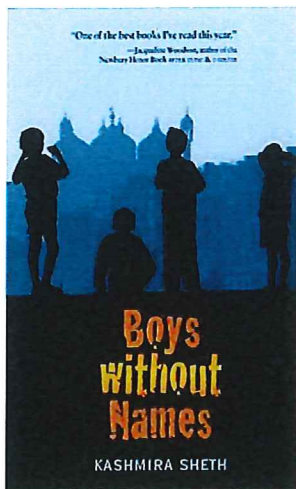


SOCIAL JUSTICE LITERATURE CIRCLE NOVELS

Below is a list of young adult novels on a variety of social issues. 8 of these novels have been included in this kit. Feel free to add/swap any of the titles below, as you see fit. It is strongly suggested that you read each of the books you plan to use for your Literature Circles before you begin the assignment with you class; this will help you choose books with content appropriate for the grades you teach, help you assess reading levels, and enable you to fully participate in group discussions. Some of the books have content that is quite realistic and heavy - you will want to preview each book before hand to make sure it is suitable for the grade you teach. Stolen, Red Wolf, and Indian Horse, for example, have content more suitable for older students. The descriptions below can help you describe the books to your students during book talks.



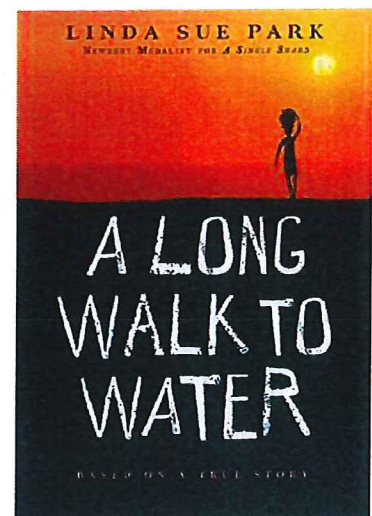
Boys Without Names - Kashmira Sheth

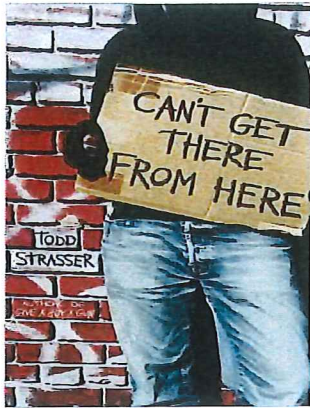
For eleven-year-old Gopal and his family, life in their rural Indian village is over: *We stay, we starve*, his baba has warned. They flee to the big city of Mumbai in hopes of finding work and a brighter future. Gopal is eager to help support his struggling family, so when a stranger approaches him with the promise of a factory job, he jumps at the offer.

But there is no factory, just a stuffy sweatshop where he and five other boys are forced to work for no money and little food. But late one night, when Gopal decides to share stories, he realizes that storytelling might be the boys' key to survival. If he can make them feel more like brothers than enemies, their lives will be more bearable in the shop-and they might even find a way to escape.

A Long Walk to Water - Linda Sue Park

A Long Walk to Water begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about two eleven-year-olds in Sudan, a girl in 2008 and a boy in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two hours' walk from her home: she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the "lost boys" of Sudan, refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay. Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor, and his story goes on to intersect with Nya's in an astonishing and moving way.





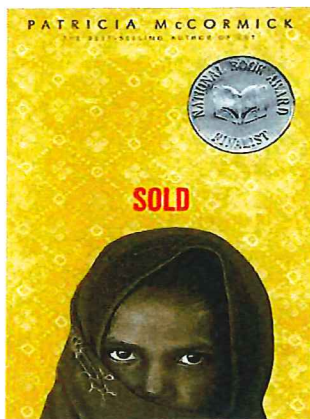
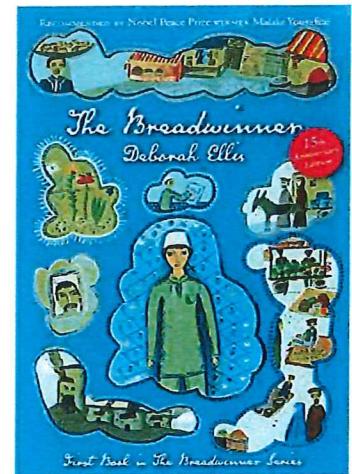
Can't Get There From Here - Todd Strasser

Her street name is Maybe. She lives with a tribe of homeless teens -- runaways and throwaways, kids who have no place to go other than the cold city streets, and no family except for one another. Abused, abandoned, and forgotten, they struggle against the cold, hunger, and constant danger. With the frigid winds of January comes a new girl: Tears, a twelve-year-old whose mother doesn't believe Tears's stepfather abuses her. As the other kids start to disappear -- victims of violence, addiction, and exposure -- Maybe tries to help Tears get off the streets...if it's not already too late.

