



**GRADES 5 & UP  
OLDER READERS LIST**



by Judy Freeman

The titles on this list are all marvelous, recently published books that older children, grades 5 and up, will enjoy reading over and over. Use the list for summer reading, for holidays, birthdays, and other special day presents, and for all the kids in your life, not just your own!

If you're in the mood to read and don't want to break the bank at the bookstore, don't forget to support your school and public libraries who will go to the ends of the earth to get your kids reading. Most public libraries run wonderful Summer Reading Clubs each summer, with programs, prizes, and lots of reading inspiration.

**NOTE: Books designated \*S\* are part of a series. Look for others in the series, too. The grade levels are listed as a general guideline, but are certainly not set in stone. If your children are looking for shorter chapter books, be sure to investigate the titles on the accompanying booklist for younger readers, grades PreK-4. For other stellar books to read, check out the many book reviews on [www.READKIDDOREAD.com](http://www.READKIDDOREAD.com).**

## **FICTION**

***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie. Illus. by Ellen Forney. Little, Brown, 2007. (Gr. 8 and Up)**

As fourteen-year-old old Arnold "Junior" Spirit explains it in words and cartoons, he has weekly seizures, a stutter, and a lisp; his head is so enormous, kids on the Spokane Indian Reservation where he lives call him Orbit and Globe. It doesn't get easier when he decides to transfer to Reardan, an all-white high school 22 miles from the reservation.

***The Adventures of Odysseus* by Hugh Lupton and Daniel Morden. Illus. by Christina Balit. Barefoot, 2006. (Gr. 3-8)**

After he washes ashore on an island ruled by King Alcinous, Odysseus relates to the king and his guests in the feasting hall the saga of his arduous attempts to return home from the Trojan War.

***Airborn* by Kenneth Oppel. HarperCollins, 2004. (Gr. 5 and Up) \*S\***

Aboard the airship Aurora, riding high above the Pacificus, fifteen-year-old cabin boy, Matt Cruse, helps to rescue an unconscious man in a hot air balloon.

***Al Capone Does My Shirts* by Gennifer Choldenko. Putnam, 2004. (Gr. 6-8)**

In 1935, Moose Flanagan's father gets a job at Alcatraz prison, and the family moves to the twelve-acre rock island in the middle of San Francisco Bay.

***American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang. Roaring Brook/First Second, 2006. (Gr. 7 and Up)**

In the first graphic novel to win the coveted Printz Award, Chinese kid Jin Wang intersperses stories about the fabled Monkey King with his own attempts to assimilate with his Caucasian classmates.

***Antsy Does Time* by Neal Shüsterman. Dutton, 2008. (Gr. 7 and Up) \*S\***

Fourteen-year-old Anthony "Antsy" Bonano comes up with an original way to help his classmate, Gunnar Ümlaut, who claims to be dying of a rare incurable disease called Pulmonary Monoxic Systemia. Antsy writes him an IOU giving him one month of his own life.

***The Arrival* by Shaun Tan. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, 2007. (Gr. 6 and Up)**

In a groundbreaking wordless picture book for older readers, follow the bittersweet journey of a poor man who leaves his family behind to immigrate by ship to a marvelous new land filled with baffling and fantastical wonders.

***Bella at Midnight* by Diane Stanley. HarperCollins, 2006. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

Rejected by Sir Edward after his wife dies in childbirth, baby Isabel is raised by the blacksmith and his kind wife until she turns 16 and her father summons her back to live with an unpleasant new stepmother and two stepsisters.

***Blood on the River: James Town 1607* by Elisa Carbone. Viking, 2006. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

In his clear-eyed, harrowing account of the first year of the Jamestown Settlement, eleven-year-old orphan Samuel Collier accompanies Captain John Smith to Virginia as his page.

***Blue Jasmine* by Kashmira Sheth. Hyperion, 2004. (Gr. 5-7)**

Twelve-year-old Seema leaves her comfortable life in India and moves with her family to Iowa, where everything is different, from school to the freezing winter weather.

***Blue Lipstick: Concrete Poems* by John Grandits. Clarion, 2007. (Gr. 5-9)**

This companion book to *Technically It's Not My Fault: Concrete Poems*, which was narrated by Robert, gives big sister Jessie her turn to dish about her life as a ninth grader.

