

HACKMATAACK

2007

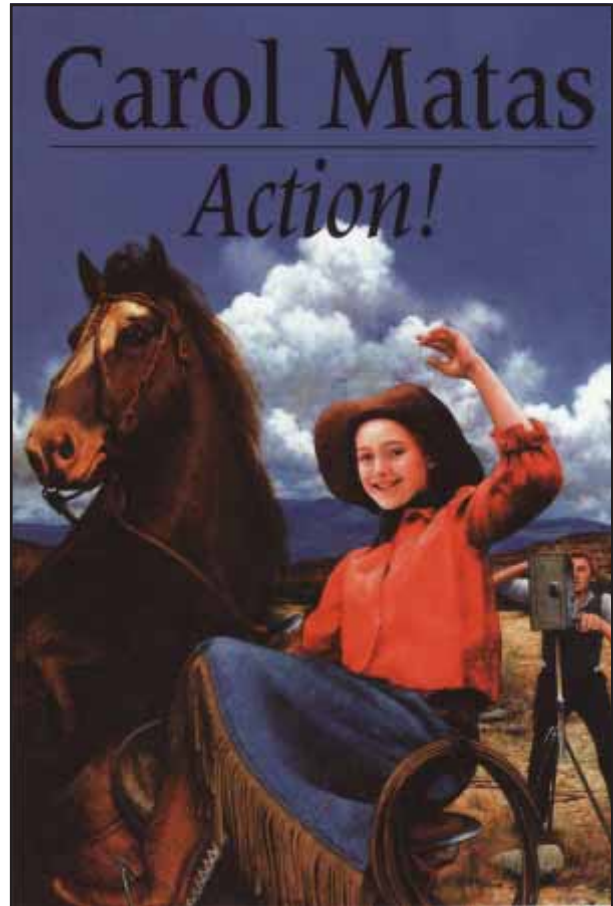
Action!

by Carol Matas

Action is about facing our fears.

Rosie, a young girl, living in 1911, in Hollywood, California, where her family has moved after her father's baseball film is a big hit. He wants to make more films with Rosie as the star. When her father brings home a Wild West show to make authentic westerns, Rosie is excited about learning how to ride a horse. That was before the show's best trick rider was injured in a terrible accident throwing the film into jeopardy.

Rosie soon finds herself lost in the Hollywood Hills with Zach, a young cowboy and irritating son of the injured stunt rider. They have to face mountain lions, horse rustlers, and the elements, not to mention each other. And Rosie, who has never been afraid of anything is suddenly very afraid!



Thematic Links:

History of the movies

Hollywood

Jewish history

Cowboys

Western history

Emotions

Facing our fears

Activity Ideas:

- Discuss what things scare you? How do you deal with your fears?
- Watch an early movie/talkie. How is it different from movies of today? Were stories told differently? Discuss the beginnings of the movie industry.
- Dreams - have you ever had strange dreams, dreams with messages? Research what dreams mean.

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Carol Matas

author of *Action!*

Carol Matas is an internationally acclaimed author of over thirty novels for children and young adults. Her best-selling work, which includes three award-winning series, has been translated into Spanish, Japanese, Taiwanese, Turkish, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, German, French, Indonesian and Russian.

A graduate of the Actor's Lab, in London England, Carol first earned a B.A. (English) from The University of Western Ontario. Her teaching experience includes Artists in the School, Manitoba Arts Council. She has been a visiting professor at Bemidji State University, Minnesota, and a Creative Writing instructor, Continuing Education Division, The University of Winnipeg. Carol is an inspiring and passionate speaker who is frequently invited to address children and adults alike across North America.

Carol writes contemporary and historical fiction, as well as science fiction and fantasy. She first began writing historical fiction when her Danish husband told her stories about his parents' experiences fighting the Nazis in World War II. She has often written about Jewish themes, and is well known for her books concerning the Holocaust, writing *Daniel's Story* at the request of The United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. Over the years, her knack for successfully infusing serious and thought-provoking issues into an action-driven format has kept readers of all ages engaged.

More information is about Carol is available on her web site: <http://www.carolmatas.com>



Selected Awards

The War Within, Geoffrey Bilson Honour Book, 2001

Footprints In The Snow, finalist, Silver Birch Award

Sparks Fly Upward, Judy Lopez Award, honour book, California library award

Rebecca. Nominated, Hackmataack, Children's Choice Award and Manitoba Readers Choice Award

In My Enemy's House. Nominated, Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction, 2000

Greater Than Angels. Nominated, Geoffrey Bilson Award

Some Other Books by Carol Matas

Rebecca, Scholastic Canada, 2000.

The War Within, Simon and Schuster: New York, 2001, Scholastic Canada.

The Second Clone, Scholastic, Canada, 2001

Dear Canada, *Footsteps in the Snow*, Scholastic, Canada, 2001

Sparks Fly Upwards, Clarion, New York, 2001

Rosie In New York City: Gotcha! Simon and Schuster, Aladdin, NY, Key Porter, Toronto, 2003