The Breadwinner - Deborah Ellis

Eleven-year-old Parvana lives with her family in one room of a bombed-out apartment building in Kabul, Afghanistan's capital city. Parvana's father -- a history teacher until his school was bombed and his health destroyed -- works from a blanket on the ground in the marketplace, reading letters for people who cannot read or write. One day, he is arrested for the crime of having a foreign education, and the family is left without someone who can earn money or even shop for food.

As conditions for the family grow desperate, only one solution emerges. Forbidden to earn money as a girl, Parvana must transform herself into a boy, and become the breadwinner.

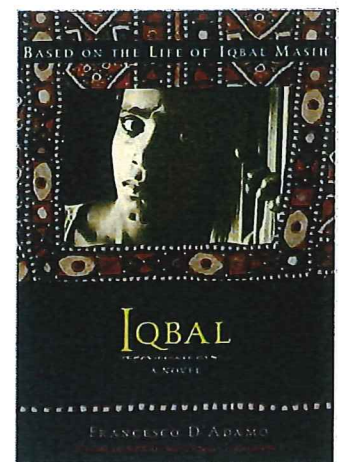


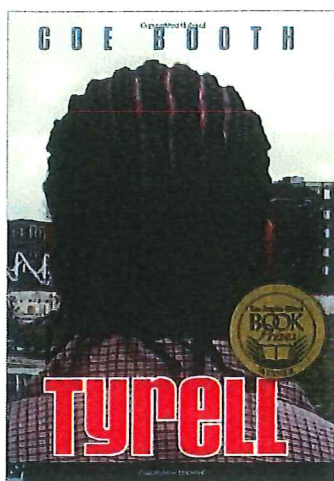
Sold - Patricia McCormick

Lakshmi is a thirteen-year-old girl who lives with her family in a small hut on a mountain in Nepal. When the harsh Himalayan monsoons wash away all that remains of the family's crops, Lakshmi's stepfather says she must leave home and take a job to support her family. Soon learns the unthinkable truth: she has been sold into prostitution. Then the day comes when she must make a decision--will she risk everything for a chance to reclaim her life?

Iqbal - Francesco D'Adamo

When young Iqbal is sold into slavery at a carpet factory, his arrival changes everything for the other overworked and abused children there. It is Iqbal who explains to them that despite their master's promises, he plans on keeping them as his slaves indefinitely. But it is also Iqbal who inspires the other children to look to a future free from toil...and is brave enough to show them how to get there. This moving fictionalized account of the real Iqbal Masih is told through the voice of Fatima, a young Pakistani girl whose life is changed by Iqbal's courage.





Tyrell - Coe Booth

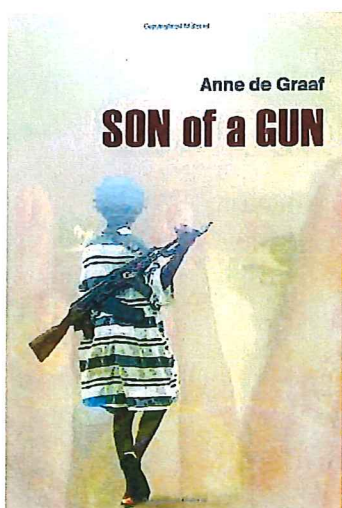
Tyrell is a young African American teen who can't get a break. He's living (for now) with his spacedout mother and little brother in a homeless shelter. His father's in jail. His girlfriend supports him, but he doesn't feel good enough for her-and seems to be always on the verge of doing the wrong thing around her. There's another girl at the homeless shelter who is also after him, although the desires there are complicated. Tyrell feels he needs to score some money to make things better. Will he end up following in his father's footsteps?