***Beowulf: A Hero's Tale Retold* by James Rumford. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. (Gr. 3-8)**

In a new illustrated version of the ninth century hero poem, the stalwart young knight Beowulf fights the ogre Grendel and his evil mother, two monsters who rise up from the marshes, and a dragon, too.

***The Big Splash* by Jack D. Farrisolo. Amulet, 2008. (Gr. 5-8)**

Against his better judgment, Matt Stevens, hard-boiled private kid detective at Franklin Middle School, accepts a small job from Vinnie Biggs, a bad apple seventh grader who runs all the illegal activities there.

***Bone #1: Out from Boneville* by Jeff Smith. Graphix/Scholastic, 2005. (Gr. 4 and Up) \*S\***

In the first of a series of colorful graphic novels, meet the three Bone cousins, recently chased out of their home town of Boneville: responsible Fone Bone; larcenous, scheming Phoney Bone; and lackadaisical, cigar-chomping Smiley Bone.

***The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak. Knopf, 2006. (Gr. 7 and Up)**

Death himself is the narrator of this unforgettable and devastating Holocaust novel. As he says, "It's just a small story really, about, among other things: \*A girl, \*Some words, \*An accordionist, \*Some fanatical Germans, \*A Jewish fist fighter, \*And quite a lot of thievery."

***Canned* by Alex Shearer. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 4-8)**

Fergal Banfield ammasses a collection of unlabeled cans from the supermarket, and finds something shocking and horrible inside one of them.

***Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson. Simon & Schuster, 2008. (Gr. 5-8)**

Though 12-year-old Isabel and her little sister Ruth expect to be freed when their mistress dies in 1776, instead they are bought and brought to New York City as slaves of Mr. Lockton, a Tory.

***City of Dogs* by Livi Michael. Putnam, 2007. (Gr. 4-8)**

On Sam's birthday, he takes in a small white dog he names Jenny, who has actually come from the Norse world, where she saved her master, Baldur, the Golden Boy, from death.

***Colibrí* by Ann Cameron. Farrar, 2003. (Gr. 5-8)**

Twelve-year-old Rosa is Uncle's guide as he pretends blindness and begs for money in small Guatemalan towns.

***Counting on Grace* by Elizabeth Winthrop. Illus. by Patience Brewster. Random House/Wendy Lamb Books, 2006. (Gr. 6-8)**

In a Vermont river town in 1910, 12-year-old Grace quits school and goes to work with her mother, Mamère, as a doffer in the dangerous textile mill.

***Coraline: Graphic Novel* by Neil Gaiman. Adapted and illus. by P. Craig Russell. HarperCollins, 2008. (Gr. 4-7)**

Fans of Gaiman's original children's chiller, *Coraline*, will enjoy revisiting her creepy world in a faithful graphic novel adaptation of the book.

***A Crooked Kind of Perfect* by Linda Urban. Harcourt, 2007. (Gr. 4-7)**

"I was supposed to play the piano," 11-year-old Zoe Elias explains. Instead, her dad buys her a "wood grained, vinyl-seated, wheeze-bag organ. The Perfectone D-60."

***The Dangerous Days of Daniel X* by James Patterson and Michael Ledwidge. Little, Brown, 2008. (Gr. 5 and Up) \*S\***

Meet wise-cracking, hard-fighting alien hunter Daniel X, age 15, as he hunts and is hunted by his most powerful and lethal opponent yet: movie mogul Ergent Seth, #6 on Daniel's List of Alien Outlaws on Terra Firma.

***Diamond Willow* by Helen Frost. Farrar, 2008. (Gr. 4-7)**

Twelve-year-old Willow who lives with her parents, little sister, and six sled dogs in Old Fork in the Alaskan bush, begs her mom to let her mush the dogs out to her grandparents' house by herself.

***Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Greg Hefley's Journal* by Jeff Kinney. Amulet, 2008. (Gr. 4 and Up) \*S\***

Writing and drawing his stick-figure pictures in his new journal helps Greg deal with middle school, overbearing parents, and two brothers. One of the funniest books ever.

***The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks* by E. Lockhart. Hyperion, 2008. (Gr. 7 and Up)**

At first, Alabaster Prep sophomore Frankie, newly emerged from the gawky stage, is thrilled to be dating popular and handsome senior, Matthew Livingston. Then she uncovers his connection with the all-male secret society, the Loyal Order of the Basset Hounds.

***Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick. Scholastic, 2005. (Gr. 6-9)**

Until that October 7 morning when eighth-grader Steven Alper was making oatmeal, the most annoying thing in his life was his five-year-old brother, Jeffrey. Then Jeffrey is diagnosed with leukemia.

***Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis. Scholastic, 2007 (Gr. 4-8)**

In 1859 in Buxton, Canada, a village founded by freed and escaped slaves, 11-year-old Elijah is well known as the first child to be born free in the Settlement.

***Emma-Jean Lazarus Fell Out of a Tree* by Lauren Tarshis. Dial, 2007. (Gr. 5-7) \*S\***

When seventh grader Emma-Jean encounters the popular Colleen Pomerantz crying in the girl's bathroom, she ignores her usual instincts to stay out of the messy lives of her classmates and sets out to help her.

***Emmy and the Incredible Shrinking Rat* by Lynne Jonell. Illus. by Jonathan Bean. Henry Holt, 2007. (Gr. 3-6) \*S\***

The more Emmy tries to be good, the more everyone seems to ignore her. The Rat who lives in a cage in her classroom tells her, "The bad ones get all the attention . . . Try being bad for once. You might like it."

***Erratum* by Walter Sorrells. Dutton, 2008. (Gr. 4-8)**

An old book titled *Her Lif* tells the story of twelve-year-old Jessica Sternhagen's own life so far in very, very, very great detail, ending with her imminent death by dagger. She figures it must be some kind of joke.

***Firegirl* by Tony Abbott. Little, Brown, 2006. (Gr. 4-7)**

Tom, an introverted, pudgy seventh grader at St. Catherine's, describes three weeks that change his life a little bit, when disfigured burn victim Jessica Feeney joins their class while she is undergoing treatments at the hospital nearby.

***Found (The Missing: Book 1)* by Margaret Peterson Haddix. Simon & Schuster, 2008. (Gr. 4-8) \*S\***

Seventh grade friends, Chip and Jonah, each receive a mysterious letter that says "YOU ARE ONE OF THE MISSING." Is it just a prank?

***The Game of Silence* by Louise Erdrich. HarperCollins, 2005. (Gr. 4-8) \*S\***

In 1850, nine-year-old Omakayas is overjoyed when her family takes in an orphaned baby boy, but horrified to learn that all the Ojibwe people of her beautiful island village on Lake Superior will soon be forced to leave their homes,

***Gossamer* by Lois Lowry. Houghton Mifflin, 2006. (Gr. 4-8)**

Littlest One is learning how to be a dream-giver, bestowing fragments of good memories upon her assigned house's human inhabitants—an older woman and her angry new foster child, eight-year-old John.

***The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman. Illus. by Dave McKean. HarperCollins, 2008. (Gr. 5-8)**

The night his family is murdered, a toddler wanders into a nearby old English graveyard where he is taken in and raised by the long-dead ghostly inhabitants who name him Nobody Owens, Bod for short.

***Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins. Scholastic, 2003. (Gr. 4-8)**

Twelve-year-old Gregor and his two-year-old sister, Boots, fall through an airduct in their New York City apartment house laundry room, and land far below in the Underland.

***Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate. Feiwel & Friends, 2007. (Gr. 5-8)**

As Kek's explains in his heartfelt narrative of free verse poems, back home in Somalia, before the soldiers killed his father and brother, he took care of the cows. Now he must now adjust to living in snowy Minnesota with his aunt and his cousin, though he still has hopes his mother is alive and will come for him.

***The Homework Machine* by Dan Gutman. Simon & Schuster, 2006. (Gr. 4-6)**

Read the testimony of four fifth graders in big trouble with the law, which started after one of them programmed his computer to complete all his homework in minutes.

***How to Steal a Dog* by Barbara O'Connor. Farrar, 2007. (Gr. 4-7)**

Georgina says, "The day I decided to steal a dog was the same day my best friend, Luanne Godfrey, found out I lived in a car."

***The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 7 and Up)**

On reaping day in District 12, in a place that was once called North America, sixteen-year-old Katniss volunteers to be this year's tribute in the Hunger Games to save Prim, her younger sister, from certain death.

***Ida B: And Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World* by Katherine Hannigan. Greenwillow, 2004. (Gr. 4-6)**

When her mother gets cancer, Ida B's is furious at her parents' decision to send her back to public school.

***The Invention of Hugo Cabret: A Novel in Words and Pictures* by Brian Selznick. Scholastic, 2007. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

Hugo, a twelve-year-old orphan, secretly winds the clocks in the Paris train station and steals toys from the old toymaker's shop because he needs the parts to restore an automaton, a mechanical man built out of clockworks.

