

4th-into-5th Grade Summer Reading List

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Prepared by Liz Perry, SFWS librarian for Alyssa Steller

It was my special pleasure this year to help the children find material for their wonderful Animal Reports. Regular visitors from the class to the library gravitated toward historical fiction, friendship circles, and Hobbit-resembling fantasies, with a small group seeking struggles boys and girls overcome in the “real” world, not with wands, but their own internal forces. “What can I do on my own?” is the big question in this realm of earliest coming-of-age fiction, where stories can begin with parents suddenly out of the picture (but the author’s guiding voice definitely present).

As you enjoy your summer with your children, please continue reading aloud, a method of sensing through story the various ways your children are experiencing the world.

Classic and Near-Classic Tales

Abel’s Island (Steig)
All-of-a-Kind Family (Taylor)
Anne of Green Gables (Montgomery)
The Animal Family (Randall Jarrell)
Bambie (Felix Salton)
Black Beauty (Sewall)
The Black Cauldron (Alexander)
The Black Stallion (Farley)
Castle in the Attic (Winthrop)
Five Children and It (Nesbit)
Moffat Series (Estes)
Henry Huggins/Romona series (Beverly Cleary)
Heidi (Spry)
Daughter of the Mountain
My Friend Flicka (O’Hara)
Homer Price (McCloskey)
Half Magic (Eager)
Heidi (Spyri)
Hitty (Field)
The Narnia Series (Lewis)
.....Do start with the Lion, Witch and Wardrobe!!
Misty of Chincoteague (Henry)
In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson (Lord)
Island of Adventure (Blyton)
Soup Series (Richard Newton Peck)
The Twenty-One Balloons (duBois)
The Secret Garden (Burnett)
Swallows and Amazons (Ransome)

The Borrowers (Norton)
The Incredible Journey (Burford)

Lassie Come Home (Knight)
Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH
Bright Island (Robinson)
A Little Princess (Burnett)
Light Princess, The Princess and Curdie,
Curdie and the Magicians (MacDonald)

Old Yeller (Gibson)
Magic Maize (Mary Buff)
The 13 Clocks (Thurber)
Children of Green Knowe (Boston)
The Wizard of Oz series (Baum)
Jungle Book (Kipling)
Miracles on Maple Hill (Sorenson)

Schlemiel Went to Warsaw (Singer)

Caddie Woodlawn (Brink)

Places We Have Been: The Norse and Those Nearby

1. *Classic Sea Stories* by renowned collector of vintage children's picture books by Cooper Edens (2007). This anthology features tales of ocean adventure with art by Arthur Rackham and N.C. Wyeth to name a few. Also consider *Princess Stories* and *The Big Book of Little* by the same collector.
2. *Leif the Lucky* by Edgar and Ingri d'Aulaire (1920s). Stunning research and artistry inform this d'Aulaire biography chronicling Leif's adventures in navigation and his ultimate "discovery" of Newfoundland.
3. *Odd and the Frost Giants* by Neil Gaimon (2009). An unlucky twelve-year-old Norwegian boy named Odd (which means "tip of a blade") leads the Norse gods Loki, Thor, and Odin in an attempt to outwit evil Frost Giants who have taken over Asgard.
4. *The Sea of Trolls* by Nancy Farmer (2006). In A.D. 793, 11-year-old Saxon Jack, apprenticed to the village Bard and kidnapped by the Berserkers, must make things right with King Ivar the Boneless when he causes the king's wife to lose her hair. Also read the sequel: *The Land of the Apples*.
5. *The Shipwreck: The Inuk Quartet Volume 1* by Jorn Riel (1979). When Leiv Steinurrson travels to Greenland in 1,000 CE as a stowaway to avenge his Viking father, a shipwreck plants him in the middle of an Inuit clan, where two children teach him how to survive in their rugged world and shift the doubts of an aging shaman wary of "others".
6. *The Sword of Siegfried* by Katherine Scherman (1959). Siegfried, hero of the Volsung Saga, seeks his fortune with the Magic Sword of Bradstock in hand, freeing the maiden Brynhild and stalking a fearful dragon.
7. *Viking Adventure* by Clyde Bulla (1963). Sigurd, a Viking boy, does not understand why he must learn to read and write. He wishes to live a life of adventure, but when he wants his adventures commemorated, he sees the value in learning a new skill.

