



ABOUT THE EDITOR

TERESA TOTEN is an award-winning writer who was born in Zagreb, Croatia, but left for Canada on that same day. Although she's lived in Toronto for most of her life, Teresa has also lived in Delhi (Ontario), Montreal, Ottawa, and New York. She developed her broad taste in reading as a result of her non-English-speaking mother's habit of filling shopping bags full of books from wildly different sections of the local library. Teresa has twice been short-listed for the Governor General's Literary Award, for *The Game* in 2001 and *Me and the Blondes* in 2006. Her upcoming novel, *Beyond Blonde*, will be published by Puffin Canada.



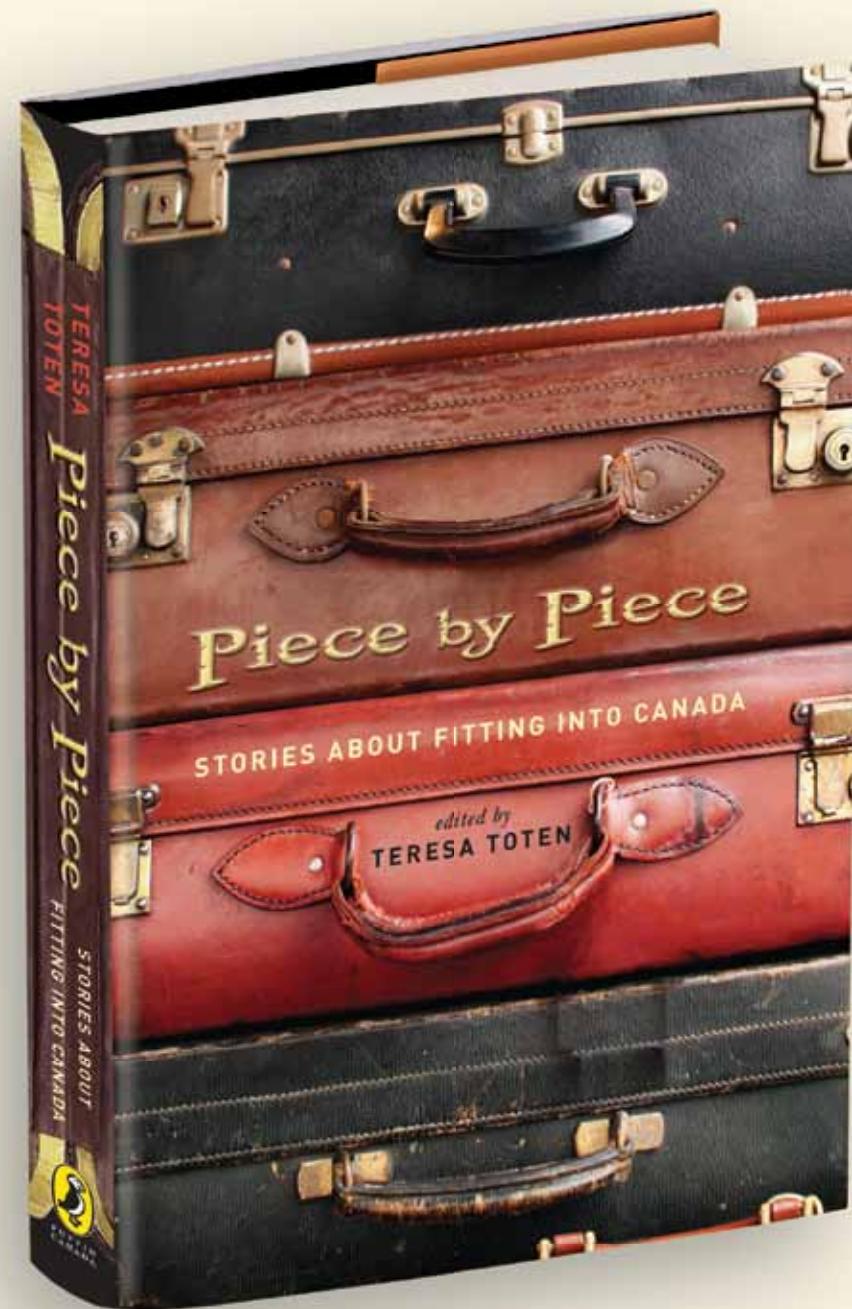
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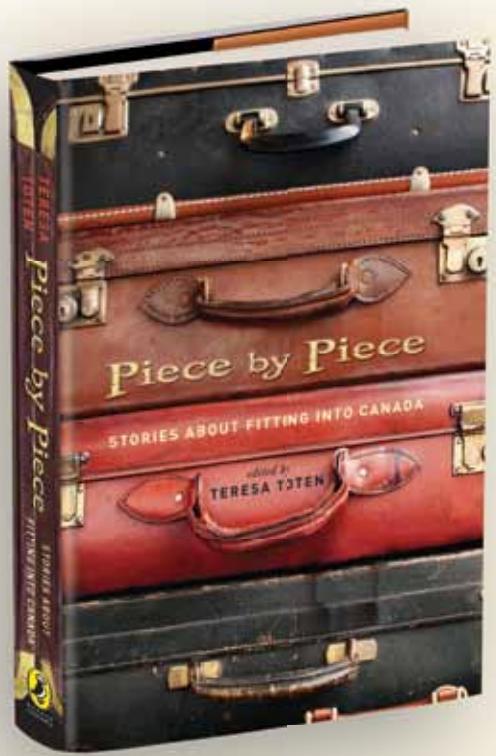