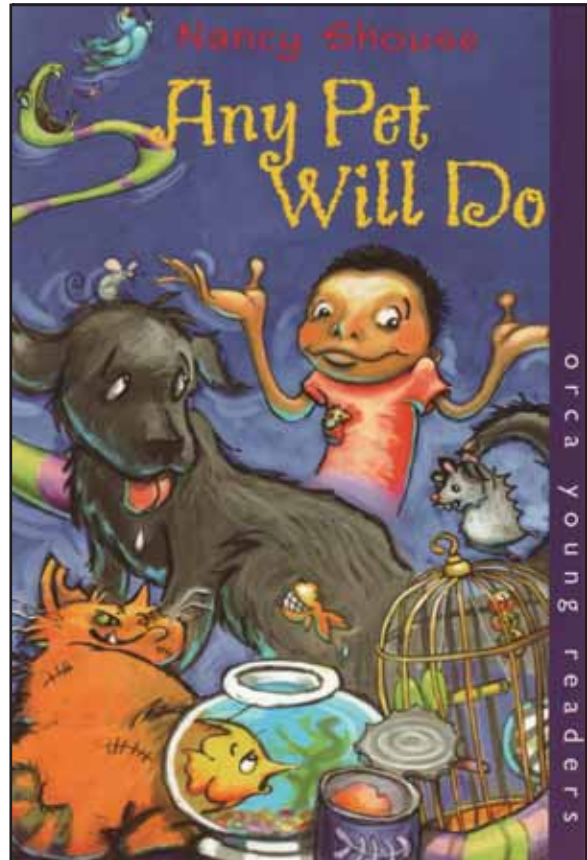
Rosie in Chicago: Play Ball! Simon and Schuster, Aladdin, NY, Key Porter, Toronto, 2003

Any Pet Will Do

by Nancy Shouse

Jeremy has wanted a pet for ages and now – finally – it looks like his parents are ready to agree. The only problem is, he isn't really sure what type of pet to get. He decides to pet-sit for the neighbors to get ideas. Every kooky person ringing Jeremy's doorbell seems to be head-over-heels crazy about their animal, but after a couple of days and often a ton of trouble, Jeremy has doubts about each one. There is one exception – fuzzy, cuddly and perfect – but allergies pop up and ruin it all. Will Jeremy ever find the perfect pet?

When I wrote *Any Pet Will Do*, my guinea pig, Rex, was dying. Rex was my fourth guinea pig and, I decided, my last. It was a sad time and it seemed natural to counter that by writing a funny, lively story about animals. Before I had finished the book, our new hamster, Frisket, was camped out next to the computer and I would watch him scurry around as I typed. Many of the situations in the book are true. The beauty of it is, if you have a pet, or even if you just imagine that you have a pet, you always have a story to write!



Thematic Links:

Working together
Sense of belonging
Responsibility
Allergies
Humour
Pet care

Activity Ideas:

- Debate which animal would make the best pet. Chart the pros and cons of each.
- Do a class survey to find out the kinds of pets your students own, or have them choose their ideal pet. Graph the results.
- Have students interview their pet. Be imaginative and creative with the answers. Dig deep! Get personal!
- Invite someone from the SPCA or Humane Society to talk about how they care for animals, the adoption process, etc.
- Invite someone from a pet therapy program to talk about how animals can improve the quality of life for seniors and others in care homes.
- Make a list of how pets enrich our lives.

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Nancy Shouse

author of *Any Pet Will Do*

I live in St. John's where the Atlantic Ocean is a stones throw away. Actually, I can't see it from my house but a brisk walk will take me there. When the sun is shining, everything twinkles. When the fog roles in, there's a mysteriousness in the air. When it rains, it's a good time stay inside and write. Fortunately, it rains a lot!

I think being a writer is similar to being born with a sweet tooth – it's hard to control. A writer simply has to write and will scribble on anything, anytime, anywhere. Being stuck in a waiting room with a notebook and a broken pencil is torture – thank goodness for teeth and fingernails!

In university I received a science degree, began a career, moved here and there, had three children and then became a stay-at-home mom to make pots and pots of play-dough. I loved the novels that came home from school. An all-time favourite was Jean Little's "From Anna," which I read aloud, or listened to, five whole times and never tired of it.

I've always written, but not in a serious, "I'd like to get published" sort of way, until several years ago when my youngest started school. Now I try to write or edit every day. Some days I write a lot while supper burns on the stove; other days I might do nothing more spectacular than shift a comma around. I could win a prize as The World's Slowest Typist, but that suits me just fine because it gives my brain time to think.



Selected Awards

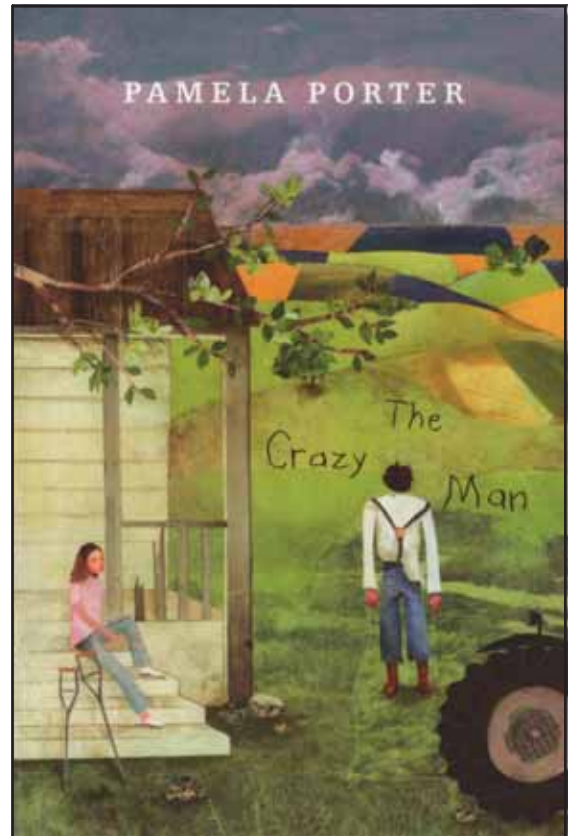
Any Pet Will Do, Canadian Toy Testing Council – Top 10 Books 2006; Resource Links – Best Bet 2005, Ann Connor Brimer Award Finalist 2006

The Crazy Man

by Pamela Porter

It is 1965 in Southeastern Saskatchewan. Eleven year-old Emaline Bitterman is riding on the back of her father's tractor as he is discing the fields for the spring planting. Emaline sees her dog, Prince, chase a snowshoe hare into the path of the discer. Afraid that Prince will get his paws cut off in the discer blades, Emaline jumps off the back of the tractor to save him, and she is badly injured by the discer. The accident is the last straw for her father, who shoots Prince and walks off the farm, leaving Emaline and her mother to try to survive on their own. Her mother hires a patient from the local mental hospital to work their fields. Thus, Angus, "the crazy man," whom the neighbour children call the gorilla, enters their lives.