Places We Have Been: Animals

1. *Beryl: A Pig's Tale* by Jane Simmons (2009). Tired of being mistreated and cooped up, Beryl the piglet escapes her farm and meets a group of wild pigs, whose settlement splits up over the decision of whether to let her stay.
2. *Big Red* by Jim Kjelgaard (1945). The lasting boy-and-dog tale recounts the adventures of an Irish setter and a boy, son of a trapper in the mountain wilderness.
3. *Caesar's Antlers* by Brooks Hansen (1997). Bette, a mother sparrow, separated by an accident from her mate in the wilds of Norway, takes her chicks on a long search for their father in the protection of a reindeer's antlers.
4. *Don't Feed the Boy* by Irene Latham (2013). Eleven-year-old Whit, who lives and goes to school at the zoo his parents oversee, stops seeing his life as one inside a cage when a the "Bird Girl" visits who sees his habitat as a refuge.
5. *Firstborn* by Tor Seidler (2015). When Blue Boy, the alpha wolf of Yellowstone Park, discovers in his son, Lamar, a thread of compassion for stragglers, an interest in chasing beetles, and, worst of all, a devotion to coyotes, Lamar feels criticized enough by his father to leave the pack, until an unsavory sort threatens a wounded Blue Boy....
6. *Gentle Ben* by Walt Morey (1965). Set in the Alaskan Wilderness, this coming-of-age tale follows a determined boy, adopting a brown bear, who hopes to raise it in town amidst predictable protest. (Also read *Rascal* by Sterling North or *Lad: A Dog* by Terhune.)

7. *Ivy Takes Care* by Rosemary Wells (2013). A long-time resident of Nevada, Ivy hires herself out to take care of other people's pets while they are away, in particular, a stubborn pony named Chestnut (beautiful illustrations by Jim LaMarche).
8. *Mogo, The Third Warthog* by Donna Jo Napoli (2008). In this retelling of the Three Little Pigs, the runt of his litter, Mogo is set on surviving in the unforgiving African savannah, a terrain filled with lions, cheetahs, wild dogs, and the threat of isolation. A cast-out baboon makes the journey easier and gives Mogo the chance at a new family.
9. *One White Dolphin* by Gill Lewis (2013). A mother dolphin and her albino calf draw the attention of a young girl, Kara, struggling to survive with her father in a fishing village in Cornwall, England. When a young Paralympics sailing hopeful comes to town, he joins forces with Kara to save not just the dolphins but the entire reef. An older read.
10. *Trash Mountain* by Jane Yolen (2014). When the grey squirrel kills his parents, red squirrel, Nutley, wonders what it will be like to leave the safety of his tree, seeking revenge, with the help of rats and gulls.
11. *Tua and the Elephant* by R.P. Harris (2013). Discovering an elephant in need in the bustling Thailand marketplace, Tua commences a journey in which rich descriptions of local sites abound.
12. *The Worm Whisperer* by Betty Hicks (2013). Ellison Ellis Coffey, a lonely 5th grader, discovers he might have the special gift of talking to bugs. This prompts him to use his new-found ability to enter his town's Woolly Worm Race to win the \$1,000 needed for his father's back surgery.

