

SMALL PRINT

A closer look at some of the books for burgeoning readers that are making a big impact this fall

By Liam O'Donnell

The cool fall air may have blown away the warm days of summer, but it has also carried to us a host of new books for kids from Canadian publishers. Penguins, pirates, new friends and old all make an appearance in the Fall 2009 releases. This overview will give you taste of what's on offer in the coming months.

Revolutionaries and Penguins

We were all young once, and Emilie Smith and Margarita Kenefic Tejada's new book, *Viva Zapata* from Tradewind Books, has a lot fun making that point.

Illustrated by Stefan Czernecki, *Viva Zapata* introduces readers to a very young Emiliano Zapata, the Mexican revolutionary hero who changed the face of Mexico fighting for the rights of the poor and oppressed. When a gang of banditos steals all of Zapata's horses, the young boy is eager to join the search party but is rebuffed for being too young. Undeterred, he sets out on his own to track down the banditos and rescue his horses. When he comes face to face with the horse thieves, Zapata must use his wit and humour to take back what has been stolen. With a light touch of foreshadowing and simple black and white illustrations, the authors have created a fun way to introduce young readers to a historical figure who made a dif-

ference in the lives of millions.

Readers are introduced to two characters they'll not soon forget in Patricia Storms' new picture book, *The Pirate and the Penguin*, published by Owlkids. Penguin lives in the South Pole where all his penguin pals like to do is practice yoga and daydream about practicing yoga. Penguin wants fun, adventure and a life that is filled with more than snow caps and glaciers. Far away, sailing the high seas, Pirate wants nothing more than to set anchor and relax. He's looking for inner peace, not the raucous, treasure-hunting life of adventure his

pirate crew is clamouring for. When Penguin's ice floe crashes into Pirate's ship, the pair sees the chance to finally live the life they want. Inspired by the Prince and the Pauper, Storms' tale of two identities encourages readers to be true to themselves. In addition to a fun

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tale, the author/illustrator packs each page with hidden jokes, visual gags and goodies that will ensure *The Pirate and the Penguin* will become a well-read and well-loved classic for pirates and penguins of all ages.

Being true to yourself isn't easy when you feel all alone in the world. Tania Duprey Stehlik and Vanja Vuleta Jovanovic's new picture book, *Violet*, published by Second Story Press, offers a



When her red mother explains that combining her father's blue and her mother's red created a beautiful purple or violet, the story's hero (and reader) is empowered to celebrate her own uniqueness.

unique approach to explaining difference to young readers. Violet is purple in a world filled with kids who are red, yellow and blue. On the first day at her new school, a classmate asks why Violet is purple and not blue like her father? Violet's confusion carries her home and leads her to question why she is not like the other kids at school. When her red mother explains that combining her father's blue and her mother's red created a beautiful purple or violet, the story's hero (and reader) is empowered to celebrate her own uniqueness. This simple, smart, tale is a great way for adults to introduce the concept of difference to young people, opening the way to positive discussions, insights and opportunities for us all to be proud of who we are.

Children everywhere will be delighted to share another adventure with their favourite barnyard threesome: Chicken, Pig and Cow, in Ruth Ohi's new picture book *Chicken, Pig, Cow On the Move*, published by Annick Press. Fresh from their first expedition beyond the Popsicle-stick barn, the three friends are feeling a bit cramped in their warm but crowded home. They decide to explore Girl's house for a new place to live. Under the couch is too scary, the fuzzy slippers too fuzzy, but Girl's dollhouse seems just right. Or is it? Even the youngest of readers will giggle and smile at Ohi's charming new book, which sets out to show that home is where the heart is.

Old Words and Old Friends

Middle readers have a chance to dig deep into the origins of the English language with *Camp Fossil Eyes*, written by Mark Abley and illustrated by Kathryn Adams, published by Annick Press.

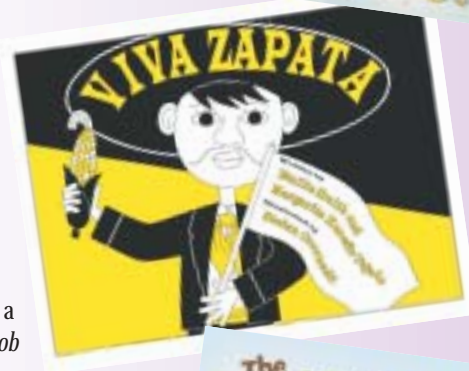
Shipped off to summer camp in the badlands, 15-year-old Jill and her brother Alex discover a love of language when they spend their summer delving into the mysteries of ancient words fossilized in rocks in the region. Along the way, they discover the ancient origins of modern words like television, pickle and even podcast. Packed with facts and fun illustrations, *Camp Fossil Eyes* provides an entertaining, accessible way for readers aged nine to 11 to discover the history of their language and insights on where it's headed. This is an ideal book for educators and parents looking to inspire readers to see our very old language in a very new way.

