



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SUMMER READING LIST



STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 5

***Roots and Blues: A Celebration* by Arnold Adoff**

Lyrical text explores how Blues have been part of everyday life throughout history, from its origins in the sounds of the earth, through slaves' voices singing of freedom, to today's greatest performers—and listeners. *Poetry*

***Whales on Stilts!* by M.T. Anderson**

Racing against the clock, shy middle-school student Lily and her best friends, Katie and Jasper, must foil the plot of her father's conniving boss to conquer the world using an army of whales. *Science-Fiction; Lexile: 760*

***The Underneath* by Kathi Appelt**

An old hound that has been chained up at his hateful owner's run-down shack, and two kittens born underneath the house, endure separation, danger, and many other tribulations before they finally end up reunited and free. *Fiction; Lexile: 830*

***The One and Only Ivan* by Katherine Applegate**

When Ivan, a gorilla who has lived for years in a down-and-out circus-themed mall, meets Ruby, a baby elephant that has been added to the mall, he decides that he must find her a better life. *Fiction*

***If Stones Could Speak* by Marc Aronson**

Explores the mysterious monument of Stonehenge and reveals some of its secrets and history. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 1070*

***Perloo the Bold* by Avi**

Perloo, a peaceful scholar who has been chosen to succeed Jolaine as leader of the furry underground people called the Montmers, finds himself in danger when Jolaine dies and her evil son seizes control of the burrow. *Fiction; Lexile: 730*

***Joshua Dread* by Lee Bacon**

Besides being bullied, Joshua faces one more obstacle in middle school, trying to hide his identity as the son of supervillans, the Dread Duo. *Fiction*

***Science Fair: A Story of Mystery, Danger, International Suspense, and a Very Nervous Frog* by Dave Barry & Ridley Pearson**

The president of Kprshskan is plotting to infiltrate the science fair at Hubble Middle School in Maryland in order to take over the United States government, but when Toby Harbinger, an ordinary student, makes up his mind finally to win the fair, the terrorists' plans go awry. *Science-Fiction; Lexile: 770*

***Growing Up in Coal Country* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti**

Describes what life was like, especially for children, in coal mines and mining towns in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 1110*

***When Fish Got Feet, Sharks Got Teeth, and Bugs Began to Swarm* by Hannah Bonner**

Describes life on Earth approximately 430 million years ago. *Nonfiction*

***At the Sea Floor Café: Odd Ocean Critter Poems* by Leslie Bulion**

An illustrated collection of poems that provides information about some of the creatures that live in the sea. Includes a glossary of scientific terms. *Nonfiction Poetry; Lexile: 1130*

***The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett**

A ten-year-old orphan comes to live in a lonely house on the Yorkshire moors where she discovers an invalid cousin and the mysteries of a locked garden. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 970*

***The Incredible Journey* by Sheila Burnford**

A Siamese cat, an old bull terrier, and a young Labrador retriever travel together 250 miles through the Canadian wilderness to find their family. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 1320*

***Citizen Scientists: Be a Part of Scientific Discovery from Your Own Backyard* by Loree Griffin Burns**

Anyone can get involved in gathering data for ongoing, actual scientific studies such as the Audubon Bird Count and FrogWatch USA. Just get out into a field, urban park, or your own backyard. You can put your nose to a monarch pupa or listen for raucous frog calls. You can tally woodpeckers or sweep the grass for ladybugs. This book, full of engaging photos and useful tips, will show you how. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 1050*

***Electric Ben: The Amazing Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin* by Robert Byrd**

Learn all about the life of Benjamin Franklin, from his childhood to his golden years, in this beautifully illustrated, thoughtful, and thorough book. *Biography; Lexile: 1050*

***Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins**

When eleven-year-old Gregor and his two-year-old sister are pulled into a strange underground world, they trigger an epic battle involving men, bats, rats, cockroaches, and spiders while on a quest foretold by ancient prophecy. *Fiction; Lexile: 630*

***The Watsons Go To Birmingham – 1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis**

The ordinary interactions and everyday routines of the Watsons, an African American family living in Flint, Michigan, are drastically changed after they go to visit Grandma in Alabama in the summer of 1963. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 1000*