Places We Have Been: The Wild West

1. *Bandit Moon* by Sid Fleischman (1998). Twelve-year-old Annyrose relates her adventures with Murieta and his band of outlaws in the California gold mining days.
2. *The Cabin Faced West* by Jean Fritz (1958). Ten-year-old Ann, in what was once considered "the West" (rural Pennsylvania), learns to understand how important her role is in guaranteeing her family's survival and comfort in their new home. Also read *Black-Eyed Susan* by Jennifer Armstrong (1995) and *Caddie Woodlawn* by Brink (1935).
3. *Classic Western Stories* compiled by illustration archivist Cooper Edens (2009). In this collection chronicling outlaws, mountain men, gunslingers, settlers, cowboys, and lumberjacks, Edens couples tales with artwork by N.C. Wyeth, Winslow Homer, and Fredric Remington, to name a worthy few.
4. *Emily's Fortune* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor (2010). As shy Emily travels to her Aunt's home by train and stagecoach with her pet turtle, Rufus, she meets a troublemaker and fellow orphan, Jackson, who helps her outwit a greedy relative.
5. *A Family Apart: The Orphan Train Adventures* by Joan Lowery Nixon (1987). When a young widow in New York City in 1856 knows she cannot provide for her six children, she sends them West, hopefully to discover more secure lives with new families. The first stop is St. Joseph, Missouri. Other books in the series find the children in other places, finding their way back to one another.
6. *Francis Tucket Series* by Gary Paulsen. In this five-book series beginning with *Mr. Tucket*, a 14-year-old boy, separated from his wagon train, unites with a one-armed trapper, who with him braves adventures in the West to help Francis reunite with his family.

7. *Jim Ugly* by Sid Fleischman (same author as *By the Great Horn Spoon*) (1992). The adventures of 12-year-old Jake and Jim Ugly, his father's part-mongrel, part-wolf dog as they explore the West searching for Jack's missing actor father.
8. *On to Oregon* by Honoré Morrow (1926). Not one to follow through on chores, eldest brother John Sager must grow up quickly when a raid forces him to take his siblings to Oregon on his own. A powerful tale of survival.
9. *Our Only May Amelia* By Jennifer Holm (1999). As the only girl in a Finnish American family of seven brothers, May Amelia Jackson resents being expected to act like a lady while growing up in Washington State.
10. *Riding Freedom* by Pam Munoz Ryan (1998). A biography of Charlotte "Charley" Parkhurst, who "couldn't sew a stitch and didn't know a petticoat from a pea-pod," recounts in lively first-person the life of a woman who escaped an orphanage to become a stagecoach driver and the first woman to vote in this country. Also read *Esperanza Rising* by the same author and *Blue Willow* by Doris Gates (1940).
11. *The Year of Miss Agnes* by Kirkpatrick Hill (2000). In 1948, a school teacher arrives in remote Alaska to give children an educational experience they haven't encountered in years...at the same time accepting their odd-smelling fish sandwiches and insisting that the deaf-boy, Bakko, attend school with everyone else. Also read *Bo at Ballard Creek* by the same author (2013).

And This is My Family.....Just Now, or Perhaps "Forever"

1. *Canned and Crushed* by Bibi Belford (2015). When Sandro Zapote finds out his little sister needs heart surgery, he starts a can-collecting, save-the-environment business to earn money his father—an undocumented laborer who rigorously harvests scrap metal and roadkill—can't raise single-handedly.
2. *Circus Mirandus* by Cassie Beasley (2015). Micah, tier of knots, has a special relationship with his Grandpa Ephriam, who will soon leave this world if Micah doesn't extract a favor from a miraculous magician, The Man Who Bends Light. Gorilla balloons, mysterious bird women, and a friend, Joey Mendoza, contribute to fast-paced drama.
3. *The Great Gilly Hopkins* by Katherine Paterson (1978—Newbery Award). Sometimes the family one seeks is not the family one ends up wanting, a truth 11-year-old foster-child Gilly discovers in her latest "placement" with an overweight, near illiterate guardian, Maime Trotter; a wizened and old African American; and "freaky" seven-year-old boy. How could these people possibly compete with the beautiful mother of Gilly's dreams?
4. *Hold Fast* by Blue Balliett (2013). When her father mysteriously disappears and her family must move into a Chicago shelter, Early seeks answers on street corners and the public library to improve her family circumstances and bring her father home.
5. *The Incorrigible Children of Ashton Place: The Unmapped Sea* by Maryrose Wood (2015). A seaside setting at Brighton Beach creates the holiday backdrop for the Ashton children, who are expecting a new sibling they hope won't be burdened with the wolfish curse afflicting their family.
6. *Lucky Broken Girl* by Ruth Behar (2017). In 1960s New York, fifth-grader Ruthie, a Cuban-Jewish immigrant, must rely on books, art, her family, and friends in her multicultural neighborhood when an accident puts her in a body cast.

