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# Fifth Grade Recommended Reading List 2020-2021 | [oppl.org/kids-lists](http://oppl.org/kids-lists)

## Fiction

Arden, Katherine. *Small Spaces*. After eleven-year-old Ollie's school bus mysteriously breaks down on a field trip, she and two classmates must use all of their wits to survive the night while being hunted in a dark forest.

Cartaya, Pablo. *Each Tiny Spark*. Sixth-grader Emilia Torres struggles with ADHD, her controlling abuela, her mother's work commitments, her father's distance after returning from deployment, evolving friendships, and a conflict over school redistricting.

Cervantes, Angela. *Lety Out Loud*. Lety loves writing adoption profiles for the shelter animals, who never mind when it takes her longer to speak English than Spanish. But the profiles turn into a rivalry that Lety worries will mean she can't adopt her favorite shelter dog.

Cline-Ransome, Lesa. *Finding Langston*. Discovering a book of Langston Hughes' poetry in a 1940s Chicago library helps Langston cope with the loss of his mother, moving north, and being bullied.

Draper, Sharon. *Blended*. Piano-prodigy Isabella, eleven, whose black father and white mother struggle to share custody, never feels whole, especially as racial tensions affect her school, her parents both become engaged, and she and her stepbrother are stopped by police.

Ferruolo, Jeanne Zulick. *Ruby in the Sky*. When Ruby and her mother move to tiny Fortin, Vermont, Ruby is surprised to make friends at school and in the neighborhood, where a reclusive lady hides a huge secret.

Green, Shari. *Macy McMillan and the Rainbow Goddess*. Dealing with her mother's remarriage and her family moving, deaf sixth-grader Macy is told she must help her elderly neighbor Iris Gillan, who is getting ready to move to a nursing home.

Hale, Shannon and Dean Hale. *The Unbeatable Squirrel Girl: Squirrel Meets World (series)*. Doreen has the powers of a squirrel, though she has to hide them—and her tail—until she discovers how to use her super powers for super good.

Hood, Susan. *Lifeboat 12*. In 1940, a group of British kids, their escorts, and some sailors struggle to survive for days in a lifeboat at sea when the ship taking them to safety is torpedoed. Based on a true story.

Johnson, Varian. *The Parker Inheritance*. When Candice finds the letter that sent her grandmother on the treasure hunt that cost her her job, she and her friend Brandon set out to find the inheritance, exonerate her grandmother, and expose an injustice once committed against an African-American family in their town. Kelkar, Supriya. Ahimsa. Gandhi asks for one member of each family to join the fight for independence from the British, and when 10-year-old Anjali's mother is jailed for doing so, Anjali must step out of her comfort zone to take over her mother's work.

Jones, Kelly. *Sauerkraut*. HD Schenk is cleaning out his uncle's basement to earn money to build his own computer and enter it in the county fair, not expecting to find the ghost of his great-great grandmother haunting an old pickling crock. A wonderfully goofy ghost tale that celebrates creative problem solving, family ties, and makers of every variety.

Kapit, Sarah. *Get a Grip, Vivi Cohen*. Eleven-year-old knuckleball pitcher Vivi Cohen, who has autism, becomes pen pals with her favorite Major League baseball player after writing a letter to him as an assignment for her social skills class.

Kelly, Erin Entrada. *Hello, Universe*. Lives of four misfits are intertwined when a bully's prank lands shy Virgil at the bottom of a well, and Valencia, Kaori, and Gen band together in a quest to find and rescue him.

Klages, Ellen. *Out of Left Field*. Every boy in the neighborhood knows Katy is their best pitcher, but when she tries out for Little League in 1957, she's rejected for being a girl. Katy fights back and discovers the forgotten history of female ball players.

Lerangis, Peter. *Throwback*. When Corey learns that he has the ability to save lives while time traveling, he is determined to go back in time to save his grandmother who died on September 11, 2001.

Lien, Henry. *Peasprout Chen: Future Leader of Skate and Sword (series)*. Peasprout dreams of becoming a legend of wu liu, the deadly and beautiful art of martial arts figure skating.

Pérez, Celia C. *The First Rule of Punk*. Twelve-year-old María Luisa O'Neill-Morales reluctantly moves with her MexicanAmerican mother to Chicago and starts school with a bang—violating the dress code with her punk rock aesthetic and spurning the most popular girl in favor of starting a band with like-minded weirdos.

Ruby, Lois. *Red Menace*. During the summer of 1953, thirteen-year-old Marty's parents are suspected of communist sympathies, upending his life and causing him to question what it really means to be a patriotic American.

Solomons, David. *Doctor Who: Secret in Vault 13*. The Doctor and her friends Yaz, Ryan, and Graham travel to the coldest spot in the universe, the Galactic Seed Vault, in search of the vault rumored to hold a great treasure and a terrible weapon.

Stone, Nic. *Clean Getaway*. Scoob is grateful for the chance to go on a roadtrip with his grandmother, but adventure quickly turns to uncertainty: G'ma keeps changing the license plate, dodging Scoob's questions, and refusing to check Dad's voice mails. And the father they go, the more Scoob realizes that the world hasn't always been a welcoming place for kids like him, and things aren't always what they seem--G'ma included.

Sumner, Jamie. *Roll With It*. Twelve-year-old Ellie, who has cerebral palsy, finds her life transformed when she moves with her mother to small-town Oklahoma to help care for her grandfather, who has Alzheimer's Disease.

Torres, Jennifer. *The Fresh New Face of Griselda*. After her father's landscaping business fails and the family loses their house, sixth-grader Griselda Zaragoza follows her sister's example and begins selling Alma cosmetics while hiding her changed circumstances from friends.



