

5

Fifth Grade Recommended Reading List 2021-2022 | oppl.org/kids-lists

Fiction

Arden, Katherine. *Small Spaces* (series). 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*. 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* (series). Discovering a book of Langston Hughes' poetry in a 1940s Chicago library helps a boy cope with the loss of his mother, moving north, and being bullied.

Day, Christine. *The Sea in Winter*. It's been a hard year for Maisie Cannon, ever since she hurt her leg and could not keep up with her ballet training and auditions. Her blended family is loving and supportive, but Maisie knows that they just can't understand how hopeless she feels.

Draper, Sharon. *Blended*. Piano-prodigy Isabella, 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.

Fipps, Lisa. *Starfish*. Ellie has been bullied for her weight, but now a swimming hobby, a kind therapist and an accepting new neighbor help her embrace her true self.

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*. H.D. 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.

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*. The 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 Mexican-American mother to Chicago and starts school with a bang—violating the dress code with her punk rock aesthetic and spurning the school's most popular girl in favor of starting a band with like-minded weirdos.

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Loretta Little Looks Back: Three Voices Go Tell It*. Loretta, Roly, and Aggie B. Little relate their Mississippi family's struggles and triumphs from 1927 to 1968 while struggling as sharecroppers, living under Jim Crow, and fighting for Civil Rights.

Reed, Dwayne. *Simon B. Rhymin'*. Dreaming of becoming a world-famous rapper, Chicago fifth-grader Simon Barnes is forced to confront his shyness and fear of speaking in public to demonstrate his talents during an oral presentation at school.

Reynolds, Aaron. *The Incredibly Dead Pets of Rex Dexter*. Receiving a pet chicken instead of the dog he has wished for all his life, Rex is cursed by the Grim Reaper in the wake of his chicken's untimely demise and becomes haunted by a chatty, messy bunch of dead animal ghosts from the local zoo.

Ruby, Lois. *Red Menace*. During the summer of 1953, 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.

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.

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, Griselda Zaragoza follows her sister's example and begins selling Alma cosmetics while hiding her changed circumstances from friends.



continued on back

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5

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Nonfiction

Armstrong Dunbar, Erica and Kathleen Van Cleve. *Never Caught: The Story of Ona Judge* (B JUDGE). The eye-opening narrative of Ona Judge, who risked everything for freedom when she ran away from enslavement in the home of George and Martha Washington.

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. 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). Original poems based on the works of Langston Hughes, Georgia Douglas Johnson, Jean Toomer, and others who enriched history during this era.

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.

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

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.

Stelson, Caren. *A Bowl Full of Peace* (940.542 STE). The story of Sachiko Yasui, a young survivor of the Nagasaki atomic bombing who cherishes a single, daily meal bowl that survived the attack and how that bowl became a family symbol of hope, peace and new traditions.

Thimmesh, Catherine. *Camp Panda: Helping Cubs Return to the Wild* (599.789 THI). Despite poaching, habitat destruction, pollution, human overpopulation, and global climate change, the panda population of China is making a comeback. How? By humans teaching baby pandas how to be wild and stay wild.

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

Weatherford, Carole Boston. *Box: Henry Brown Mails Himself to Freedom* (B BROWN). A lyrical tale about the cost and fragility of freedom follows the life of Henry "Box" Brown, an enslaved man and abolitionist who was separated from his family before he mailed himself to freedom.

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.

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.

Escabasse, Sophie. *Witches of Brooklyn*. Effie moves to Brooklyn to live with her strange aunt and soon discovers that she might be a witch.

Levy, Deborah. *Becoming RBG* (Graphic novel, B GINSBURG). A child who questioned unfairness became a student who persisted despite obstacles, who became an advocate who resisted injustice, who became a judge who revered the rule of law. She was the one and only RBG: Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Mannaert, Wauter. *Chef Yasmina and the Potato Panic*. A young chef is the only one who can protect her town from an onslaught of scientifically enhanced, highly-addictive potatoes.

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.

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?

Smith, James Otis. *Black Heroes of the Wild West* (Nonfiction graphic novel, 978.02 SMI). The extraordinary true tales of three black historical figures in the Old West: Mary "Stagecoach" Fields, a cardplaying coach driver; Bass Reeves, the first black Deputy Marshall west of the Mississippi; and Bob Lemmons, a cowboy famous for his ability to tame mustangs.

Tankard, Jeremy. *Yorick and Bones*. Yorick is a skeleton who was just dug up after a few hundred years of sleep. He speaks like it too. 'Forsooth, my joy, I barely can contain!' Bones is the hungry dog who did the digging. Though he cannot speak, he can chomp. What will become of these two unlikely companions?

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.

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.

Yee, Reimena. *Séance Tea Party*. After watching her circle of friends seemingly fade away, Lora is determined to still have fun on her own, so when a tea party leads Lora to discovering Alexa, the ghost that haunts her house, they soon become best friends.