7. *The Penderwicks in Spring* by Jeanne Birdsall (2015). In this last book in the Penderwicks series, Batty, who has just lost her dog, Hound, prepares for a Birthday Concert with her singing at the center. Affording voice lessons, however, means launching a dog-walking business.
8. *Rapscott's Girls* by Elise Primavera (2015). Ms. Rapscott, the headmistress of a school catering to girls of very busy parents, receives five (whoops, four) new students in boxes on her doorstep and teaches the neglected children previously unmastered attainments, such as knowing how to identify a birthday cake (they have never seen one) and walking across the street without being slaughtered.

Friendships—All Sorts

1. *Adventures with Waffles* by Maria Parr and Kate Forrester (2015). Trille and Lena have been thrill-seeking friends forever—sledding down an icy slope with a chicken, coaxing a cow onto a boat—but then one day, Lena leaves and Trille must find his way on his own.
2. *Bluish* by Virginia Hamilton (2002). They are different from one another—all three girls—but it's the new girl in a wheelchair and knitted hat who spawns the others' curiosity and their determination to find a way to become supportive friends.
3. *Faith and the Electric Dogs* by Peter Jennings (1998). Set in San Cristobal de las Casas, Mexico, this story recounts the imagination and courage of a ten-year-old girl who seeks to escape her local tormentors and return to San Francisco on a tin rocket ship fueled with pork fat and chili peppers. Also read *How Tia Lola Came to (Visit) Stay* by Julia Alvarez (2002) and *Grandma Torrelli Makes Soup* by Sharon Creech.
4. *The Great Unexpected* by Sharon Creech (2013). Two orphan girls in Blackbird Tree, USA, one quiet and another who "could talk the ears off a cornfield," meet a mysterious boy who drops out of a tree and links their lives with others in Rook's Island, Ireland.
5. *The Liberation of Gabriel King* by K.L. Going (2007). Gabe believes he was born "chicken"—he's afraid of spiders, corpses, loose cows, and just about everything related to the 5th grade....enter, Frita, Gabe's personal "Fear" trainer.
6. *A Little Bit of Spectacular* by Gin Phillips (2015). Eleven-year-old Olivia, moving in with a strict grandmother in Birmingham, Alabama, finds herself without friends at her new school until she sees the phrase, "We are Plantaganet," on a bathroom wall. Suddenly she and an unusual girl, Amelia, join forces to solve a mystery.
7. *Notes from a Liar and Her Dog* by Gennifer Choldenko (2003). Burdened with the pressure of two "perfect" sisters, Ant, beloved by her dog Pistachio, makes up stories about herself in an effort to seem more appealing; receiving attention from a concerned teacher and volunteering at the local zoo help her to see herself with different eyes.
8. *Violet Raines Almost got Struck by Lightning* by Danette Hayworth (2008); Violet is happy with things just the way they are in her sleepy Florida town until a city-girl, Melissa, moves in and threatens to unbalance friendships with everyone she holds dear.
9. *Wishtree* by Katherine Applegate (2017). An old red oak tree tells how he and his crow friend, Bongo, help their human neighbors get along after a threat against an immigrant family is carved into the tree's trunk.
10. *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio (2016). August Pullman was born with a facial deformity that, up until now, prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid -- but his classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face. Wonder begins from Auggie's

point of view, but soon switches to include his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others. These perspectives converge in a portrait of one community's struggle with empathy, compassion, and acceptance.