***Journey to the Blue Moon* by Rebecca Rupp. Candlewick, 2006. (Gr. 3-6)**

Alex, who is failing school, can't see the point in doing much of anything until he gets a ticket for a rickety spaceship ride to the Blue Moon, where all lost things can be found.

***Larklight* by Philip Reeve. Illus. by David Wyatt. Bloomsbury, 2006. (Gr. 5 and Up) \*S\***

Art loves living in his family's rambling, ramshackle house, Larklight, out in the deeps of space, but when Father is captured by huge white space spiders, Art and his sister Myrtle must flee to the Moon.

***The Legend of the Wandering King* by Laura Gallego Garcia. Scholastic, 2005. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

In ancient Arabia, the young prince of Kinda, Walid ibn Hujr, is consumed with jealousy when he loses a poetry competition to Hammad, a simple carpet weaver. Walid attempts to destroy the man, demanding that he weave a carpet containing the history of the human race.

***The Lightning Thief* (Percy Jackson & the Olympians series, Book 1) by Rick Riordan. Miramax/Hyperion, 2005. (Gr. 5-8) \*S\***

Percy, a troubled, dyslexic, ADHD kid, discovers he is actually a half-blood, with a human mother from New York City and a father who is a Greek god.

***Listening for Lions* by Gloria Whelan. HarperCollins, 2005. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

In 1919, when the influenza epidemic kills her parents, missionaries in British East Africa, 13-year-old red-haired Rachel Sheridan is taken in by the cold and scheming Pritchards. To gain an inheritance, they want her to pretend to be their daughter, Valerie, also a flu victim.

***Locomotion* by Jacqueline Woodson. Putnam, 2003. (Gr. 5-8) \*S\***

Lonnie composes a book of poems that explain how his parents died in a fire and he came to live with Miss Edna.

***The London Eye Mystery* by Siobhan Dowd. Random House/David Fickling, 2008. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

Ted, a boy with Asperger's Syndrome, might be "a weirdo," as his disdainful big sister Kat puts it, but his obsessive analysis of every clue helps him figure out how their 13-year-old cousin, Salim, disappeared from a sealed pod on the London Eye, a huge observation wheel.

***Looking for Bobowitz* by Daniel Pinkwater. Illus. by Jill Pinkwater. HarperCollins, 2004. (Gr. 3-6) \*S\***

Nick and his new pals try to track down Arthur Bobowitz, who twenty years earlier made headlines when his pet, a six-foot, 200 pound chicken named Henrietta, terrorized Hoboken, New Jersey.

***The Magic Thief: Book One* by Sarah Prineas. Illus. by Antavier Caparo. HarperCollins, 2008. (Gr. 4-8)**

After Connwaer, an orphan boy and expert pickpocket, nicks the locus magicalicus or wizard's stone from the pocket of Nevery, an old wizard, he is taken on as the wizard's servant.

***Masterpiece* by Elise Broach. Illus. by Kelly Murphy. Henry Holt, 2008. (Gr. 3-7)**

Marvin, a shiny black beetle who lives beneath the kitchen sink of a New York City apartment, discovers his own artistic gifts when he draws an intricate picture in ink for James, the boy who lives there.

***Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* by James Patterson. Little, Brown, 2005. (Gr. 5 and Up) \*S\***

"Welcome to our nightmare," says 14-year-old Max, introducing her close-knit "family" in the first book of a thrilling fantasy adventure series. There's Fang, 14; Iggy, 14 and blind; Nudge, 11; the Gasman, 8; and his little sister, Angel, 6. They're 98% human, and 2% avian. They've all got wings. And they can fly.

***The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo. Illus. by Bagram Ibatoulline. Candlewick, 2006. (Gr. 3-8)**

Edward, beloved companion of young Abilene Tulane, is a three-foot china rabbit who loves no one but himself.

***MVP\*: Magellan Voyage Project* by Douglas Evans. Illus. by John Shelley. Front Street, 2004. (Gr. 3-6)**

Instead of heading to summer camp, twelve year old Adam Story sets off on a contest to be the first kid to circumnavigate the globe in forty days.

***No Talking* by Andrew Clements. Illus. by Mark Elliott. Simon & Schuster, 2007. (Gr. 3-6)**

Dave Parker sparks a fifth grade competition, boys against girls, to see who can go for two entire days without speaking.