No Safe Place - Deborah Ellis

Orphaned and plagued with the grief of losing everyone he loves, fifteen-year-old Abdul has made a long, fraught journey from his war-torn home in Baghdad, only to end up in The Jungle -- the squalid, makeshift migrant community in Calais.

When an altercation at the soup kitchen ends up with him accidentally stabbing a policeman, Abdul has to flee, and in desperation he takes a spot in a small boat heading to England. A sudden skirmish leaves the boat stalled in the middle of the Channel, the pilot dead, and four young people remaining -- Abdul; Rosalia, a Romani girl who has escaped from the white slave trade; Cheslav, gone AWOL from a Russian military school; and Jonah, the boat pilot's ten-year-old nephew.

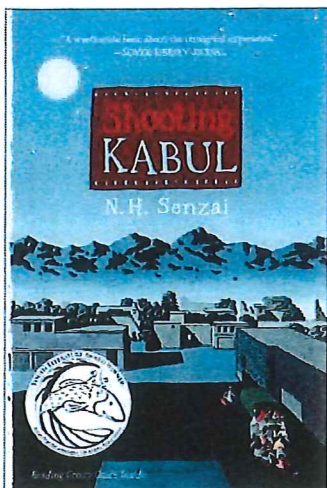
The four of them end up hijacking a yacht and, despite their fear and mistrust, they form a kind of makeshift family. And as the authorities close in on them, they find refuge in an unusual place -- a child's secret cave on the English coast.



Son of a Gun - Anne de Graaf

This powerful and gripping story describes the journey of a brother and sister, eight-year-old Lucky and ten-year-old Nopi, who are kidnapped from school and forced to become child soldiers in Liberia's fourteen-year-long civil war.

Lucky and Nopi manage to escape, but must continue fleeing. Even after they are reunited with their parents, they both know the pieces of their lives will never fit together like they used to. When will the war really be over, and when will they get to have the childhood they still dream about?



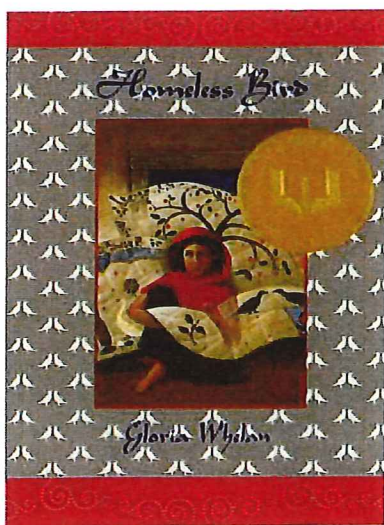
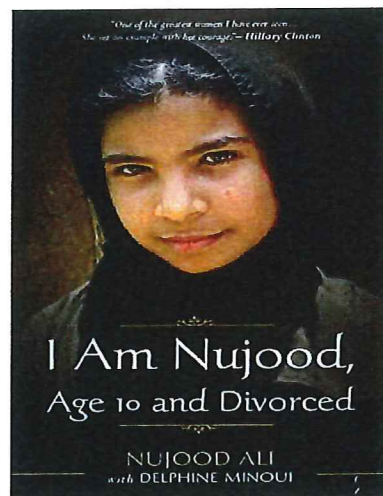
Shooting Kabul - N.H. Senzai

In the summer of 2001, twelve year old Fadi's parents make the difficult decision to illegally leave Afghanistan and move the family to the United States. When their underground transport arrives at the rendezvous point, chaos ensues, and Fadi is left dragging his younger sister Mariam through the crush of people. But Mariam accidentally lets go of his hand and becomes lost in the crowd, just as Fadi is snatched up into the truck. With Taliban soldiers closing in, the truck speeds away, leaving Mariam behind.

Adjusting to life in the United States isn't easy for Fadi's family and as the events of September 11th unfold the prospects of locating Mariam in a war torn Afghanistan seem slim. When a photography competition with a grand prize trip to India is announced, Fadi sees his chance to return to Afghanistan and find his sister. But can one photo really bring Mariam home? Based in part on the Ms. Senzai's husband's own experience fleeing his home in Soviet controlled Afghanistan in the 1970s, *Shooting Kabul* is a powerful story of hope, love, and perseverance.