***Family Reminders* by Julie Danneberg**

In 1890s Cripple Creek, Colorado, when young Mary McHugh’s father loses his leg in a mining accident, she tries to help, both by earning money and by encouraging her father to go back to carving wooden figurines and playing piano. *Fiction; Lexile: 780*

***Where the Ground Meets the Sky* by Jackie Davies**

During World War II, a twelve-year-old girl is uprooted from her quiet, East coast life and moved to a secluded army post in the New Mexico desert where her father and other scientists are working on a top secret project. *Fiction; Lexile: 590*

***The Secret Science Alliance and the Copycat Crook* by Eleanor Davis**

Eleven-year-old Julian Calendar thought changing schools would mean leaving his “nerdy” persona behind, but instead he forms an alliance with fellow inventors Greta and Ben and works with them to prevent an adult from using one of their gadgets for nefarious purposes. *Graphic Novel; Lexile: 470*

***The City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau**

In the year 241, twelve-year-old Lina trades jobs on Assignment Day to be a Messenger to run to new places in her decaying but beloved city, perhaps even to glimpse Unknown Regions. *Fiction; Lexile: 680*

***The Birchbark House* by Louise Erdrich**

Omakayas, a seven-year-old Native American girl of the Ojibwa tribe, lives through the joys of summer and the perils of winter on a island in Lake Superior in 1847. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 970*

***The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm* by Nancy Farmer**

In 2194 in Zimbabwe, General Matsika’s three children are kidnapped and put to work in a plastic mine, while three mutant detectives use their special powers to search for them. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 660*

***Harriet the Spy* by Louise Fitzhugh**

Eleven-year-old Harriet, who is a spy and plans to be an author, keeps a secret notebook filled with thoughts and notes on her schoolmates and people she observes on her afterschool spy route, but when some of her classmates read the notebook, they seek revenge. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 760*

***Seedfolks* by Paul Fleischman**

One by one, a number of people of varying ages and backgrounds transform a trash-filled inner-city lot into a productive and beautiful garden, and, in doing so, the gardeners are themselves transformed. *Fiction; Lexile: 710*

***Tuesdays at the Castle* by Jessica Day George**

Eleven-year-old Princess Celie lives with her parents, the king and queen, and her brothers and sister at Castle Glowler, which adds rooms or stairways or secret passageways most every Tuesday, and when the king and queen are ambushed while traveling, it is up to Celie—the castle’s favorite—with her secret knowledge of its never-ending twists and turns, to protect their home and save their kingdom. *Fiction*

***Spy School* by Stuart Gibbs**

Twelve-year-old Ben Ripley leaves his public middle school to attend the CIA’s highly secretive Espionage Academy, which everyone is told is an elite science school. *Fiction*

***Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse**

In a series of poems, fifteen-year-old Billie Joe relates the hardships of living on her family’s wheat farm in Oklahoma during the dust bowl years of the Depression. *Fiction*

***Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen**

Roy, who is new to his small Florida community, becomes involved in another boy’s attempt to save a colony of burrowing owls from a proposed construction site. *Fiction; Lexile: 760*

***Zombie Makers: True Stories of Nature’s Undead* by Rebecca L. Johnson**

Examines real-life accounts of zombies in nature, including a fly-enslaving fungus, a suicide worm, and a cockroach-taming wasp, and related topics. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 800*

***The Ghost’s Grave* by Peg Kehret**

Apprehensive about spending the summer in Washington state with his Aunt Ethel when his parents get an overseas job, twelve-year-old Josh soon finds adventure when he meets the ghost of a coal miner. *Fiction*

***Lives of the Scientists: Experiments, Explosions (And What the Neighbors Thought)* by Kathleen Krull**

Profiles 18 of history’s most noteworthy scientists, from Zhang Heng and Isaac Newton to Albert Einstein and Barbara McClintock, sharing lesser-known facts about their favorite activities, relationships, and eccentricities. *Biography; Lexile: 1120*

***A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeline L'Engle**

Meg Murray and her friends become involved with unearthly strangers and a search for Meg's father, who has disappeared while engaged in secret work for the government. *Fiction; Lexile: 740*

***Rabbit Hill* by Robert Lawson**

When a new family moves into the neighborhood, the animals of Rabbit Hill are very curious about how these human inhabitants will act. *Fiction; Lexile: 1050*