***North* by Donna Jo Napoli. Greenwillow, 2004. (Gr. 4-8)**

Sixth grader Alvin sets off by train from Washington, D.C. to the Arctic Circle to retrace the route of Matthew Henson, the African American explorer who was part of Robert Peary's expedition to the North Pole way back in 1909.

***Pandora Gets Jealous* by Carolyn Hennesy. Bloomsbury, 2008. (Gr. 4-8)**

What does Pandy find in her parents' bedroom but the box her father, the Titan Prometheus, has made her promise never to touch. What if she brought it to school to show? "Of course she wouldn't open it. Duh."

***Peeled* by Joan Bauer. Putnam, 2008. (Gr. 6 and Up)**

Hildy Biddle, reporter for her high school newspaper, *The Core*, in the Upstate New York apple-growing town of Banesville, is committed to finding the truth, especially when the town newspaper begins publishing improbable stories about the supposedly-haunted old Ludlow house.

***The Penderwicks on Gardam Street* by Jeanne Birdsall. Knopf, 2008. (Gr. 4-7)**

Four years after their mother's death, the four Penderwick sisters, appalled when their father plans to start dating, come up with the Save-Daddy Plan, to fix him up with awful women so he won't get remarried.

***Princess Academy* by Shannon Hale. Bloomsbury, 2005. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

Fourteen-year-old Miri is one of the girls of the mountain village of Mount Eskel who is summoned to attend an academy that will prepare them to meet the prince, who will then select one of them as his bride.

***The Puzzling World of Winston Breen* by Eric Berlin. Putnam, 2007. (Gr. 4-7)**

For his younger sister Katie's tenth birthday, twelve-year-old puzzle-lover Winston gives her what he thinks is a small empty wooden box which contains a puzzle and the key to their town's biggest mystery.

***Red Ridin' in the Hood: And Other Cuentos* by Patricia Santos Marcantonio. Illus. by Renato Alarcão. Farrar, 2005. (Gr. 4-8)**

Eleven traditional fairy tales are updated and reset in the barrios of the U.S. and given an original Latino flavor.

***The Revenge of the Witch. (The Last Apprentice, Book One)* by Joseph Delaney. Illus. by Patrick Arrasmith. Greenwillow, 2005. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

Thomas Ward, the left-handed 12-year-old seventh son of a seventh son, becomes the apprentice to the Spook, a man who walks the County, protecting it from witches, boggarts, ghosts, and gasts.

***Revolution Is Not a Dinner Party: A Novel* by Ying Chang Compestine. Henry Holt, 2007. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

"The summer of 1972, the year I turned nine, danger began knocking on doors all over China," says Ling whose father, a doctor, is arrested as an "undercover enemy" during Chairman Mao's Cultural Revolution.

***The Rising Star of Rusty Nail* by Lesley M. M. Blume. Knopf, 2007. (Gr. 4-7)**

In the sleepy little town of Rusty Nail, Minnesota in 1953, Franny, who loves playing piano more than anything, is determined to outdo that spoiled brat, Nancy Orilee, in a piano playing

competition at school.

***The Road to Paris* by Nikki Grimes. Putnam, 2006. (Gr. 4-6)**

When eight-year-old Paris and her ten-year-old brother Malcolm run away from their abusive foster family in New York City, Paris is taken to a new foster home with the Lincoln family in upstate New York.

***Rules* by Cynthia Lord. Scholastic, 2006. (Gr. 4-8)**

Twelve-year-old Catherine is hoping for a summer friend and a reprieve from always to take along her autistic eight-year-old brother, David.

***Savvy* by Ingrid Law. Dial, 2008. (Gr. 4-8)**

On her thirteenth birthday, Mibs Beaumont, awaiting the extraordinary savvy, or special talent, she is destined to acquire, must instead figure a way to get to her Poppa, now unconscious in the hospital after a car wreck.

***Sahara Special* by Esmé Raji Codell. Hyperion, 2003. (Gr. 4-6)**

Sahara Jones is repeating fifth grade, though her new teacher, who the kids call Miss Pointy, believes in Sahara when she says she is a writer.

***The Scarecrow and His Servant* by Philip Pullman. Illus. by Peter Bailey. Knopf, 2005. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

When lightning strikes Mr. Pandolfo's wheat field, the scarecrow, with its big solid turnip head, a broad crack for a mouth, two stones for eyes, and nothing in the way of brains, jolts to life.