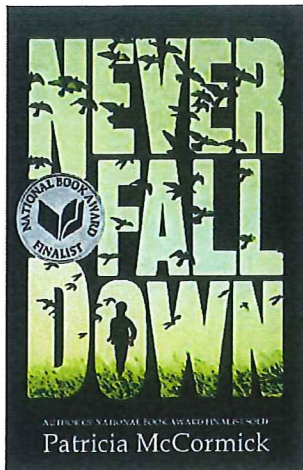
I am Nujood: Age 10 and Divorced - Nujood Ali

Nujood Ali's childhood came to an abrupt end in 2008 when her father arranged for her to be married to a man three times her age. With harrowing directness, Nujood tells of abuse at her husband's hands and of her daring escape. With the help of local advocates and the press, Nujood obtained her freedom—an extraordinary achievement in Yemen, where almost half of all girls are married under the legal age. Nujood's courageous defiance of both Yemeni customs and her own family has inspired other young girls in the Middle East to challenge their marriages. Hers is an unforgettable story of tragedy, triumph, and courage.



Homeless Bird - Gloria Whelan

Like many girls her age in India, thirteen-year-old Koly faces her arranged marriage with hope and courage. But Koly's story takes a terrible turn when in the wake of the ceremony, she discovers she's been horribly misled; her life has been sold for a dowry. In prose both graceful and unflinching, this powerful novel relays the story of a rare young woman, who even when cast out into a brutal current of time-worn tradition, sets out to forge her own remarkable future. Inspired by a newspaper article about the real thirteen-year-old widows in India today, this universally acclaimed best-selling novel, characterized by spare, lyrical language and remarkable detail, transports readers into the heart of a gripping tale of hope.



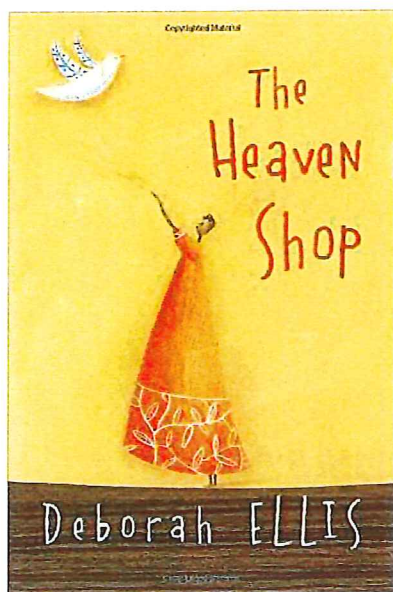
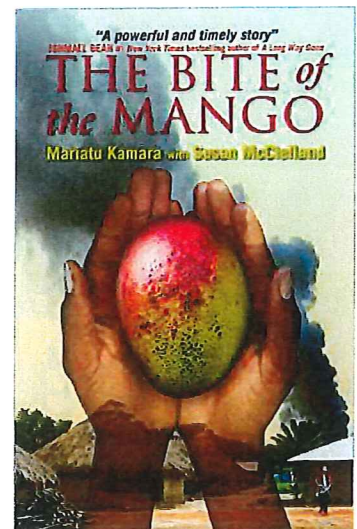
Never Fall Down - Patricia McCormick

When soldiers arrive in his hometown, Arn is just a normal little boy. But after the soldiers march the entire population into the countryside, his life is changed forever. Arn is separated from his family and assigned to a labor camp: working in the rice paddies under a blazing sun, he sees the other children dying before his eyes. One day, the soldiers ask if any of the kids can play an instrument. Arn's never played a note in his life, but he volunteers. This decision will save his life, but it will pull him into the very center of what we know today as the Killing Fields. And just as the country is about to be liberated, Arn is handed a gun and forced to become a soldier.