Getting into Trouble...and Out of It

1. *A Bear Named Trouble* by Marion Dane Bauer (2005). Told in alternating voices—the boy's and the bear's—this story, based on a true tale, is about a zookeeper's son who must sort out the confusion he feels when a befriended bear kills his favorite goose.
2. *Binney for Short* by Hilary McKay (2013). Eleven-year-old Binney struggles to cope with her father's death and the loss of her favorite beloved dog when she adjusts to a new home that might be haunted by her horrible Aunt Violet. Read McKay's other books: *A Dog Named Friday* and *The Amber Cat*.
3. *The Buddha's Diamonds* by Carolyn Marsden (2008). As a storm sweeps in, Tinh's father tells them to tie up the fishing boat, but the storm scares Tinh and he runs away; how will he make amends to repair the damage to the boat? Also read *Rickshaw Girl* by Mitali Perkins (2007).
4. *The Green Glass House* by Kate Milford (2014). An ancient smuggler's inn forms the setting for the mysterious disappearance of objects linked to the building's history as Milo, traveling with his adoptive parents, and his friend Meddy, the cook's daughter, work together decipher clues.
5. *Handbook of Dragon Slayers* by Merrie Haskell (2013). Compromised by a cripple foot, and wishing to dwell in a cloistered scriptorium, Princess Matilda—accompanied by two dragon-slayers—must go out in the world to reclaim her family lands.
6. *Ice Drift* by Theodore Taylor (2005). Two young Inuit brothers and their loyal sled dog struggle to survive on an ice floe adrift in the Greenland Straight.
7. *The Mysterious Benedict Society* by Trenton Lee Stewart *Four children answer the ad, "Are you a gifted child looking for splendid opportunities?" Adventure awaits.*
8. *The Mighty Miss Malone* by Christopher Paul Curtis (2012). The "smartest" girl in her class in Gary, Indiana, Deza must make educational sacrifices when they land in a "Hooverville" outside Flint, Michigan. A brother's beautiful singing voice and her own determination shift a potentially dim outlook into a reflection of the family motto: "We are a family on a journey to a place called wonderful."
9. *Pieces and Players* by Blue Balliett (2015). A Vermeer and Manet have vanished, along with 11 other paintings, from one of the most buttoned-up museums in the world, and Petra, Calder, and Tommy must get to the bottom of things with two new assistants: Zoomy and Early, a lover of words. If you haven't read this author's previous works, here they are: [Chasing Vermeer](#), [The Wright 3](#), and [The Calder Game](#).
10. *Ruby Holler* by Sharon Creech (2012). Told with Creech's typical wry humor, this work records the life of two orphaned siblings (not exactly angels) transported to Appalachia to help an elderly couple track down an elusive bird and also take a canoe trip. As the journeys unravel, trust builds between the children and wise adults of their new home.
11. *Skinnybones* by Barbara Park (1997). Jokester, Alex, the smallest boy in his class, tells everyone he is an amazing pitcher—even though he is, in fact, terrible at baseball. Luckily his second joke has a better ending.

12. *Smith* by Leon Garfield (1967). Moments after he steals a document from a man's pocket, an illiterate young pickpocket in 18th-century London witnesses the man's murder by man who want the papers for themselves. Also read *John Diamond* by the same author.
13. *The Mysterious Benedict Society* by Trenton Stewart. "Are you a gifted child looking for Special opportunities?" Four very special children answer this ad (you can test your wits along with them) and are chosen to go on a secret mission that only the most resourceful and intelligent children could complete.
14. *Broken Bones* by Scott William Carter (2013). Based on the story of Pinocchio, this book focuses on Pino, a boy who used to be a puppet, who has a talent for creating other puppets and bringing them to life (Gepetto's wife, for instance). Will he strike a deal with the villagers who would like to use him or strike out on his own?