I wrote *The Crazy Man* because young people often ask themselves, "What would happen to me if my dad left/ I got hurt/I missed a lot of school/my life changed in a significant way? Who would take care of me? Would I be able to take care of myself?" The answer is yes — you can survive difficult circumstances. Good things will come to you again, and you can still make a bright future for yourself. I think children are amazingly strong and courageous people and I thought that other children as well as adults would be interested to read about a girl like Emaline and the ways she deals with her injury and her dad, and how she is the first one to see Angus not just as a freak, but as a whole human being.



Thematic Links:

Prejudice
Discrimination
Forgiveness
Gratitude

Activity Ideas:

- Write a poem in which you meet a magical, maybe scary, person or being. What magic can that being do? What questions would you ask him or her?
- Look at photographs of the Northern Lights. Write a poem in which you tell what it looks like for someone who has never seen it.
- Look at a map of Canada. Write a poem describing each province. What colour is it on the map? What does its shape remind you of? Put a different province in each line.

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Pamela Porter

author of *The Crazy Man*

I have lived in lots of places: Texas, New Mexico, Louisiana, Washington, Montana, British Columbia — even Africa for a little while. I like seeing new places. My family and I hang out in Saskatchewan for a month every summer and we all love it. I have two growing children, one starting university and one starting high school. Together, we have adopted a menagerie of rescued animals — two dogs, two horses and a cat who wasn't rescued but has lived with us for almost twenty years, and his favourite place to sleep is in the recycle box. One of the things I most enjoy about being an author of books for young people is meeting the students who read my books, listening to their opinions, reading their poems and letters, and answering their astoundingly intelligent questions.



Selected Awards

The Crazy Man, Governor General's Literary Award, Children's Literature; Texas Institute of Letters Friends of the Austin Public Library Award for best Young Adult novel; Willow Award nominee; Great Lakes Book Award nominee
Sky, Chocolate Lily Award nominee; Great Lakes Book Award nominee

Some Other Books by Pamela Porter

Sky, Groundwood Books, 2004

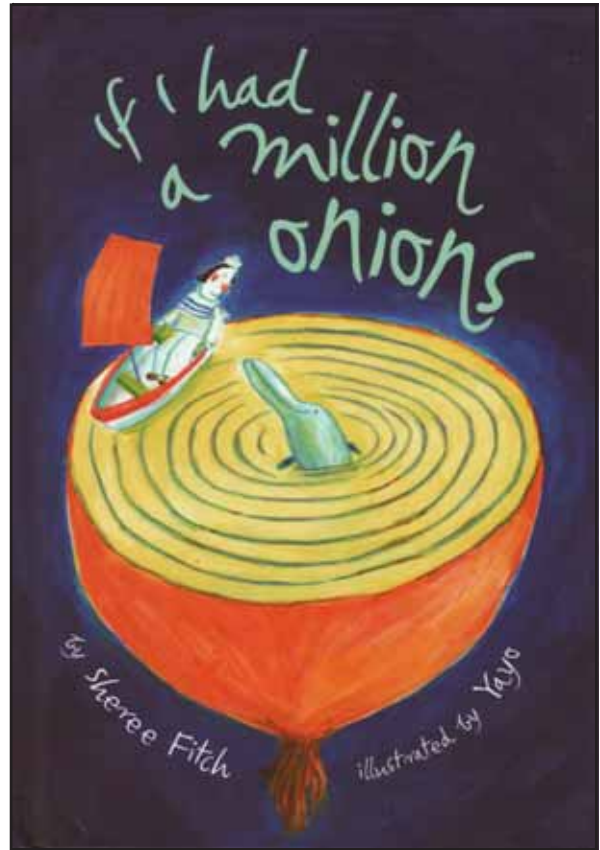
If I Had a Million Onions

by Sheree Fitch

In a world that often means no sense to me, making nonsense makes sense. I like to celebrate with words, and play with language and even --sometimes fingersnap and toe tap to the music of words. To me, this book is about that and what you take away from it yourself.

For me as a writer -- this is about creating small moments of joy to share with others. And it keeps my own heart glad. *If I Had a Million Onions* is a selection of many different kinds of verse for children of all ages --including adults! That is because I think you are never too old for this. The nonsense I love most can be just "silly" but also, sometimes it reverses and spins things around -- changes the way you see the world and makes you think again. What you might not know: One poem can take years to finish.

Mostly this book is about play and hopes and dreams and imaginings and what ifs and having a place to get all tongue tangled and tripped up and know that they! Sometimes the more mistakes you make the more fun it might be!



Thematic links:

Poetry
Oral tradition
Tongue twisters

Activity Ideas:

- Read and use poems as points of departure for your own: write and write and write.
- Invent and dramatize programming for the Children's News Now Network
- Discuss why the author used onions.
- Read more poetry by Sheree and other writers like Sheldon Oberman.
- Do a collage based on the Onion book.
- If you could write a message to someone in the Arctic, what would it be? What would you say?
- Try "lipslippery" by putting the first the first letter of a word in front of the next, like Beggs and Acon.

