



Grades 4 to 12

English Language Arts

**Authorized Novels and Nonfiction
Annotated List**



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<i>Parents</i>	
<i>Students</i>	
<i>Teachers</i>	✓

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FOREWORD

Authorized Novels and Nonfiction Titles for Grades 4–12

The Learning and Teaching Resources Branch of Alberta Education is proud to present the **new list** of authorized novels and nonfiction titles for grades 4–12.

- The grades 4–6 list is completely new—the first elementary novels and nonfiction list authorized by Alberta Education.
- The grades 7–9 list has been completely updated since the former 1990 list.
- The 1994 grades 10–12 list has been “refreshed” with seven to twelve new titles added for each senior high school course.

This annotated list provides short quotation summaries, suggested themes and literary features. It also identifies potentially sensitive issues. This list also includes video titles that have been authorized to support some elementary and junior high school titles. The video series “Good Conversation” presents original interviews with authors. The video series “All About the Book” is billed as a “kid’s video guide” to the text. Both series are produced by Tim Podell Productions and can be ordered directly from ACCESS: The Education Station at:

ACCESS: The Education Station
Learning and Skills Television of Alberta Ltd.
3720 – 76 Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB
T6B 2N9
780-440-7728
<https://estore.accesslearning.com/>

Review and Selection Process

In 2003, Alberta Education contracted specialists in children’s and young adult’s literature to develop lists of potential novels and full-length nonfiction titles for each grade division under review. Titles that were out-of-print or unavailable in Canada were not considered for inclusion on the new list.

Selected school jurisdictions were then invited to form teams of teachers to evaluate these potential titles for inclusion on the recommended list. The school boards who participated were:

Grades 4–6: Edmonton Catholic Separate School District No. 7

Grades 7–9: Edmonton Catholic Separate School District No. 7
and Parkland School Division No. 70

Grades 10–12: Calgary School District No. 19 and Rocky View School Division No. 41

All short-listed titles were read, reviewed and validated by a minimum of three readers. As the teacher review teams read the texts, they looked for and selected titles that:

- offered a variety of human experiences
- provided an interesting and challenging reading experience suitable for the age, ability and social maturity of the students
- elicited thoughtful responses and a critical appreciation of literature
- illustrated literary merit, with a range of style and structure
- broadened student understanding of social, historical, geographical and cultural diversity
- encouraged students to develop a sensitivity to and an understanding of individual differences, such as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability
- used language effectively and responsibly, and used language that was essential to the integrity of the work.

In addition, the potential titles were analyzed to ensure that guidelines for recognizing diversity and promoting respect had been met. Several books were submitted for Aboriginal or other content validation.



Please note that Canadian titles are identified with this icon.

Selecting Titles for the Classroom

The teacher must exercise care in selecting learning resources appropriate for their students.

Alberta Education and the teacher review teams strongly recommend that teachers read the books prior to selection and carefully consider the sensitivities of both the student audience and the community.

The teacher review teams carefully considered grade appropriateness when assigning texts to this list. Teachers who consider a text from a different grade or course to be appropriate for their students may wish to coordinate their choice with their colleagues.

Titles must be selected in a context of respect for the values of others. If a student, for whatever reason, is uncomfortable reading an assigned book, an alternative choice should be offered.

Teachers of all grades are encouraged to refer to the Choosing Resources section in the *Senior High School English Language Arts Guide to Implementation*, 2003.¹

1. The *Senior High School Guide to Implementation* is available on the Alberta Education Web site at http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/english/ela10.asp. It is also available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre at <http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca>.

The *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12*² describes Controversial Issues as follows:

Controversial issues are those topics that are publicly sensitive and upon which there is no consensus of values or beliefs. They include topics on which reasonable people may sincerely disagree. Opportunities to deal with these issues are an integral part of student learning in Alberta.

Studying controversial issues is important in preparing students to participate responsibly in a democratic and pluralistic society. Such study provides opportunities to develop the ability to think clearly, to reason logically, to open-mindedly and respectfully examine different points of view, and to make sound judgements.

Teachers, students and others participating in studies or discussions of controversial issues shall exercise sensitivity to ensure that students and others are not ridiculed, embarrassed, or intimidated for positions that they hold on controversial issues.

Controversial issues:

- represent alternative points of view, subject to the condition that information presented is not restricted by any federal or provincial law
- reflect the maturity, capabilities and educational needs of the students
- meet the requirements of provincially prescribed and approved courses and programs of study and education programs
- reflect the neighbourhood and community in which the school is located, as well as provincial, national and international contexts.

Controversial issues that have been anticipated by the teacher, and those that may arise incidentally during instruction, should be used by the teacher to promote critical inquiry and teach thinking skills.

The school plays a supportive role to parents in the areas of values and moral development, and shall handle parental decisions in regard to controversial issues with respect and sensitivity.

This information about controversial issues should be used as a guide in presenting various points of view about an issue raised in a novel or piece of nonfiction. Teachers should also investigate what policies their school system has in place that will assist in responding to inquiries from parents or members of the community.

2. The *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12* is available on the Alberta Education Web site at http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/legislation. It is also available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre at <http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca>.