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### Nonfiction

Armstrong Dunbar, Erica and Kathleen Van Cleve. *Never Caught: The Story of Ona Judge* (B JUDGE). Never Caught is the eye-opening narrative of Ona Judge, George and Martha Washington's runaway slave, who risked everything for freedom.

Beccia, Carlyn. *Monstrous: The Lore, Gore, and Science Behind Your Favorite Monsters* (001.944 BEC). Discover the origins of eight scream-worthy monsters, find out how major historical events shaped their creation, and delve into the science behind these fearful beasts.

Chambers, Veronica. *Resist: 35 Profiles of Ordinary People who Rose Up Against Tyranny and Injustice* (303.484 CHA). You may only be one person, but you have the power to change the world. Before they were activists, they were just like you and me. These remarkable figures show us what it means to take a stand and say no to injustice, even when it would be far easier to stay quiet.

Grimes, Nikki. *One Last Word: Wisdom From the Harlem Renaissance* (811 GRI). Nikki Grimes uses "The Golden Shovel" poetic method to create original poems based on the works of master poets like Langston Hughes, Georgia Douglas Johnson, Jean Toomer, and others who enriched history during this era.

Hudson, Wade. *We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Voices* (305.8 WE). What do we tell our children when the world seems bleak, and prejudice and racism run rampant?

Melvin, Leland. *Chasing Space* (B MELVIN). When the former Detroit Lion's football career was cut short by an injury, Leland Marvin didn't waste time mourning his broken dream. Instead, he found a new one -- something completely out of this world.

Tyson, Neil DeGrasse. *Astrophysics for Young People in a Hurry* (J 523.01 TYS). Building on the wonder inspired by outer space, *Astrophysics for Young People in a Hurry* introduces an exciting field and the principles of scientific inquiry to young readers.

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Martin Rising: Requiem for a King* (811 PIN). In a rich embroidery of visions, musical cadence, and deep emotion, Andrea and Brian Pinkney convey the final months of Martin Luther King's life -- and of his assassination -- through metaphor, spirituality, and multilayers of meaning.

Rhatigan, Joe. *Inventions That Could Have Changed the World* (609 RHA). The fascinating stories of inventions that could have changed the world, should have made a difference, or would have astounded us all, but for one reason or another, didn't. Some inventions were too wacky, weird, or unwieldy. Others simply didn't work.

Sandler, Martin W. *The Whydah: A Pirate Ship Feared, Wrecked, and Found* (910.45 SAN). For more than two hundred years, the wreck of the Whydah (and the riches that went down with it) eluded treasure seekers, until the ship was finally found in 1984 by marine archaeologists.

Wilson, Janet. *Our Future: How Kids are Taking Action* (361.2 WIL). These young people from across the globe are raising awareness about what issues matter to them most. From oil pipelines to cyber bullying, from gun violence to animal protection, they won't let their youth stop them from being heard.

### Graphic Novels

Aldridge, Ethan M. *Estranged* (series). Edmund and the Childe were swapped at birth; Edmund lives in secret as a changeling in the World Above, his fae powers hidden, while the Childe lives among the fae, where being a human makes him a curiosity at the royal palace. Now they must unite on a dangerous quest to save both worlds—even if they're not sure to which world they belong.

Cameron, Neill. *Mega Robo Bros* (series). London! The future! Alex and Freddy are just like any other brothers. They squabble. They drive their parents crazy. There's only one difference; they're the most powerful robots on Earth!

Chanani, Nidhi. *Pashmina*. Indian-American teen Priyanka attempts to reconnect with her mother's homeland through a magical pashmina shawl.

Larson, Hope. *Compass South* (series). After escaping the Black Hook Gang in 1860 New York City, twelve-year-old twins Alexander and Cleopatra flee to New Orleans, become separated, and try to find each other in San Francisco, while being followed by pirates who think they hold the key to treasure.

Levy, Deborah. *Becoming RBG* (Graphic Novel Bio GINSBURG). This graphic biography follows a shy little girl who became a child who questioned unfairness, who became a student who persisted despite obstacles, who became an advocate who resisted injustice, who became a judge who revered the rule of law, who became... RBG

Mercado, Yehudi. *Sci-Fu*. Hip-hop, sci-fi, and kung fu all hit the turntables when a young mix-master scratches the perfect beat and accidentally summons a UFO.

Montclare, Brandon. *Moon Girl and Devil Dinosaur* (series). Lunella Lafayette is an inhuman preteen genius who wants to change the world, but she also has to deal with a red-scaled beast teleported from the prehistoric past!

Nicholas, Jamar. *Leon: Protector of the Playground*. Leon is a super hero with a pedigree—his mom is one of the best heroes in town. Does he have what it takes to protect his school?

Thummler, Breanna. *Sheets*. When Marjorie, a practical teen in charge of her family's laundry business, encounters Wendell, a ghost seeking purpose in the forbidden human world, the pair must find a solution to Wendell's chaos-inducing hauntings.

Vivat, Booki. *Frazzled: Everyday Disasters and Impending Doom* (series). Nervous about middle school because her family does not get her and her friends know exactly what they want to do, Abbie Wu searches for her own passion before discovering a knack for leadership when injustices in the cafeteria come to light.

Wang, Jen. *Stargazing*. Growing up in the same Chinese-American suburb, perfectionist Christine and artistic, confident, impulsive Moon become unlikely best friends, whose friendship is tested by jealousy, social expectations, and illness.

Xu, Ru. *Newsprints* (series). With her city at war, orphan Blue disguises herself as a newsboy for the only local paper that tells the truth, but a new friend gives her the courage to start seeking the freedom to be herself.