

Canadian books for high school readers

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Refreshing your English course syllabus

In late 2014, the writer Natalee Caple penned the manifesto, “Why I Teach Brand New CanLit,” inspiring other Canadian university teachers to freshen up their syllabi. The reasons to do such a thing are plentiful, as she went out on to illustrate, chief among them: the work is more relevant to students’ lives; authors are alive and perhaps available for class talks; students have no choice but to be original in their responses, and reading brand new CanLit reinforces “Canadian culture...as real and ongoing, lively, diverse and present.”

Mad Miss Mimic, by Sarah Henstra

This title was published in the spring to great reviews, a YA title with great crossover appeal whose substance is underlined by Henstra’s “day job” as an English Literature professor at Ryerson University.

There is a bomb-plot, and a love-plot, and Shannon Ozirny in the Globe and Mail called this one “the perfect beach read for that teen who got an A in History (and would rather stay inside watching Downton Abbey than go to the beach in the first place).”