***The Secret Life of Sparrow Delaney* by Suzanne Harper. Greenwillow, 2008. (Gr. 7 and Up)**

Though her grandmother, mother, and six older sisters are professional mediums, and she herself is the seventh daughter of a seventh daughter, fifteen-year-old Sparrow has never let anyone know that she's been seeing and interacting with spirits most of her life.

***The Seams: The Glitch in Sleep* by John Hulme and Michael Wexler. Bloomsbury, 2007. (Gr. 5-8) \*S\***

In addition to his regular life as a twelve-year-old kid from Highland Park, New Jersey, Becker Drane has the Best Job in the World. He's a briefer for the Department of Weather in the Seams, helping to fix weather disasters in The World.

***Skulduggery Pleasant* by Derek Landy. HarperCollins, 2007. (Gr. 5 and Up) \*S\***

Twelve-year-old Stephanie Edgely teams up with Skulduggery Pleasant, a walking, talking skeleton and detective, to solve her uncle's murder.

***Someone Named Eva* by Joan M. Wolf. Clarion, 2007. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

After Nazi soldiers take away her father and older brother from their small Czech town in 1942, 11-year-old Milada is wrenched from her mother and sent to a center in Poland to become a proper Aryan girl.

***Swindle* by Gordon Korman. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 4-7)**

When sixth grader Griffin Bing is swindled out of a million dollar Babe Ruth baseball card by a local baseball card dealer, he assembles a crack team of talented classmates to steal it back.

***Tales Our Abuelitas Told: A Hispanic Folktale Collection* by F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada. Illus. by Felipe Dávalos, Viví Escrivá, Susan Guevara, and Leyla Torres. Atheneum, 2006. (Gr. 1-6)**

A dozen sprightly folktales introduce American kids to a wide range of stories with roots in Spain and Latin America.

***Technically, It's Not My Fault: Concrete Poems* by John Grandits. Clarion, 2004. (Gr. 4-8)**

Meet Robert in all his hilariously snarpy moods, in concrete or shape poems that wake you up with his take on school, sisters, skateboards, talking backwards, and bloodcurdling screams.

***Theodosia and the Serpents of Chaos* by R. L. LaFevers. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. (Gr. 4-7)**

When a priceless ancient Egyptian scarab is stolen, 11-year-old Theodosia Throckmorton, aided by her younger brother Henry and a street urchin and pickpocket named Sticky Will, must find it before its curse brings down the whole British Empire.

***Troll Fell* by Katherine Langrish. HarperCollins, 2004. (Gr. 5-8)**

Orphan Peer Ulfsson and his beloved dog are carried off by his brutish twin uncles, Grim and Baldur Grimsson, to work like a slave in their house and mill up on bleak Troll Fell.

***Twilight* by Stephenie Meyer. Little, Brown, 2005. (Gr. 7 and Up) \*S\***

Eleventh grader Bella Swan, newly arrived in Forks, Washington, the rainiest town in the U.S., is mesmerized by her new biology lab partner, the gorgeous but glowering Edward Cullen, who seems to detest her at first sight.

***The Underneath* by Kathi Appelt. Illus. by David Small. Atheneum, 2008. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

By a steamy swamp and an East Texas river, meet an abandoned calico cat and her two kittens; a hound dog called Ranger, kept chained on the back porch by an angry trapper called Gar-Face; a 100-foot Alligator King; and Grandmother Moccasin, an ancient and vengeful serpent.

***Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld. Simon & Schuster/Pulse, 2005. (Gr. 7 and Up) \*S\***

In Part 1 of the Uglies Trilogy, Tally Youngblood, still an ugly, sneaks across the old bridge from Uglyville to New Pretty Town, hoping to find her best friend, Peris, who had his operation to make him a pretty three months ago.

***The Wee Free Men* by Terry Pratchett. HarperCollins, 2003. (Gr. 6 and Up)**

Because nine-year-old Tiffany Aching is warned away from a sharp-toothed green-headed monster by two tiny redheaded blue men in a boat, it seems that she may be the new witch of the lowlands.

***Weedflower* by Cynthia Kadohata. Atheneum, 2006. (Gr. 5-8)**

Soon after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 6, 1941, Sumiko and her family are sent to a huge dusty internment camp of 17,000 Japanese detainees in Poston, Arizona, in the searing Sonoran Desert.