***The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis**

Four English schoolchildren find their way through the back of a wardrobe into the magic land of Narnia and assist Aslan, the golden lion, to triumph over the White Witch, who has cursed the land with eternal winter. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 940*

***One White Dolphin* by Gill Lewis**

When a baby albino dolphin caught in old fishing netting washes ashore, Paralympics sailing hopeful Felix and English school girl Kara work with veterinarians and specialists to save and reunite the dolphin with her mother, setting off a chain of events that might just save the reef from the environmental effects of proposed dredging. *Fiction; Lexile: 620*

***The 5,000-Year-Old Puzzle* by Claudia Logan**

An account of Dr. George Reisner's 1925 discovery and excavation of a secret tomb in Giza, Egypt, based on archival documents and records, but told through the fictionalized experiences of a young boy who accompanies his father on the dig. *Picture Book; Lexile: 900*

***Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry**

In 1943, during the German occupation of Denmark, ten-year-old Annemarie learns how to be brave and courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 670*

***White Fur Flying* by Patricia MacLachlan**

A sad and silent nine-year-old boy finds his voice when he moves next to a family that rescues dogs. *Fiction*

***Beneath the Streets of Boston* by Joe McKendry**

Presents an illustrated study of America's first subway system built in Boston in 1897, and explores how it was dug, problems encountered, and opposition to it. *Nonfiction*

***The Unwanteds* by Lisa McMann**

In a society that purges thirteen-year-olds who are creative, identical twins Aaron and Alex are separated, one to attend University while the other, supposedly Eliminated, finds himself in a wondrous place where youths hone their abilities and learn magic. *Fiction*

***Eye of the Storm* by Kate Messner**

Jaden's summer visit with her meteorologist father, who has just returned from spending four years in Russia conducting weather experiments not permitted in the United States, fills her with apprehension and fear as she discovers that living at her father's planned community, Placid Meadows, is anything but placid. *Fiction; Lexile: 740*

***The Boneshaker* by Kate Milford**

When Jake Limberleg brings his traveling medicine show to a small Missouri town in 1913, thirteen-year-old Natalie senses that something is wrong and, after investigating, learns that her love of automata and other machines make her the only one who can set things right. *Fiction; Lexile: 900*

***Anne of Green Gables* by L. M. Montgomery**

Anne, an eleven-year-old orphan, is sent by mistake to live with a lonely, middle-aged brother and sister on a Prince Edward Island farm and proceeds to make an indelible impression on everyone around her. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 850*

***Temple Grandin: How the Girl Who Loved Cows Embraced Autism and Changed the World* by Sy Montgomery**

An authorized portrait about Grandin's life with autism and her groundbreaking work as a scientist and designer of cruelty-free livestock facilities describes how she overcame key disabilities through education and the support of her mother. *Biography; Lexile: 960*

***Shadow* by Michael Morpurgo**

Teenager Aman and his mother lose their loyal spaniel Shadow while escaping Afghanistan to flee to England. Now they must depend on a friend and his grandfather to enable Shadow's return. *Fiction*

***Herbert's Wormhole* by Peter Nelson**

When almost-sixth-grader Alex, a video game fanatic, is forced on a "playdate" with his neighbor Herbert, an inventor, the two travel to the twenty-second century and face off against aliens, who are not as beneficent as most people think. *Science-Fiction; Lexile: 780*

***The Book of Blood: From Legends and Leeches to Vampires and Veins* by H. P. Newquist**

A thrilling and lively tour of the world of blood, from ancient history to modern science, to dark and often gruesome legends of vampires and plague, this book informs readers about the most important tissue in the body. *Nonfiction*

***Life in the Ocean: The Story of Oceanographer Sylvia Earle* by Claire A. Nivola**

A picture book biography of oceanographer Sylvia Earle, discussing her childhood along the Gulf of Mexico, her passion for the environment, and her experiences in ocean exploration. *Biography; Lexile: 1170*

***The Borrowers* by Mary Norton**

Miniature people who live in an old country house by borrowing things from the humans are forced to emigrate from their home under the clock. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 780*

***The Emperor's Silent Army: Terracotta Warriors of Ancient China* by Jane O'Connor**
Describes the archaeological discovery of thousands of life-sized terracotta warrior statues in northern China in 1974, and discusses the emperor who had them created and placed near his tomb. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 980*