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Sheree Fitch

author of *If I Had a Million Onions*

"In 2007, I will have been a published writer for twenty years. To me, it all still seems like I might be dreaming. I am grateful I have had so many readers, teachers who use my books, chances to travel, family who love me and amazing opportunities to teach. Nowadays I realize that teaching writing, encouraging others to publish their books, is as important to me as my own writing. It is another way of sharing. Because writing is that: a sharing.

One of the programs I have been involved with is Somebody's Daughter. It is a program where I go out on the land in Nunavut in northern Canada, and teach writing skills at night. During the day the women learn to sew traditional Inuit clothing. In 2002, I sewed a tiny sealskin kamik. In 2005, a polar bear came close to our camp. Writing brings many adventures -- both real and imaginary.

One more thing: I am still learning how to be a writer. It is a wonderful neverending learning. I still get frustrated at times too. I am slow. Very slow. I often do most of my work long hand and then go to the computer. These days, I am working on scripts for a television show (maybe) and another novel. And I believe 'a book can't be a book unless it is read. A poem can't be a poem unless it is said.'"

Sheree Fitch is an educator, literacy activist and author of award winning poetry, picture books, nonfiction, plays and novels for all ages. For more information, go to www.writers.ns.ca/Writers/sfitch.html.



Selected Awards

There are Monkeys in My Kitchen, Mr. Christie Award

Mabel Murple, Ann Connor Brimer Award

If You Could Wear My Sneakers, Silver Birch and Hackmataack Awards

1998 Vicky Metcalf Award for body of work

Some Other Books by Sheree Fitch

Peek-A-Little-Boo, Illustrated by Laura Watson. Orca Books, 2005

The Gravesavers, Doubleday Canada, 2005

Pocket Rocks. Illustrated by Helen Flook. Orca Publishers, 2004

Persnickety Pete (The Cleanest Boy in the World). Illustrated by Jane Wallace-Mitchell. Pearson Education Australia, 2003

Everybody's Different on Everybody Street. Illustrated by Laura Jocoleur. The Nova Scotia Hospital Foundation, 2001

Writing Maniac: How I grew up to be a writer (and you can, too!). Pembroke Publishers, 2000.

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The Latch

by Joyce Grant-Smith

The setting for *The Latch* is actually where I live, by the Annapolis River. When the basement was being dug for my house, we found an old door latch - the one pictured on the cover of the book - and that was one of the things that inspired me to write the story.

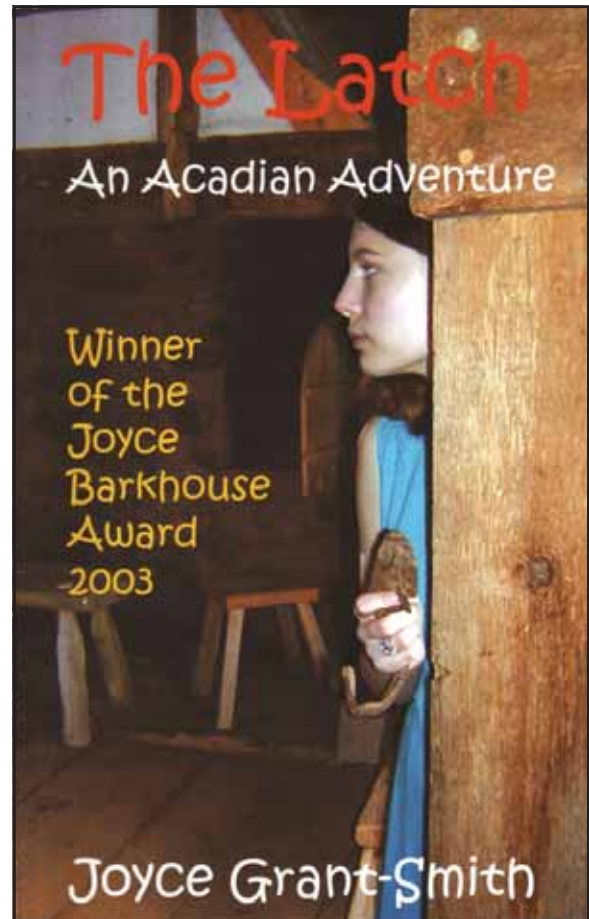
In the story, Ami, a city girl, is moving to the Annapolis Valley with her parents when she finds an old door latch. Suddenly, she's transported into the past and finds herself living with an Acadian family in the 1750's. She has to learn to live without cars, or T.V., or even bathrooms. She also learns to love her Acadian family. But she finds out that life back then could be very dangerous. She misses her mom and dad terribly and tries to figure out a way to get back to her own time. In the end, she has to find a way to come to grips with both the present and the past.

Thematic Links:

Acadians
Pioneer life
Family
Time travel

Activity Ideas:

- Make a mind map or graphic organizer showing all the things Ami learned about the Acadians while she was living with Marc and Marie.
- Compare and contrast Ami's life in 2002 with her life with the Acadians in the 1700's. Use the topics of transportation, clothing, leisure activities, food.
- Draw a storyboard of one of the important events of the book.
- Research more about pioneer life. Learn how to churn butter.



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Joyce Grant-Smith author of *The Latch*

I have been a teacher for 27 years and one of my favorite things is to read great stories to my students. I also like to help them to become better writers by showing them how the right words can paint pictures in the readers' minds.

Besides teaching and writing, caring for animals is a passion of mine. I have a menagerie of dogs, cats and horses. Most of them have come from shelters or from situations where they needed rescuing.

I'm married and I have two children. The girl who portrays Ami on the cover of *The Latch* is actually my daughter.