***Whales on Stilts* by M. T. Anderson. Illus. by Kurt Cyrus. Harcourt, 2005. (Gr. 3-6)**

Lily Gefelty goes to work with her dad on Career Day and uncovers a nefarious plot of blue whales with laser-beam eyes that plan to take over the world.

***What I Call Life* by Jill Wolfson. Henry Holt, 2005. (Gr. 5-8)**

Thanks to her emotionally unstable mother who has had one of her "episodes" in the public library, eleven-year-old Cal Lavender is now living in a group home run by an old woman the other girls call the Knitting Lady and waiting for her mother to return for her.

***Wings* by William Loizeaux. Illus. by Leslie Bowman. Farrar, 2006. (Gr. 3-6)**

Nick recalls his memorable summer in 1960 when he rescued and raised a baby mockingbird he named Marcy.

***Yellow Star* by Jennifer Roy. Marshall Cavendish, 2006. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

Of the more than 250,000 Jews crammed into the Lodz ghetto in 1939, only 800 survived, of whom only 12 were children. Sylvia Perlmutter was one of those children, and this is her story, retold by her niece, and written in free verse.

***The Young Man and the Sea* by Rodman Philbrick. Scholastic, 2004. (Gr. 5-8)**

Twelve-year-old Skiff Beakman says, "Before I tell you about the biggest fish in the sea and how it tried to kill me and then ended up saving my life, first you got to know about the leaky boat, 'cause it all began right there."

## NONFICTION

***The Adventures of Marco Polo* by Russell Freedman. Illus. by Bagram Ibatoulline.**

**Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, 2006. (Gr. 4-8)**

Was 13th century Italian adventurer Marco Polo a "man of a million lies," as some called him, or did he really spend 17 years traveling through China and the Far East as an envoy for Mongol ruler, Kublai Khan?

***The American Story: 100 True Tales from American History* by Jennifer Armstrong. Illus. by Roger Roth. Knopf, 2006. (Gr. 4-8)**

In this handsome and hefty volume is a dazzling chronology of 100 American stories from our history, starting with the founding in 1565 of St. Augustine and concluding with the 2000 presidential election.

***Andy Warhol: Pop Art Painter* by Susan Goldman Rubin. Abrams, 2006. (Gr. 4-8)**

This picture book biography of 1960s Pop Art icon Andy Warhol is packed with quotes, paintings, reproductions, and photos.

***Anne Elizabeth's Diary: A Young Artist's True Story* by Anne Elizabeth Rector. Little, Brown, 2004. (Gr. 3-6)**

In 1904, at age twelve, Anne Elizabeth Rector, an aspiring artist who lived in New York City, kept a diary that she filled with tiny, delicately colored pen and ink drawings of her day.

***Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Through the Gates and Beyond* by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan. Roaring Brook, 2008. (Gr. 4-8)**

This gorgeous nonfiction picture book captures the art and ambitious installations of Christo, with oversized color photographs of The Gates, in Central Park, New York City, in 2005.

***Comets, Stars, the Moon, and Mars: Space Poems and Paintings* by Douglas Florian. Harcourt, 2007. (Gr. 2-6)**

Florian's 20 witty poems pay tribute to the whole solar system.

***Dancing to Freedom: The True Story of Mao's Last Dancer / Li Cunxin* by Li Cunxin. Illus. by Anne Spudvilas. Walker, 2008. (Gr. 2-5)**

In his picture book autobiography, famed ballet dancer Li Cunxin (pronounced Lee Schwin-sing) describes his route from a childhood of poverty in a remote Chinese village to becoming a star.

***Down the Colorado: John Wesley Powell, the One-Armed Explorer* by Deborah Kogan Ray. Farrar, 2007. (Gr. 3-6)**

In spite of having lost his right arm during a Civil War battle, in 1869, John Wesley Powell led a crew of nine men to explore the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, the first recorded expedition to do so.

***Escape: The Story of the Great Houdini* by Sid Fleischman. Illus. with photos. HarperCollins, 2006. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

This lively biography of famed magician Harry Houdini includes all of the big escapes from handcuffs, ropes, and straight jackets, and the story of his untimely death on Halloween night, 1926.

***Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich* by Adam Rex. Harcourt, 2006. (Gr. 2-6) \*S\***

Get to know all those creatures you've met in film and in your nightmares—like Frankenstein, the Mummy, and Dracula—in a collection of 20 poems that will get you screaming with laughter.