***Project Mulberry* by Linda Sue Park**
While working on a project for an after-school club, Julia, a Korean American girl, and her friend Patrick learn not just about silkworms, but also about tolerance, prejudice, friendship, patience, and more. Between the chapters are short dialogues between the author and main character about the writing of the book. *Fiction; Lexile: 690*

***Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson**
The life of a ten-year-old boy in rural Virginia expands when he becomes friends with a newcomer who subsequently meets an untimely death trying to reach their hideaway, Terabithia, during a storm. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 810*

***Tom's Midnight Garden* by Philippa Pearce**
While staying with his aunt and uncle, Tom discovers a beautiful garden that is visible only at night and meets a little girl from the Victorian era with whom he travels back in time. *Favorites & Classics; Lexile: 860*

***Words in the Dust* by Trent Reedy**
Zulaikha, a thirteen-year-old girl in Afghanistan, faces a series of frightening but exhilarating changes in her life as she defies her father and secretly meets with an old woman who teaches her to read, her older sister gets married, and American troops offer her surgery to fix her disfigured cleft lip. *Fiction; Lexile: 670*

***Canary in the Coal Mine* by Madelyn Rosenberg**
Tired of his twelve-hour shifts and facing danger daily, Bitty, a canary whose courage more than makes up for his small size, treks to the state capital to try to improve working conditions in coal mines. *Fiction*

***The Mangrove Tree: Planting Trees to Feed Families* by Susan L. Roth**
A cumulative verse, alternating with additional narrative, describes the ecological and social transformation resulting from the work of Dr. Gordon Sato, a Japanese American cell biologist who made saltwater and desert land productive through the planting of mangrove trees in the tiny African country of Eritrea. *Nonfiction; Lexile: 1190*

***Walls Within Walls* by Maureen Sherry**
When the Smithfork family moves into a lavish Manhattan apartment building, they discover clues to a decades-old mystery hidden behind the walls of their new home. *Fiction*

***Tesla's Attic* by Neal Shusterman & Eric Elfman**
With a plot combining science and the supernatural, four kids are caught up in a dangerous plan concocted by the eccentric inventor, Nikola Tesla. *Science-Fiction*

***Ubiquitous: Celebrating Nature's Survivors* by Joyce Sidman**
Poems and factual information about some of the creatures that live on Planet Earth. *Nonfiction Poetry; Lexile: 1300*

***Old Man's Cave* by Jeff Smith**
The adventure starts when cousins Fone Bone, Phoney Bone, and Smiley Bone are run out of Boneville and later get separated and lost in the wilderness, meeting monsters and making friends as they attempt to return home. (Bone series #6) *Graphic Novel*

***Liar and Spy* by Rebecca Stead**
Seventh-grader Georges adjusts to moving from a house to an apartment, his father's efforts to start a new business, his mother's extra shifts as a nurse, being picked on at school, and Safer, a boy who wants his help spying on another resident of their building. *Fiction*

***The Grave Robber's Apprentice* by Allan Stratton**
Hans, a foundling raised by a grave robber, helps Countess Angela Gabriela, nearly thirteen, when she is torn away from her dream of being a professional puppeteer by an evil archduke out to destroy her and her parents. *Fiction; Lexile: 650*

***King of the Mound* by Wes Tooke**
Twelve-year-old Nick loves baseball so after a year in the hospital fighting polio and with a brace on one leg, Nick takes a job with the team for which his father is catcher and gets to see the great pitcher, Satchel Paige, play during the 1935 season. Includes historical notes. *Fiction*

***Robot Dreams* by Sara Varon**
The enduring friendship between a dog and a robot is portrayed in this wordless graphic novel. *Graphic Novel*

Favorite Series

Poppy series by Avi
John Bellairs Mysteries series by John Bellairs
The Penderwicks series by Jeanne Birdsall
The Dark is Rising series by Susan Cooper
The Moffats series by Eleanor Estes
Shadow Children series by Margaret Peterson Haddix
Dog Friday trilogy by Hilary McKay
Percy Jackson & the Olympians series by Rick Riordan
Septimus Heap series by Angie Sage
Enola Holmes Mysteries series by Nancy Springer
The Mysterious Benedict Society series by Trenton Lee Stewart
Sammy Keyes series by Wendelin Van Draanen
Dear America series by various author