



November is Indigenous People Month

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In America, we often learn of our history starting with European colonization, but there is a history that stretches far beyond three ships arriving on our shores. Indigenous People Month recognizes the complex history of our country. The term indigenous people simply means people who have lived on this land before many of our ancestors arrived by boat, plane, or crossed borders to get here. Often incorrectly called Indians, Indigenous Americans prefer to be called First Nations, Native Americans, or Indigenous People. Or you can simply refer to the particular tribe or language group the individual belongs to.

There are 562 Native Sovereign territories in the United States still adhering to a cultural history that spans centuries. Did you know Native territories are their own nations with their own educational systems and their own legal systems? No matter where you live in America, First Nation people had their own sophisticated societies before European colonization.

In November in America, we celebrate Thanksgiving with our families. Part of that tradition includes the story of Native People sharing a table with Pilgrims. But that's only a sliver of Native People's rich history on American land and the complex relationship they had with European colonizers. There is much to celebrate and learn about Indigenous People's Month from our fellow Americans.

Resources To Get You Started!

[Project 562](#)

In 2012 Matika Wilbur sold everything in her Seattle apartment and created Project 562 which reflects her commitment to visit, engage, and photograph all 562 plus Native American sovereign territories in the United States. Browse the gallery to find lovely photographs of current Native people.

[Native Land](#)

Enter your address to see who lived on the land before your family and learn more about the Nations and their people. Here at Brook Park, we share the land that the Kikapoo once inhabited! Kikapoo people have moved to Oklahoma and Texas.

[LaGrange Park Library's Own Voices Book Club](#)

This book club happens in your own time. Pick up the two selected titles from the library and read and discuss when it's convenient for you.



[Decolonizing Thanksgiving: A Toolkit for Combatting Racism in Schools](#)

This site compiles resources for families and schools to teach a more historically accurate lesson about Thanksgiving. This article includes a variety of resources and books specifically geared toward celebrating Thanksgiving.

[Deconstructing the Myths of "The First Thanksgiving"](#)

[7 Thanksgiving Books for Kids Written From the Native Perspective](#)

A list of books that discuss Thanksgiving from an Indigenous American perspective.

This Month's Reading List!

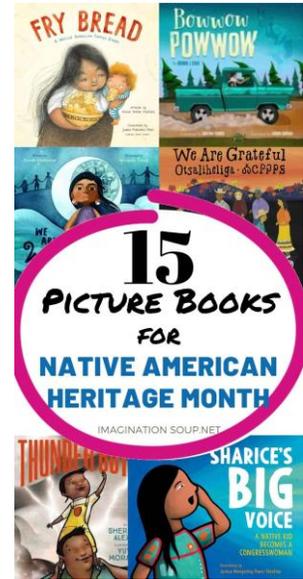
[Apple, Skin to the Core By Eric Gansworth](#) The DEI discussion group will be discussing this book on November 17th. It is a YA book in verse, meaning it reads more like a poetry book than a novel.

“In *APPLE (SKIN TO THE CORE)*, Eric Gansworth tells his story, the story of his family—of Onondaga among Tuscaroras—of Native folks everywhere. From the horrible legacy of the government boarding schools, to a boy watching his siblings leave and return and leave again, to a young man fighting to be an artist who balances multiple worlds.”



Picture Books About Modern-Day Indigenous Families

Children often learn about indigenous cultures from history but it's just as important to know that indigenous cultures are still alive and strong in the modern-day, too. Picture books like these show Native American and Native Canadian cultures incorporating tradition, culture, and language in the present day.



Native American Children's Literature Recommended Reading List

Check out this booklist divided by age and composed by the First Nations Development group. "Our mission is to strengthen American Indian economies to support healthy Native communities. We invest in and create innovative institutions and models that strengthen asset control and support economic development for American Indian people and their communities.

Questions? Do you have a topic you would like to see covered in the Diversity Spotlight? Would you like to contribute to the Diversity Spotlight?

Email the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee at bpcdei95@gmail.com