Selected Awards

The Latch, Joyce Barkhouse Award from the Writers' Federation of NS, 2003

Some Other Books by Joyce Grant-Smith

"Brindle" published in *Dog Tales for the Soul*, Volume One, 2005

"Colbi" published in *Happy Endings* Volume One, 2005

"Casey" published in *Happy Endings* Volume Two, 2005

Gentle Voices, Attitude Publishing, 2006

Mabel Riley: A Reliable Record of Humdrum, Peril and Romance

by Marthe Jocelyn

It is 1901 and Mable Riley dreams of adventure and of becoming a writer. When her older sister leaves home to become a schoolmistress in the small town of Stratford, Ontario, Mable is sent along too. Mable hopes her new world will be full of peril and romance. But life at the Goodhand Farm (where the sisters board), is as humdrum as the one she's left behind.

Then Mable encounters the mysterious Mrs. Rattle, a peculiar widow with a taste for upsetting the townspeople with her strange opinions. Mrs. Rattle is a *real* writer, and Mable eagerly accepts her invitation to a meeting of the Ladies Reading Society. But the ladies are not discussing books at all, and Mable may soon have more peril than she'd bargained for!

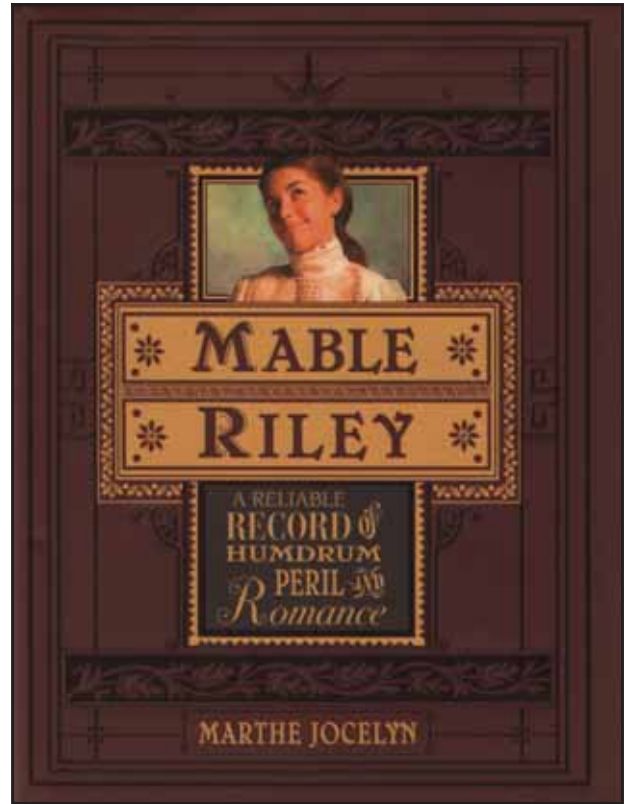
Composed of the letters Mable sends home, the poems she writes for her classmates, and chapters from her own work-in-progress, *Mable Riley* is the funny, inspiring, (and reliable) record of a young girl finding her voice, and the courage to make it heard.

Thematic links:

Diaries
Letter writing
One-room schoolhouses
Women writers

Activity Ideas:

- Write a letter to Mabel telling her about your life.
- Discuss how school in the early 1900's is different to where you go to school.
- Read about the lives of famous women writers.
- Start your own book club. How is it different than the Ladies Reading Society?



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Marthe Jocelyn

author of *Mable Riley*

Marthe was born in Toronto. She loved to read when she was growing up, and to go to the theatre. Her family had an enormous 'dress-up' box and she and her brothers wrote and performed plays and circuses in the backyard. When she got older, she had many different jobs before she began to write books. She was a theatre usher, cookie seller, waitress, sailor, photo stylist and toy designer. She had her own company, Jesse Design, for fifteen years. Now she lives partly in New York City and partly in Stratford, Ontario. Her husband is a painter and they have two daughters.

"In the attic of my grandmother's house, I recently found a box containing several of her diaries, the oldest dating from 1901 and 1905. The first was written during her initial year as a teacher in a one-room school house in Southern Ontario. The second was written during her honeymoon - a train trip to Western Canada - during which she mentions her new husband exactly twice. There was very little in the content of these journals to inspire a story, but the penciled pages and the self-conscious language prodded me to discover a character who lived at the same time and longed for adventure and romance..."
Mabel Riley is born.



Selected Awards

Mabel Riley, Winner of the 2005 TD Canadian Children's Literature Award

A Home for Foundlings, nominated 2005 Norma Fleck Award

Earthly Astonishments, finalist for CLA Book of the Year, shortlisted Hackmataack, Red Cedar

Hannah's Collections, shortlisted Governor General's Literary Award

Some Other Books by Marthe Jocelyn

Secrets, Tundra 2005

ABC x 3, Tundra 2005

A Home for Foundlings, Tundra 2005

Over Under, Tundra 2005

Mayfly, Tundra 2005

A Day with Nellie, Tundra 2002

The Invisible Enemy, Tundra 2002

Hannah's Collections, Tundra 2000

Earthly Astonishments, Tundra 2000

Martin Bridge: Ready for Takeoff!

by Jessica Scott Kerrin

Martin Bridge and his friends, Alex and Stuart, are big fans of Zip Rideout, a cartoon astronaut superhero. They eat Zip Rideout Space Flakes every morning and watch his television show every afternoon. They also enjoy launching model rockets, squirting Faster Blasters and humming Zip's theme song. The trouble with Martin's world is that these routine things often go wrong, or as Stuart would say, "Ka-boom!" Yet through it all, Martin discovers that he is so much more than his superhero.

