

A LASTING GIFT: READING

The Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians, in collaboration with the Tehama County Library, are introducing a new collection of Native American literature. These books represent works spanning generations by Native and Non-Native authors. **They provide the perspectives of diverse cultures and experiences of indigenous peoples.** The collection of books includes non-fiction and fictional pieces that are diverse enough to appeal to young children, youth, and adults. The books will be catalogued in the Corning library on Third Street in Corning, CA and made available for check-out by the public.

The book collection is part of the ongoing effort by the Tribe **to promote literacy throughout the community,** beginning with young children. All parents want their children to do well in school, and books are essential to their early learning. As young children are read to, they build their vocabulary and other early reading skills. A recent study out of Ohio State showed that **children that are read multiple books daily will have heard over a million more words by the age of five.**

One of the authors of study explained, *“Kids who hear more vocabulary words are going to be better prepared to see those words in print when they enter school... they are likely to pick up reading skills more quickly and easily.”*^[i] Children who are read to are given a lasting gift.

The benefits of regular reading extend to young people as well. Reading in elementary and middle school provides children a huge advantage. **Elementary students who**

read thirty minutes or more a day have significantly larger vocabularies and better thinking skills. Not surprisingly, avid readers become better writers. These benefits continue to grow as children enter secondary school. Further, **high school students who engage in reading for pleasure get higher grades in English, mathematics, science, and history than their non-reading peers.**^[ii] There is similar research that the effects of reading for pleasure extends into college.

The Tribe is hoping to draw Native and Non-native readers alike to the library to enjoy the fiction and non-fiction books. These books will **instill a greater appreciation of our continent’s diverse Indigenous peoples, histories and cultures.** Some of these books contain oral traditions and stories that have been passed on for generations. Reading these books helps us engage in conversation with the past. Books, as Barbara Tuchman reminds us, *“are carriers of civilization. Without books, history remains silent.”*^[iii] Books can bring change. They can increase our understanding and can even change our hearts.

The Everett Freeman Promise Neighborhood initiative (“Corning Promise”) continues to support projects that improve the developmental and educational outcomes in the Corning-Rancho Tehama communities. This is one of the many literacy projects supported by Corning Promise, the community arm of the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indian tribe.

NATIVE AMERICAN CHILDREN'S BOOKS
Recommended by *Native Readers*

BOOKS FOR PRESCHOOL
Sweetest Kulu
By Calina Kalok (Inuit)
Inhibit Media, Inc. 2014
Fry Bread
By Kevin Noble Maillard (Seminole)
Rising Brook Press, 2019
Wild Berries
by Julie Flett (Cree-Metis)
Simply Read books, 2013
My Heart Fills With Happiness
By Monique Gray Smith (Cree, Lakota)
Simply Read books, 2013

BOOKS FOR MIDDLE GRADES (4-7)
The Birchbark House
By Louise Erdrich (Ojibwa)
Hyperion, 1999
How I Became a Ghost
By Tim Tingle (Choctaw)
The Road Runner Press, 2013
Skeleton Man
By Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki)
HarperTrophy, 2001
Indian Shoes
By Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee Creek)
Harper Collins 2002

BOOKS FOR EARLY ELEMENTARY (K-3)
Jingle Dancer
By Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee Creek)
Harcourt Inc, 2000
When We Were Alone
By David A. Robertson (Cree)
Highwater Press, 2016
The Good Luck Cat
By Joy Harjo (Muscogee Creek)
Simply Read Books, 2013
We are Grateful: Otsalilga
By Tracy Sorell (Cherokee)
Charlesbridge, 2018

BOOKS FOR HIGH SCHOOL (8-12)
If I Ever Get Out of Here
By Eric Gameworth (Chondaga)
Arthur A. Levine Books, 2013
Hearts Unbroken
By Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee Creek)
Candlewick, 2018
The Lesser Blessed
By Richard Van Camp
Douglas and McIntyre, 1996
An Indigenous Peoples History of the United States for Young People
By Roxane Dunbar-Ortiz
Beacon Press, 2019

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CORNING LIBRARY
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CORNING PROMISE
Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians

TEHAMA COUNTY LIBRARY

[i] Jessica A. R. Logan, Laura M. Justice, Melike Yumus, Leydi Johana Chaparro-Moreno. When Children Are Not Read to at Home. Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics, 2019; 1 DOI: 10.1097/DBP.0000000000000657

[ii] Whitten, Christy, Sandra Labby, and Sam L. Sullivan. “The Impact of Pleasure Reading on Academic Success.” The Journal of Multidisciplinary Graduate Research 2, no. 4 (2016): 48-64. <https://www.shsu.edu/academics/education/journal-of-multidisciplinary-gr...>

[iii] [Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Nov. 1980), pp. 16-32]