Magic Happens

1. *Breadcrumbs* by Anne Ursu (2011). Hazel and Jack are best friends until an accident with a magical mirror and a run-in with a villainous queen find Hazel on her own, entering an enchanted wood in the hopes of saving Jack's life.
2. *The Castle Corona* by Sharon Creech (2007). Marvelous illustrations intersperse this book where two orphaned peasant children discover a mysterious pouch, the contents of which lead them to the magnificent Castle Corona. Also read *The Princess Academy* by Shannon Hale.
3. *Castle Hangnail* by Ursula Vernon (2015). When 12-year-old Molly arrives at the Castle Hangnail to fill a vacancy for "Wicked Witch," her innate kindness in spite of her extraordinary magic skills might keep her from fitting in. But she hides a secret. What could it be and how could this threaten her new home?
4. *The City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau (2004). Living in the City of Ember, believed to be that last refuge of the human race, two children—Lina and Doon—must find what is making the lights flicker and go out. Also read *The People of Sparks*, *The Prophet of Yonwood*, and *The Diamond of Darkhold*.
5. *Fog Magic* by Julia L. Sauer (1943). Greta, from Nova Scotia, who loves the fog, is transported by the fog to a stone house and a woman in plum-colored silk, who takes her on a journey into the village's past. Winner of a 1986 Newbery Honor.
6. *Gregor and Prophecy of Bane* by Suzanne Collins (2005). A bat and rebellious princess, assist Gregor in his search for his kidnapped sister in this second book of the Overlander series. A slightly older read.
7. *Jinx* and *Jinx's Magic* (2013 & 2014) by Sage Blackwood. An ill-used orphan is the hero of a tale in which he enters a primeval forest to discover wizards and witches and his own ability to conjure fire.
8. *Ophelia and the Marvelous Boy* by Karen Foxlee (2014). In this retelling of "The Snow Queen," young Ophelia Jane Worthington-Whittard spends her lonely days attempting to rescue a boy imprisoned in a remote museum display.
9. *Peter Nimble and His Fantastic Eyes* by Jonathan Auxier (2012). A blind 10-year-old orphan, trained as a thief, finds himself in possession of a box with magical eyes. When he tries on the first pair, he is transported to an island, where he is expected to assist those in need rather than steal. Also read the sequel: *The Night Gardener* (2014).

10. *Rump: The True Story of Rumpelstiltskin* by Liesl Shurtliff (2013). In this book, we discover why Rumpelstiltskin's name is so important, how he is able to spin straw into gold, and why a first-born child is ultimately his reward.
11. *The Secret of the Ruby Ring* by Yvonne MacGrory (1994). A ring grants an 11-year-old girl two wishes, but what if she loses the ring after the first wish? Also read *Emma and the Ruby Ring* and *The Quest of the Ruby*.
12. *Splendors and Glooms* by Laura Amy Schlitz (2012). Lizzie and Parsefal, apprentices to the evil puppeteer Grisini, seek to uncover the whereabouts of a beloved girl who disappears at the birthday party.
13. *A Tale of Two Castles* by Gail Carson Levine (2012). Newly arrived to a town with two castles, Elodie finds herself assisting a wise dragon to solve the mystery of a greedy king, a giddy princess, a fearsome ogre, and handsome cat trainer.
14. *A Tangle of Knots* by Lisa Graf (2013). A tale told from multiple perspectives, this book, based in Poughkeepsie, focuses on the lives of several with special talents: Cady is a magnificent cake baker, Zane specializes in long-distance spitting, another is gifted in origami and another in whistling. Then there is the villain whose talent is stealing other's talents and everything becomes very, well, tangled.
15. *Time out of Time* by Maureen Doyle McQuerry (2015). Timothy James, his sister Sarah, and a friend race against both time and evil in their quest to find The Four Treasures of the Market. Hindering and assisting them are well-drawn characters from Scottish myth and folklore. A good book for mystery lovers and accomplished code-breakers.
16. *Tilly's Moonlight Garden* by Julia Green (2013). Having just moved into a drafty old mansion and away from her friends, Tilly, follows a fox into a magic garden where she discovers a new friend whom no one else can see.
17. *The Wish Giver: Three Tales of the Coven Tree* by Bill Brittain (1983). Wishes granted are often filled with unexpected consequences, as children discover following a Church Social. The Wishes? Being Well-liked. Staying put. Avoiding water-hauling.