The Bite of Mango - Mariatu Kamara

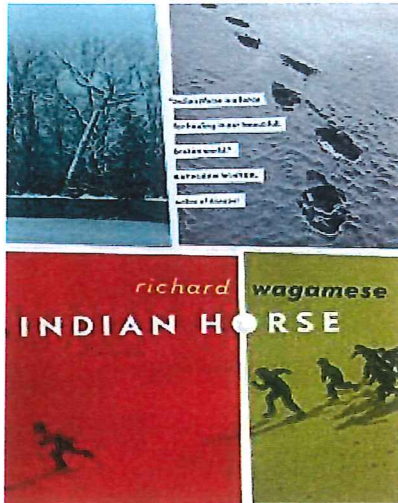
As a child in a small rural village in Sierra Leone, Mariatu Kamara lived peacefully surrounded by family and friends. But when 12-year-old Mariatu set out for a neighboring village, she never arrived. Heavily armed rebel soldiers, many no older than children themselves, attacked and tortured Mariatu. During this brutal act of senseless violence they cut off both her hands. With no parents or living adult to support her and living in a refugee camp, she turned to begging in the streets of Freetown.

As told to her by Mariatu, journalist Susan McClelland has written the heartbreaking true story of the brutal attack, its aftermath and Mariatu's eventual arrival in Toronto where she began to pull together the pieces of her broken life with courage, astonishing resilience and hope.



The Heaven Shop- Deborah Ellis

At her father's funeral, Binti's grandmother utters the words that no one in Malawi wants to hear. Binti's father and her mother before him, dies of AIDS. Binti, her sister, and brother are separated and sent to the home of relatives who can barely tolerate their presence. Ostracized by their extended family, the orphans are treated like the lowest servants. With her brother far away and her sister wallowing in her own sorrow, Binti can hardly contain her rage. She, Binti Phirim, was once a child star of a popular radio program. Now she is scraping to survive. Binti always believed she was special, now she is nothing but a common AIDS orphan. Binti Phiri is not about to give up. Even as she clings to hope that her former life will be restored, she must face a greater challenge. If she and her brother and sister are to reunited, Binti Phiri will have to look outside herself and find a new way to be special.



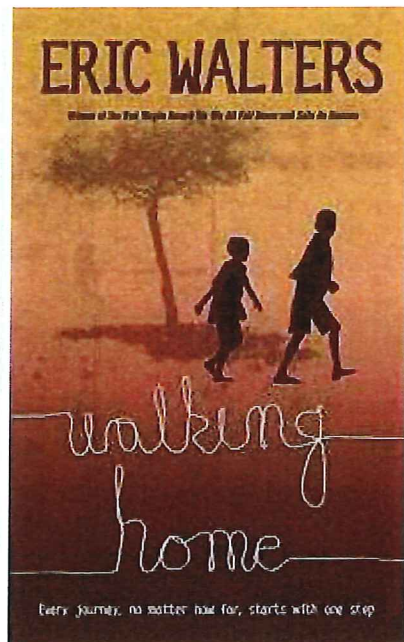
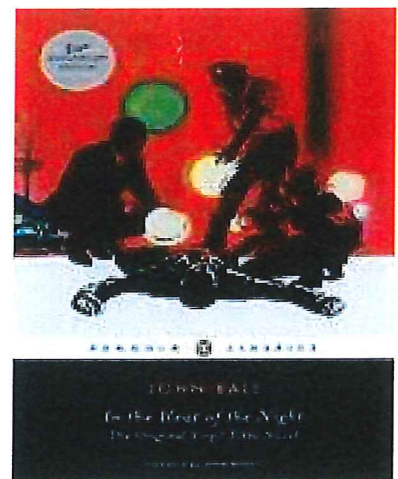
Indian Horse - Richard Wagamese

Saul Indian Horse is dying. Tucked away in a hospice high above the clash and clang of a big city, he embarks on a marvelous journey of imagination back through the life he led as a northern Ojibway, with all its sorrows and joys.

For Saul, taken forcibly from the land and his family when he's sent to residential school, salvation comes for a while through his incredible gifts as a hockey player. But in the harsh realities of 1960s Canada, he battles obdurate racism and the spirit-destroying effects of cultural alienation and displacement.