I created Martin Bridge after my husband, Peter, who was a leader of a boy's troop, came home with our son, Elliott, to describe their latest misadventure that involved exploding rockets. *Smithereens* is the result of that story.

Other *Martin* stories developed when friends of mine shared experiences that didn't go according to plan, such as giving a gift to the wrong person; a friend showing up for a birthday party on the wrong day; missing the bus for an important school field trip; falsely accusing a parent of throwing out a toy, or a pet parrot flying out the window in the middle of winter.

Everyday, all around me, things goes wrong. I have lots of Martin material to choose from!



Thematic links:

Friendship
Competition
Kindness
Truthfulness
Death of a pet
Stealing
Humour

Activity Ideas:

- Think about all the people in your life (friends, classmates, teachers, neighbours, family members). Who deserves to be known as the World's Best, and why? Make a banner for them (to be displayed in the classroom). Write a description and/or draw a picture of them (or bring them in and introduce them to the class).
- Think of someone deserving who you would like to surprise. Write down what steps you would take to plan the surprise. Draw the surprise scene, especially the look on the person's face who would be surprised.
- What toy do you own that your mom or dad does not like, and why? Write a description and draw the toy (or bring it in for show and tell, unless it is a b-b gun or some such!)
- Write about a time when it was hard to tell the truth.

Go to www.kidscanpress.com - resource Room for more activities

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Jessica Scott Kerrin

**author of *Martin Bridge:
Ready for Takeoff!***



I grew up on the Prairies, and although I enjoyed school, I had a terrible secret. I was a lousy speller. This made it tough because I really liked to write. It turns out that a lot of writers can't spell, and I figured this out when I got my first award for creative writing, back in grade three. On the trophy, my writing teacher had misspelled my name!

Since then, I have tried, as much as I can, to write about experiences I find funny, like that one.

Today, I live with my family and our pet tortoise in downtown Halifax in a house so old, the floors slope, and all the marbles end up in one corner. We enjoy outdoor adventures and have recently returned from a family jungle tour of Costa Rica. In addition to writing, I have managed galleries, dance schools and museums with artists, ballerinas and curators. And now that I have staff, I get *them* to check my spelling. Some things never improve.

Selected Awards

Martin Bridge: Ready for Takeoff has received the following nominations and/or recognition:
New York City Public Library's selection for "Top Books of 2005"

The Horn Book's "The Best of 2005".

Nominated for The Willow Award (Saskatchewan Young Readers' Choice). Results pending.
2006 Notable Books List by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), which is part of the American Library Association

Some Other Books by Jessica Scott Kerrin

Martin Bridge: On the Lookout! (Kids Can Press, 2005)

Martin Bridge: Blazing Ahead! (Kids Can Press, Fall, 2006)

There will be eight books in total to be published in the series.

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One on One

by Don Aker

I have always been intrigued by situations that require people to choose between doing the right thing and doing the *easy* thing. In *One on One*, I got to explore one of these situations with my main character, Jared St. George.

Jared is eleven and all he can think about is making his school basketball team. What Jared refuses to think about is math, and the fact that he's failing it. Jared's only hope is peer tutoring from Ellie Brejovic, the weirdo classmate whom everyone shuns. To his surprise, Ellie makes math make sense. But when his mark improves, Jared would rather tell people he's been cheating than let the guys find out about her.

I remember going to school with people like Jared and people like Ellie, and I was interested in putting them together to see how things would turn out.

Thematic Links:

Team work, competitiveness

Peer pressure, friendship

Tolerance, acceptance, individual differences

Honesty, integrity, morality, doing what's right

Immigrant life

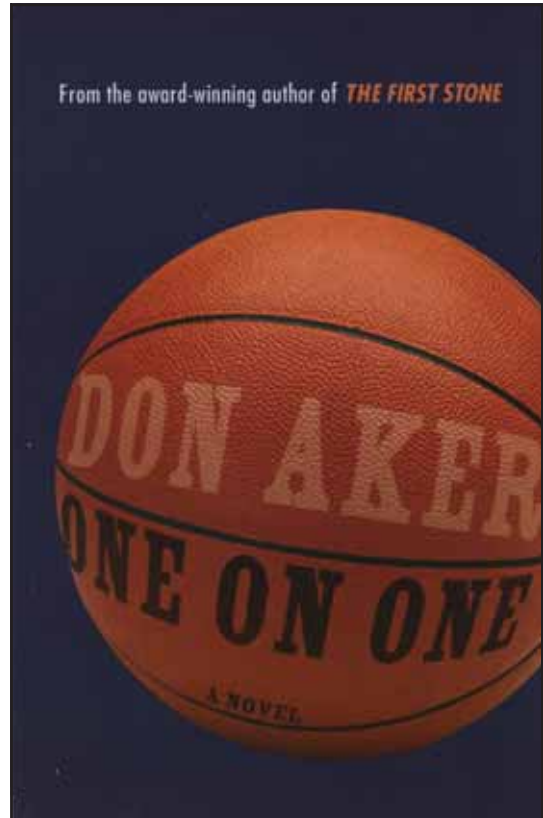
Activity Ideas:

- What qualities do you think make a person a valuable member of any team, sports or otherwise? Which quality is most important of all? Why?
- Have you ever hidden something from your parents? Why? Did they ever discover your secret? Describe how you felt during this incident.
- Have you ever betrayed a friend? Why? How did you feel afterwards?
- Have you ever felt like an outsider? Who or what made you feel this way? How did this affect you?
- List all the characters introduced in the novel's first chapter, and tell what you learn about each one. Which of these characters interests you most? Why?
- If you had the opportunity to redesign the cover of *One on One*, what would it look like? Explain why you think this would be a better cover.
- Many readers feel that Steve and Jared would have been best friends even if they hadn't lived beside each other. Write an essay explaining the qualities you think are most important in a best friend.

