



Monthly Booklist

November 2006

Picture books featuring contemporary
Native North Americans.

Children of Native America Today by Yvonne Wakim Dennis and Arlene Hirschfelder. (2003)
Ages 7-12

This informational book includes details about 25 Native American communities in the United States and features modern-day children in those communities. In the “Northeast” section, a two-page spread of Wabanaki territory (including Maine) is featured.

Jingle Dancer by Cynthia Leitich Smith. Pictures by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying Hwa Hu. (2000) Ages 4-8

Jenna is determined to dance at an upcoming powwow, but first she must gather enough jingles to wear on her dress. An author’s note offers more information about how people in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation live today, and also explains the Ojibway origins of jingle dancing.

Muskrat Will Be Swimming by Cheryl Savageau. Pictures by Robert Hynes (2006) Ages 5-9
A girl of Native American and French descent whose classmates call her a “lake rat” is comforted by a legend (adapted from a Joseph Bruchac tale) concerning Muskrat. Originally published ten years ago, this book was just reissued by Maine’s own Tilbury House.

SkySisters by Jan Bourdeau Waboose. Pictures by Brian Deines (2000) Ages 4-8
Two Ojibway sisters climb Coyote Hill on a cold winter night to see the SkySpirits. After waiting on the top of the hill, they see the Spirits: the Northern Lights. This story gently portrays both the relationship between two sisters and the relationship between humans and nature.

The Sugar Bush by Winona LaDuke and Waseyabin Kapashesit. (1999) Ages 3-9
Winona LaDuke is best known as a politician. This is the story of her maple-sugaring trip with her daughter, Wasey. Photographs show how sap from trees is transformed into syrup, while text explains that to Winona and Wasey’s people, the trees are sacred and the syrup is a gift.

Two Pairs of Shoes by Esther Sanderson. Pictures by David Beyer. (1990) Ages 3-7
Esther receives patent leather shoes *and* moccasins for her birthday, and learns “when and how to wear each pair.” Esther’s special relationship with her *Kokom* (Cree for “grandmother”) provides a context for this story about gift-giving and moving between two cultures.

Where Did You Get Your Moccasins? by Bernelda Wheeler. Pictures by Herman Bekkering. (1995) Ages 4-8

Jody brings his moccasins to school and tells how they were made. Written in a question-and-answer format, with black-and-white illustrations, this book works best as a conversation starter.