



## Worksheet for Selecting Native American Children’s Literature

Please use the American Indian Library Association’s guidelines before using this criteria.

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_ Illustrator \_\_\_\_\_

YES NO

|                  |   |  |  |
|------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Authority</b> | Was the book written by a Native American author?   |  |  |
|                  | Was it written in consultation with a Native American community?                                    |  |  |
|                  | Does the author have in-depth expertise in the tribal community referenced in the book?             |  |  |
|                  | Does the author cite consultants with expertise in the tribal community referenced in the book?     |  |  |
|                  | Is the author's work recommended by scholars and organizations with expertise in Native literature? |  |  |

|                 |   |  |  |
|-----------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Accuracy</b> | Is the text historically and culturally accurate?                             |  |  |
|                 | Are the illustrations historically and culturally accurate?                   |  |  |
|                 | Are the references primary-source documents or from tribal community members? |  |  |

|                          |  |  |  |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Tribally Specific</b> | Is the book tribally specific and does it avoid generic terms such as “The Native Americans”?                              |  |  |
|                          | Does the book avoid stereotypes and generalizations in its language and illustrations?                                     |  |  |
|                          | Are retellings or interpretations of traditional stories that specify tribal origin referenced and included in the notes?  |  |  |
|                          | Does the book contain notes and/or glossaries that verify or otherwise support the accuracy of tribal languages when used? |  |  |

|                 |   |  |  |
|-----------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Language</b> | Is the dialogue realistic and free of Hollywood romanticism such as “My Son” or broken English such as “Me go help”?                          |  |  |
|                 | If the dialogue uses a word that is often misunderstood (such as “squaw”), are clear explanations of the word given in the notes or glossary? |  |  |
|                 | Does the dialogue misuse words such as “papoose” (the Narragansett word for “baby”) that cannot be universally applied across tribes?         |  |  |

|                            |  |  |  |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>“We are still here”</b> | Does the book show continuity of culture, convey indigenous knowledge, values, spirituality, religions, and morals rooted in the past and connected to the present?                                      |  |  |
|                            | Does the book present accurate portrayals of contemporary life among American Indians in various geographical settings: on or near reservations, villages, and communities, and in urban or rural areas? |  |  |

***If you have more checkmarks in the no boxes do not use the book in the classroom but consider using this worksheet as a tool with your students to develop their critical thinking skills instead.***