Father-Son

1. *Dragonwings* by Laurence Yep (1975). During the early years of the 20th-century in San Francisco, a Chinese immigrant father and his son build a flying machine just after the Wright Brothers successfully launch theirs.
2. *Fortunately, the Milk* by Neil Gaimon (2013). A rollicking, exaggerated tale of the sacrifice and ingenuity of a father caring for his family while his wife is away. It is truly amazing how many things can happen on the way to the grocery store and back.
3. *The Janitor's Boy* by Andrew Clements (2001). A fifth-grader finds himself the target of ridicule when classmates find out his father is the school janitor, so he turns his anger briefly on his father and faces consequences that bring enlightenment.
4. *The Misadventures of Family Fletcher* by Dana Alison Levy (2015). A family with two fathers and four adopted boys travels through the school year as they navigate the discontent of a grumpy neighbor. Of the brothers, Sam likes soccer, Jax loves fourth grade, Eli relishes elite academic challenges, and Frog spends much of his time protecting his invisible cheetah.

Ordinary Girls (and Some Princesses) Overcoming Obstacles

1. *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo (2000). Moving to a new Florida town with her preacher father, a young girl, Opal, befriends a dog who introduces her to a handful of the community's unique residents.
2. *Clever Gretchen and Other Forgotten Folktales* by Alison Lurie (1980). Fourteen stories populated by capable and witty heroines—both princesses and commoners—include
3. *The Fourteenth Goldfish* by Jennifer Holm (2014). Saddened by the death of her goldfish, the departure of a friend, and a nostalgia for 5th grade, Ellie encounters wonderment at the arrival of a cranky, bossy, 13-year-old boy, who just might be Ellie's grandfather, scientifically driven to discover the secrets of immortality.
4. *Harriet the Spy* by Fitzhugh (1964). Harriet, in part a girl on her own, keeps a frank journal, which when discovered and read by her friends, isolates her even further. How to make amends? Others in this series: *The Long Secret* and *Sport*.
5. *The Haunting of Granite Falls* by Eva Ibbotson (1987). Ghosts are upset when their castle is relocated from Scotland to Texas...just to keep an indulged oil magnate's child, Helen Hopgood, happy.
6. *Ghouliah Song* by William Alexander (2013). Kalie, who loves music, is delighted when a goblin gives her a flute carved out of bone, but when the tune separates her from her shadow, she must leave home, and discover ways to reunite with her village.
7. *The Ordinary Princess* by M.M. Kaye. At her christening, a princess is given the gift of "ordinariness" by a fairy, leading her to a neighboring palace where she, as the 14th assistant kitchen maid, unexpectedly meets the prince of her dreams.
8. *The Penderwicks in Spring* by Bidsall (2015). For those who know the series, Book Four is told from the perspective of Batty, now 10—graced with a beautiful singing voice and planning a grand surprise. She starts a dog-walking business to pay for voice lessons and move through worries she may be responsible for the death of the family dog, Hound.
9. *Seven Wild Sisters* by Charles de Lint (2014). When a girl saves an injured sangman fairy in the Tanglewood Forest, she puts herself, her six sisters, and many others in the midst of a fairy feud (fun illustrations).
10. *A Snicker of Magic* by Natalie Lloyd (2014). A mother and daughter moving to Midnight Gulch Tennessee, are caught up in the legendary magic of their new home as Felicity Pickle, a lover of words, seeks for a permanent home.
11. *The War that Saved my Life* by Kimberley Brubaker Bradley (2015). A young disabled girl and her brother are evacuated from London to the English countryside during World War II, where they find life to be much sweeter away from their abusive mother.
12. *When the Circus Came to Town* by Laurence Yep (2001). A gentle story records how the musical gifts of a young Chinese girl pull her back into the world following a rough encounter with smallpox, which scars her face.
13. *Where the Mountains Meet the Moon* by Grace Lin (2011). Wishing her family might no longer live in its ramshackle hut, Minli uses her father's folktales of the Jade Dragon and the Old Man on the Moon to inspire her journey to reverse her family fortunes. (Also read the sequel *Starry River of the Sky*).

