

Finding Children's Books that Celebrate Indigenous People & Cultures

LOOK FOR BOOKS THAT:

- ▶ are written and illustrated by indigenous people,
- ▶ feature indigenous people in a positive light (rather than perpetuating stereotypes),
- ▶ feature an indigenous person as a main character (rather than a supporting character),
- ▶ feature indigenous people in a range of settings (as a hero, in everyday life, in the present day, in an historical setting, etc.), and
- ▶ include “indigenous characters who demonstrate the ability to achieve success on their own terms and in the context of their cultures or communities, as successful problem-solvers independent of non-Native teachers, social workers, and other authority figures.”

These suggestions are adapted from the American Indian Youth Literature Award Criteria, available here: <https://ailanet.org/app/uploads/2019/03/AIYLA-Criteria-updated-March-2019.pdf>



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Cooperative Extension

WHERE TO FIND CHILDREN'S BOOKS

DATABASES

Diverse Book Finder <https://diversebookfinder.org/>

- ▶ Database of picture books
- ▶ Search feature includes an option to filter by “Tribal Affiliation/Homelands” and “Race/Culture”
- ▶ Compiled by a research team at Bates College

Books with Characters of Color <https://tinyurl.com/BooksPOC>

- ▶ Database of children's books that include characters of color (includes indigenous characters)
- ▶ Only searchable by child's age (preschoolers to teens)
- ▶ Compiled by Common Sense Media

WEBSITES

Where to Find Diverse Books <https://diversebooks.org/resources-old/where-to-find-diverse-books/>

- ▶ List of websites that provide recommendations for books with diverse characters. Includes an American Indian section.
- ▶ Compiled by We Need Diverse Books, a non-profit “that advocates essential changes in the publishing industry to produce and promote literature that reflects and honors the lives of all young people.”

BOOK LISTS

Best Books List from the American Indians in Children's Literature Blog <https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/p/best-books.html>

- ▶ Annual list of books by or about indigenous people
- ▶ Compiled by Dr. Debbie Reese of Nambé Pueblo and other Native people

American Indian Youth Literature Award from the American Indian Library Association <https://ailanet.org/activities/american-indian-youth-literature-award/>

- ▶ List of award-winning books.
- ▶ Three award categories: Picture Book, Middle Grade Book, and Young Adult Book.
- ▶ Compiled by the American Indian Library Association

You can also contact local tribal museums, cultural centers, language preservation offices, and colleges.

- ▶ A list of tribal colleges in the US can be found here: <https://sites.ed.gov/whiaiane/tribes-tcus/tribal-colleges-and-universities/>