For more information on Don Aker and his publications, visit the following websites:

www.donaker.com

www.umanitoba.ca/outreach/cm/profiles/aker.html



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Don Aker

author of *One on One*



Born in Windsor, Nova Scotia, I grew up in a small rural community in Hants County. By the time I was 13, I knew I wanted to be a writer, but I just assumed that no one from a small community like mine could ever become one, so I chose to become a teacher, instead. After high school, I attended Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, where I received my Bachelor of Arts (1976), Bachelor of Education (1977), and Master of Education (1991) degrees.

I have worked as a classroom teacher since 1977, and I currently serve as Literacy Mentor for the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board. I am the father of two grown daughters and I live with my wife in Middleton, a small town in the heart of Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley.

Being around young people all the time strongly influences the stories I write. Most of my stories are written for teenagers and adults, and *One on One* is the first novel I've written for a younger audience. I have published 11 books and several short stories and articles, and I am currently finishing a fifth novel that HarperCollins will publish in 2007. I do most of my writing when I'm not teaching, which is during the summer and on school breaks, but there's never a time when I'm not working on something.

Selected Awards

One on One, shortlisted Manitoba Young Readers' Choice Award, Hackmataack Award *The First Stone*, Ann Connor Brimer Award, White Pine Award.

Stranger at Bay, shortlisted CNIB Torgi Award, Red Maple Award, Ann Connor Brimer Award, Blue Heron Award.

Of Things Not Seen, Ann Connor Brimer Award, Canadian Authors Association Lilla Stirling Award, shortlisted Manitoba Young Readers' Choice Award.

Some Other Books by Don Aker

The Space Between (young adult novel), to be published by HarperCollins, 2007.

One on One (junior novel), HarperCollins, 2005.

"Pull," *The Horrors: Terrifying Tales* (Book One), Red Deer Press, 2005.

The First Stone (young adult novel), HarperCollins, 2003.

Winging It: How Birds Have Adapted to Their Environment (nonfiction), Pearson Education, 2003.

New Language, New Friends (nonfiction), Pearson Education, 2003.

Stranger at Bay (young adult novel), originally published by Stoddart Publishing, 1997. Now published by Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

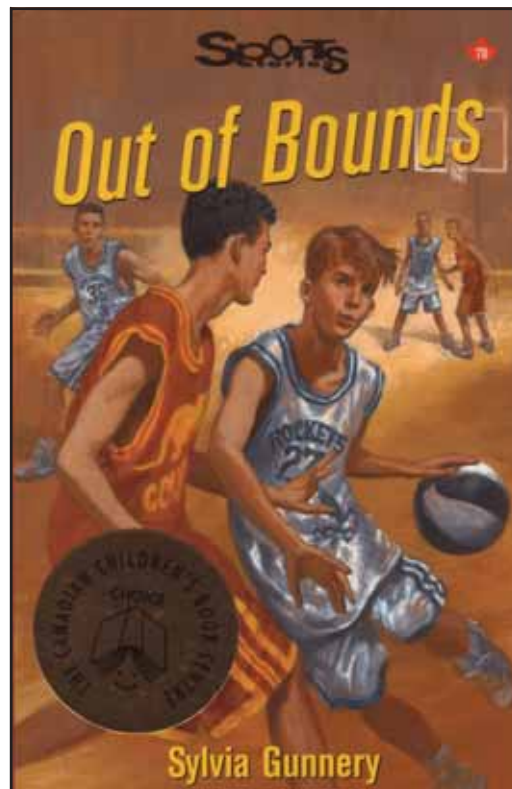
Of Things Not Seen (young adult novel), originally published by Stoddart Publishing, Toronto, 1995. Now published by Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

Out of Bounds

by Sylvia Gunnery

Jay Hirtle loves basketball. He and his best friend Colin are determined that the Richmond Rockets will end the winning streak of their number-one opponent the Centerville Cougars. But when the Hirtle house is damaged by fire, Jay's family must move in with Gramps at Centerville. Jay is now faced with a tough choice: give up a basketball season, or wear the Cougars' jersey and play on the enemy team.

I thought about writing Jay's story when I was sitting in the bleachers watching a high school basketball game. It seemed like that game wasn't just about basketball—it was as if some players were actually enemies. There were angry faces when opponents scored and angry shouts from fans. I wanted to see what might happen if a basketball player had to switch teams. Would it be possible to set aside rivalries? I remember how I felt playing basketball: we were a solid team, proud of our school and positive we were the best team. Like Jay, I loved basketball, but could I have played for our number-one opponent? As you read Jay's story, perhaps you'll think about what you'd do in the same situation.



Thematic links:

Sportsmanship
 Friendship
 Loyalty
 Rural sports
 Small-town Nova Scotia
 Extended family
 Brothers

Activity Ideas:

- Interview: Decide on a sports topic of interest to you. Then interview a coach, a team player, and a fan to find out their thoughts on the same questions.
- Research: Do a web search on a player you admire. Design a card with a photo on one side and interesting facts on the other.
- Point of View: What is your point of view on sports in general or on a particular sport? Create a collage by finding pictures and words in newspapers and magazines that connect with your view.
- Tell Your Story: Write a story about your own experience in sports. You might remember trying out for a team, or making a fantastic play, or fumbling.
- Imagine: Write a sports story by creating a fictional character and imagining what might happen.
- Words Search: Browse through the sports sections of newspapers to find sports words. Here are some suggestions for lists you may want to make: Words that Describe Players; Action Words; Words About Winning; Words About Losing; Looong Sports Words; Short Sports Words. After you have made your list(s), you may want to create a word search or a crossword puzzle.