Tundra Books is set to introduce an old children's literature hero to a whole new audience with the release of Mordecai Richler's classic Jacob Two-Two books. This time around the champion of Child Power gets new covers, new inside illustration and even a new adventure. The new editions of *Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang*, *Jacob Two-Two and the Dinosaur* and *Jacob Two-Two's First Spy Case* each come with new illustrations in a compact format perfect for readers from two plus two plus two years old and up. From tackling fearsome wrestlers to escaping the Canadian government with a pet dinosaur, each of Richler's Jacob Two-Two stories is a hilarious romp through the world of childhood imagination. Added to these adventures is *Jacob Two-Two on the High Seas*, written by Cary Fagan, published for the first time this fall. When Jacob Two-Two's family moves to Canada on board the SS Spring-a-Leak, he meets acrobats, sea captains, even a failed toy inventor. But all is not well when Jacob spots a series of mysterious clues: an eye

patch, a talking parrot and ship flying the skull and crossbones flag. Are Jacob and his family being stalked by pirates? Fans new and old will relish the chance to revisit Jacob Two-Two's imaginative world of adventure.

Skating Stars and Brave Books

Young adult readers have a range of top titles to choose from this fall season. Award-winning author, Norma Charles straps on her skates her new novel *Chasing a Star*, published by Ronsdale Press. Sophie LaGrange can't believe her luck when she learns that Olympic skating great Barbara Ann Scott is coming to her town to skate in the



Hollywood Ice Review. Although her family can't afford tickets, Sophie is determined to meet her idol. Sneaking out to the local arena, where Barbara Ann is practicing, puts her right in the path of a local biker gang meeting nearby. Matters get worse when Sophie

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learns the gang is planning to hurt Barbara Ann Scott. Sophie's determination to save her idol from danger provides an ideal mix of adventure and real life history that will engage skating fans ages nine and up. Included in the novel is information about Barbara Ann Scott's career and photos of her in action, making this a great resource

for educators looking to introduce readers to an important part of Canada's sporting heritage.

Also of interest to educators is *thinandbeautiful.com*, a novel about one girl's struggle with anorexia and the encouragement she receives online from her pro-anorexia community. Inspired by her own battle with anorexia, author Liane Shaw paints a darkly desperate and yet hopeful account

of one girl's struggle with her body image. Published by Second Story Press and accompanied with a resource-packed website, *thinandbeautiful.com* is a brave book that succeeds in both being a compelling read and a great tool to spark a dialogue among teens around beauty, media pressure and the effects it has on us all.

That is just the tip of the book pile on offer this fall for retailers across Canada. These titles should get your autumn season off to a good start and provide customers with a good book to curl up with as winter approaches. **CBA**

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Liam O'Donnell is the author of many books and graphic novels for children. His latest graphic novel, *Media Meltdown*, the fourth title in the *Graphic Guide Adventure series* is published this fall from Orca Book Publishers. Visit Liam online at: liamodonnell.com.

A BOOKSTORE'S 'CENTS' OF COMMUNITY

Tattletales proves that 'A Little Change Can Make a Big Difference' with their Pennies/Coins for Books Campaign

By Emily Sinkins

What if you could harness all that spare change that lies largely ignored—the nuisance pennies, the couch nickels, the pocket dimes—and transform it into books for school children in your community? Now, what if the process were highly labour intensive (those coins won't roll themselves)? Well, you might be less inclined, but at Tattletales Books, home of the Pennies/Coins for Books Campaign, owner Anne Whebby believes the payoff—goodwill generated among local schools, the books that will set children on a lifelong reading journey—is well worth the effort.

Now in its fourth year, the campaign encourages schools to register for a coin-amassing operation over a set period of their choosing before the March deadline. When time is up, they bring their collection to Tattletales who turns what each school has raised into a store cred-

books that the program has placed in schools in the Halifax Regional School Board. The impressive results have won the initiative many fans, and enable the store to make use of publisher co-op funds to offset some of the associated costs.

While the campaign has clearly catapulted an eager community into action, Tattletales continues to add incentive. In an information packet sent to interested schools Tattletales provides plenty of creative ways to inject fun and learning into the penny-saving process. Penny activities that incorporate science experiments, magic tricks and creative writing exercises combine to create new appreciation for the power of a penny.

Sweetening the pot this time around is Tattletales' promise of a \$2010 cash bonus to the school that brings in the most per capita as part of their 2010 campaign.

For Whebby the rewards are in contributing a valued service in her community—fostering close ties with local schools, cultivating their business, and most importantly building enthusiasm about reading among the children who will return to the bookstore time and time again to trade in their own hard-won pennies for literary adventure. **CBA**

IT ALL ADDS UP

How a little change becomes a lot of books...

Last year, a school that raised \$800 in coins received \$200 of Tattletales' funds for a total of \$1000. When that school spent their funds, they received a 20 per cent discount so they were able to purchase \$1250 worth of books for the \$1000 credit they received.

Over three years the campaign has brought in \$211,000 in collections which, with the Tattletales' school discount applied, amounts to \$263,000 worth of books that the program has placed in schools in the Halifax Regional School Board.

it, while adding to it a credit equivalent to that school's percentage of the store's overall take (which includes sponsorship and customer-generated donations). All that plus the 20 per cent school library discount translates into a lot of reading material for participating schools.

Those pennies also add up to a lot of books. Over three years the campaign has brought in \$211,000 in collections which, with the Tattletales' school discount applied, amounts to \$263,000 worth of