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Piece by Piece: A Teacher's Guide

How to Do a Classroom Piece by Piece Anthology (Grades 7 to 11)



ABOUT THE BOOK

Piece by Piece: Stories About Fitting into Canada is an extraordinary anthology of original stories featuring some of Canada's finest authors who were born in another country and who struggled to fit into this one. These very personal and powerful stories about immigrants from the Caribbean, the Middle East, Europe, South Asia, and the Far East will inspire students and spark discussion in your classroom.

Here are some suggestions for creating your own classroom **Piece by Piece Anthology** ...

ORGANIZATIONAL NOTES

Each anthology will need at least **one publisher, one or two editors**, and **ten to twelve contributors**.

The **PUBLISHER** will be responsible for both the overall look of the anthology (including its cover design) and the actual production of the book—whether the approach is low-tech (photocopied pages, staples for binding, handmade covers) or involves the use of self-publishing software (if available in the school). Along with the editor, the publisher will also be responsible for the ordering of the stories, the interior layout, and the inclusion of one-paragraph contributor biographies.

The **EDITOR** will be responsible for making sure the contributors are using the best possible **theme** and **genre** for their talents, and for keeping them to their deadline (we suggest no more than one week). The editor will review the first drafts and make suggestions to the contributors, who will implement these in their second draft.

After the first-draft review is completed, the editor will write a brief (500-word) introduction that provides an overall synopsis of the anthology, a little taste of the stories it contains, and a hint about his or her own story. (You may choose to have two editors working on any one anthology.)

CONTRIBUTORS' PIECES

Each story should be written in the **first person**, even if the story is appropriated from a relative or family friend. Each story should focus on a specific dramatic moment or event or highly vivid recollections.

CONTRIBUTORS CAN CHOOSE ONE OF THREE POSSIBLE THEMES:

1. If the contributor remembers becoming a newcomer to Canada, or any aspect of the immigration or moving experience, he or she can write a **personal memory** piece, focusing on a particularly surprising, thrilling, or poignant event that occurred as part of the process of becoming a Canadian (for example, an incident at a new school or new neighbourhood that still resonates).
2. If the contributor was too young when his or her family arrived in this country, or is a second-generation Canadian, he or she can write a **family memory** piece, which could focus on the experience of feeling out of place as a result of cultural differences, or on the story (using first person) of a family member that details the shock, wonder, or confusion about coming to Canada. (This can lead to some lovely and lively exchanges of family history.)
3. If the contributor's family has been in Canada for more than one generation, the contributor can write a **historical memory** piece, in which he or she interviews a family member who knows

the story of the first crossing. The contributor should do a bit of research on the family's country of origin at the time of departure and on the particular Canadian destination at the time of arrival. (The contributor should assume the newly arrived immigrant role and take us to his or her most dramatic moments.)

CONTRIBUTORS CAN ALSO CHOOSE ONE OF FOUR POSSIBLE GENRES:

1. **short story:** a first-person narrative of about 1000 words (this could also take the form of letters home, or a series of diary entries)
2. **illustrated story:** illustrations with minimal text, or a cartoon/comic, about one to two pages in length
3. **spoken word or traditional poem:** about one to two pages in length
4. **rap or song lyrics:** about one to two pages in length

Note: The variety of genres, themes, and roles available to students should provide ample flexibility and opportunity for your entire class to participate.

PUBLICATION AND PERFORMANCE PIECES

The class could hold an official **BOOK LAUNCH**, whether in the library, during a parents' evening event, or as an "across the classrooms" celebration in the cafeteria. As well, a copy of your class's 2010 Piece by Piece Anthology could be placed and catalogued in the school library, beginning an annual tradition.

Another possibility is for a Piece by Piece **PERFORMANCE**. The editor and publisher could direct dramatic readings from the anthology, selecting the most powerful passages (of, say, about two minutes each) and blending them together for a "Piece by Piece Mash Up!" that could be performed for the school at an assembly or arts event night.