

DEAR CANADA

DISCUSSION GUIDE

A Season for Miracles **Twelve Tales of Christmas** By various authors

- 1 Diary writing is a common theme among all the stories in this collection. What is it about writing in a diary that is so comforting and so sacred, especially during the holidays? Have you ever written in a diary?
- 2 How many of these characters feel like outsiders? Describe a few characters and the stories that resonated with you most. Have you ever felt out of place, misunderstood, or missing your loved ones? How did that make you feel?
- 3 The young girls in these stories have endured true hardships in their lives. Susanna was run out of her home after it was burnt down by the Americans; Chin Mei-Ling was forced to live in Vancouver with her father for a better life while her mother and brother were left behind in China, and Marianna was one of many home children sent over from Britain to Canada to start a new life after being orphaned. What makes these characters so strong and brave? How do they work towards building a better life, and what are some of their hopes and dreams?
- 4 All of these story vignettes feature courageous, feisty young women living through war, death, mourning the loss of a loved one, or longing to reunite with them. Why do you think Christmas is such an important time for them? What does it represent?
- 5 We are all a part of history and everyone has a story to tell, whether it's happy or sad. Holidays are a good source of family stories. Share a piece of your own history in a diary entry.