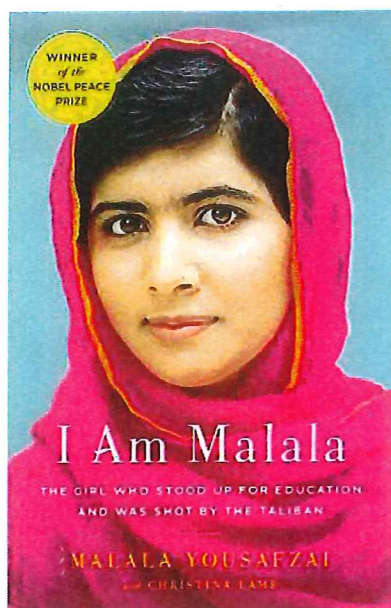
In the Heat of the Night - John Ball

A small southern town in the 1960s. A musician found dead on the highway. It's no surprise when white detectives arrest a black man for the murder. What is a surprise is that the black man—Virgil Tibbs—is not the killer but a skilled homicide detective, passing through racially tense Wells, South Carolina, on his way back to California. Even more surprising, Wells's new police chief recruits Tibbs to help with the investigation. But Tibbs's presence in town rubs some of the locals the wrong way, and it won't be long before the martial arts-trained detective has to fight not just for justice, but also for his own safety.



Walking Home - Eric Walters

13-year-old Muchoki and his younger sister, Jata, can barely recognize what's become of their lives. Only weeks ago they lived in a bustling Kenyan village, going to school, playing soccer with friends, and helping at their parents' store. But sudden political violence has killed their father and destroyed their home. Now, Muchoki, Jata, and their ailing mother live in a tent in an overcrowded refugee camp. By day, they try to fend off hunger and boredom. By night, their fears about the future are harder to keep at bay. Driven by both hope and desperation, Muchoki and Jata set off on what seems like an impossible journey: to walk hundreds of kilometers to find their last remaining family.



I am Malala - Malala Yousafzai

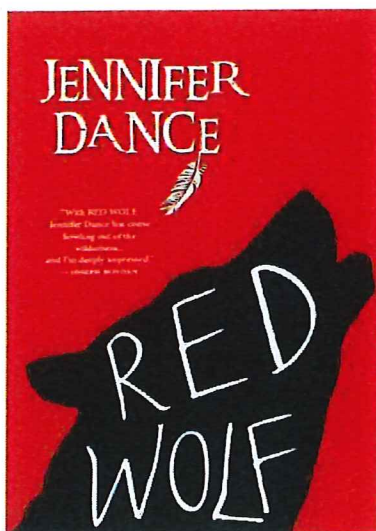
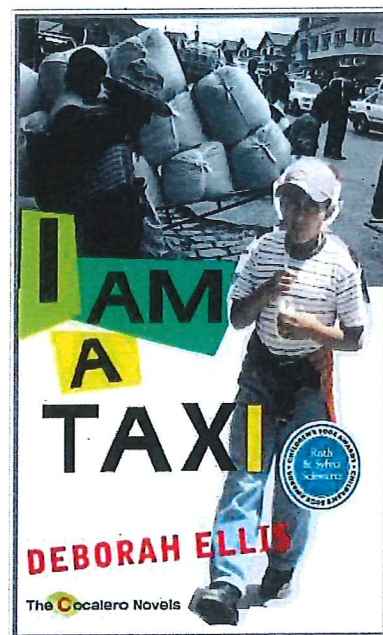
When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education.

On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive.

Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize.

I am a Taxi - Deborah Ellis

For twelve-year-old Diego and his family, home is a prison in Cochabamba, Bolivia. His parents farmed coca, a traditional Bolivian medicinal plant, until they got caught in the middle of the government's war on drugs and were mistakenly convicted of drug possession. Diego's parents are locked up, but he can come and go: to school, to the market to sell his mother's hand knitted goods, and to work as a "taxi," running errands for other prisoners. But then his little sister temporarily runs off while under his watch, earning his mother a heavy fine. The debt and dawning realization of his hopeless situation make him vulnerable to his friend Mando's plan to make big money, fast. Soon, Diego is deep in the jungle, working as a virtual slave in an illegal cocaine operation. As his situation becomes more and more dangerous, he knows he must take a terrible risk if he ever wants to see his family again.



Red Wolf - Jennifer Dance

In the late 1800s, both Native people and wolves are being forced from the land. Starving and lonely, an orphaned timber wolf is befriended by a boy named Red Wolf. But under the Indian Act, Red Wolf is forced to attend a residential school far from the life he knows, and the wolf is alone once more. Courage, love and fate reunite the pair, and they embark on a perilous journey home. But with winter closing in, will Red Wolf and Crooked Ear survive? And if they do, what will they find?