense of loss both personal and cultural is deeply moving. Drew Hayden Taylor is an excellent writer and has a clear grasp of teen angst both native and non-native.</p> <p>The story plot outline moves quickly and the middle school reader will be continually on the edge of their seat. This is an excellent choice for reading as a classroom novel.</p>