Shorter Chapter Books (under 125 pages)

8. *Birdie's Lighthouse* by Deborah Hopkinson (1996). A girl, moving to an island off the coast of Maine to be with her father, encounters a fierce storm.
9. *Chalk Box Kid* by Clyde Bulla (1987). Nine-year-old Gregory's new home doesn't have a garden, but he is able to create a very surprising and different one in an unusual spot.
10. *Donovan's Word Jar* by Monalisa DeGross (1996). When the jar Donovan keeps his word collection in fills, he discovers a special means of giving his words away and receiving something wonderful in return.
11. *The Dragon's Boy* by Jane Yolen (1990). Young Arthur meets a dragon he comes to accept as a friend and mentor. Also read *The Pit Dragon Chronicles* by the same author.
12. *The Green Book* by Patton Walsh (2012). A family needing to leave Earth to live on a new planet must take little with them and use their wits in the place carefully chosen for them. Told from the perspective of Pattie, who chooses to bring a book.
13. *Half-A-Moon Inn* by Paul Fleischman (1991). A mute boy, searching for his mother in a storm, is held captive by the proprietress of an ancient inn.
14. *Highway Robbery* by Kate Thompson (2009). On a cold day in 18th-century England, a poor young boy agrees to hold a man's horse for a guinea, but soon finds himself in a pickle when the man never returns and others are pursuing him.
15. *Like Jake and Me* by Mavis Jukes (1984). Alex, who loves to dance, admires his new cowboy stepfather, who wields a sharp ax and doesn't seem to be afraid of anything...until an encounter with a furry wolf-spider (hint: Alex to the rescue!).
16. *Pioneer Cat* by William H. Hooks (1988). Nine-year-old Kate Purdy must think of ways to conceal her cat, who is not allowed on the wagon train trip from Missouri to Oregon.
17. *Not My Dog* by Colby Rodowsky (2001). Ellie wanted a cute puppy, not a full-grown mutt...so she resists her new pet until one day her resistance almost makes her lose the only pet she's ever likely to have.
18. *Sable* by Karen Hesse (1998). Tate is delighted when a stray dog turns up at her doorstep, but the dog makes so much trouble for the neighbors it may not be able to stay. Also read *A Wish on a Unicorn* by the same author.
19. *Shoeshine Girl* by Clyde Bulla (1975). Determined to earn some money, 10-year-old Sarah Ida gets a job at a shoe shine stand and learns much else besides polishing shoes.
20. *Skinny Bones* by Barbara Park (1982). The smallest boy on a baseball team gets more than he bargains for when he challenges the team's star pitcher with his active sense of humor. Also read the sequel.
21. *The Skirt* by Gary Soto (1993). Bringing her mother's folklorico skirt to school, Miatta accidentally leaves it on the bus and must find it before the class performance.
22. *Stone Fox* by John Gardiner (1948). Determined to keep the family farm going, Willy hitches his dog, Searchlight, to the family plough and harvests an entire potato crop, but this isn't enough. He must also enter a sled race to earn a much-needed \$500.
23. *Tornado* by Betsy Byars (1996). As they wait out a tornado in a storm cellar, two boys listen to their farm hand's tale of a dog blown into his life many years ago by similar weather.

Truth be Told

1. *Can We Save the Tiger?* By Martin Jenkins. The beauty and potential disappearance of ground iguanas, partula snails, and white-rumped vultures are stories told of some of the many animals described in this thoughtful, age-appropriate book.
2. *The Elephant Scientist* by Kaitlin O'Connell (2012). Winner of the American Library Association's Siebert Award for nonfiction, this work follows the journey of scientist O'Connell in Namibia observing the African Elephant at Atosha National Park. It is during such a trip that she makes an astonishing discovery.

To Access the Summer Booklists on our Grade-School Website

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