HACKMATAACK

2007

Sylvia Gunnery author of *Out of Bounds*

Sylvia Gunnery is the author of many novels for teens and children. Many of the themes and characters in her novels have developed from her classroom experiences with junior high and high school students. As she writes, she likes to see how real-life experiences mix in with imagination. For instance, a boa constrictor gets loose in *Menace and Mischief* and that actually happened in a school where she taught. On the first page of *Out of Bounds*, Jay is knocked out during a basketball game. This scene is very close to an actual event she witnessed at a basketball tournament.

Sylvia lives at Crescent Beach, Nova Scotia, very close to a town like the fictional town of Richmond where Jay lives.



Selected Awards

A recipient of a Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence

Some Other Books by Sylvia Gunnery

I'm Locker 145, Who Are You? Scholastic, 1984
We're Friends, Aren't We? Scholastic, 1986
Chewing Gum and Other Crimes, Scholastic, 1987
Taking Sides, Scholastic, 1991
Crossing the Line, Scholastic, 1998
Menace and Mischief, Stoddart Kids, 1999
Robin's Impossible, Crazy Idea, Pottersfield Press, 2001
Personal Best, James Lorimer, 2005

Educational:

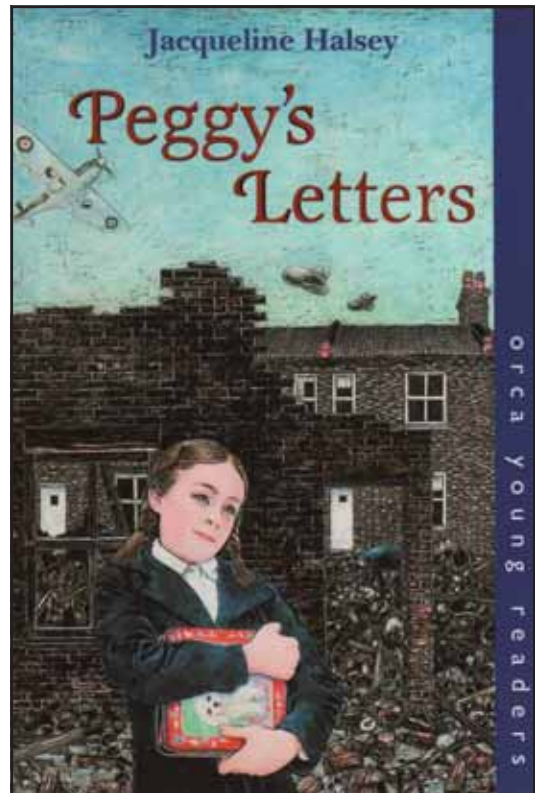
Just Write! Pembroke, 1998
Crow's Busy Day, Curriculum Plus 2004
Who's At the Door? Curriculum Plus 2004

Peggy's Letters

by Jacqueline Halsey

Set in London towards the end of the Second World War, Peggy together with her Mum and baby brother take shelter in a butcher's shop while an air raid is taking place. Reaching home they discover that their house has been bombed. Everything is lost including Peggy's precious biscuit tin of letters from her father. With no other option, the family moves in with Peggy's grumpy Grandfather. Against a background of air raids and food rationing, Peggy adjusts to life in her Grandfather's house, a new school, and her mother going out to work. She makes friends with a boy named Spud whose passion for scavenging bombsites leads to more than one surprising discovery.

Over the last few years the television news has been filled with horrific images from war ravaged countries in the Middle East. I was particularly moved by the courage of women and children living in these war zones. Daily life such as shopping, cooking and washing have to go on no matter what is happening outside your door. As I watched these pictures, I remembered my mother's stories about her life in war-torn London. It made me think, how in wartime, even a simple walk to the store can turn into a dangerous expedition. I decided to write a picture book about a wartime shopping trip. This grew into a novel for young readers called "Peggy's Letters." The story is entirely made up but many of the background stories come from my mother's memories.



Thematic Links:

WW11

The Blitz, bombs, air raids, Civilian life during the war

Effect of war on children

Grandparents and children

Prized possessions

For more information on the time in history from a child's point of view: BBC website: The People's War. People who experienced the Second World War first hand are now in their senior years. This site collects personal wartime memories and anecdotes before they are lost forever. It is well organized and you can easily find children's stories.

Activity Ideas:

- Try some British bangers (sausages)
- Find out what food was rationed and the quantities you would have been allowed each week. Make up your own system of rationing – ration books, coupons etc. How would you feed yourself if there wasn't much food in the super markets? What food could you get for free? What food would be really scarce? Where does our food come from? How far does it travel? Why was Halifax so important to Britain during the war years?
- Factories would be making war related items so basic items were hard, if not impossible, to find. Recycling and re-using were a necessity not a choice. Any ideas?
- Many children were evacuated to the country during the war. Would you rather stay with your family and face the bombs or go away and be safe?

HACKMATAACK

2007

Jacqueline Halsey

author of *Peggy's Letters*

I was born in London England. After many years globetrotting I discovered Nova Scotia where I have lived with my family for the last twenty-five years. I'm a writer, artist, potter and avid reader. I like sailing, whale watching, cats and adventures. For the last fifteen years, I have worked in the youth services department of Alderney Gate Library, Halifax. My days are filled with books, rhymes, songs, puppets and lots of children to share them with. How much fun is that.



Selected Awards

The Gran Plan, The Joyce Barkhouse Award for Children's Literature 3rd Place, Atlantic Writing Competition

Some Other Books by Jacqueline Halsey

The Gran Plan, Scholastic. Literacy for the Early Years, School Reading Program. To be released Fall 2006