***Genius: A Photobiography of Albert Einstein* by Marfé Ferguson Delano. National Geographic, 2005. (Gr. 5-8)**

A foreword by Einstein's granddaughter sets the tone for this personable, anecdote-filled biography of the world's great thinker, not just as a scientist, but as a complex and fascinating person. As Einstein said, "I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious."

***Helen's Eyes: A Photobiography of Annie Sullivan, Helen Keller's Teacher* by Marfé Ferguson Delano. National Geographic, 2008. (Gr. 4-8)**

Large, sepia-toned photos document the life of Annie Sullivan, from the poorhouse to Perkins Institute for the Blind, and on to Alabama in 1887, which Helen Keller described as her "soul's birthday."

***Hey Batta Batta Swing!: The Wild Old Days of Baseball* by Sally Cook and James Charleton. Illus. by Ross MacDonald. McElderry, 2007. (Gr 2 and Up)**

Baseball fans, do you know what a dinger, an Uncle Charlie, or a can of corn is? Find out what the game was like in the good old days.

***Hidden Child* by Isaac Millman. Farrar, 2005. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

In 1940, when Isaac Millman, was seven, the German army invaded France and he spent the war years in hiding.

***How Strong Is It?: A Mighty Book All About Strength* by Ben Hillman. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 3-6) \*S\***

Astonishing facts abound in this eye-popping look at 22 of the strongest animals, substances, and elements on Earth. Don't miss the companion books *How Big Is It?*, *How Fast Is It?*, and *How Weird Is It?*

***How Sweet It Is (and Was); The History of Candy* by Ruth Freeman Swain. Illus. by John O'Brien. Holiday, 2003. (Gr. 2-6)**

Greedy sweet-eaters will drool over this lighthearted look at confections through the ages, from the origin of the word "candy" in India to facts about candy today.

***I, Matthew Henson: Polar Explorer* by Carole Boston Weatherford. Illus. by Eric Velasquez. Walker, 2008. (Gr. 1-6)**

On April 6, 1909, African American explorer Matthew Henson and Robert Peary reached the North Pole. In this handsome nonfiction picture book, Henson recounts his hard fought achievements.

***A Kick in the Head: An Everyday Guide to Poetic Forms* compiled by Paul B. Janeczko. Illus. by Chris Raschka. Candlewick, 2005. (Gr. 5-8)**

In poems that exemplify 29 poetic forms, Janeczko pulls together most of his well-chosen examples from seasoned poets for children. Exploding on each page are Raschka's hip, colorful blasts of watercolor, ink, and torn paper illustrations that pull you, elated, into each poem.

***Knucklehead: Tall Tales & Mostly True Stories About Growing Up Scieszka* by Jon Scieszka. Viking, 2008. (Gr. 3-8)**

In 38 short, ridiculously funny chapters, children's book author Jon Scieszka describes his childhood with anecdotes about growing up the second oldest of six rambunctious brothers in Flint, Michigan.

***Leonardo, Beautiful Dreamer* by Robert Byrd. Dutton, 2003. (Gr. 4-8)**

The amazing life of Leonardo da Vinci is summed up in a breathtaking oversized picture book.

***Lincoln Shot: A President's Life Remembered* by Barry Denenberg. Illus. by Christopher Bing. Feiwel & Friends, 2008. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

This huge book—12" wide by 18" high— looks like an old newspaper and bills itself as a "Special Memorial Edition" of The National News, looking back, a year after the assassination, at Lincoln's life and times, complete with sepia-toned photos, ads, maps, and portraits.

***The Lincolns: A Scrapbook Look at Abraham and Mary* by Candace Fleming. Schwartz & Wade, 2008. (Gr. 5 and Up) \*S\***

This meaty medley of stories, anecdotes, photographs and black and white reproductions digs into the lives and times of one of America's most talked about couples.

***The Long Gone Lonesome History of Country Music* by Bret Bertholf. Little, Brown, 2007. (Gr. 3 and Up)**

Even if you think you don't like country music, this rip-roaring, rib-tickling overview of the history, styles, and stars of country music will get you turning on the radio.

***Our Eleanor: A Scrapbook Look at Eleanor Roosevelt's Remarkable Life* by Candace Fleming. Atheneum, 2005. (Gr. 6 and Up) \*S\***

Reading the absorbing anecdotes about the first activist First Lady's accomplishments, propelled by her almost superhuman energy and unflinching commitment to human rights, will fill you with admiration and leave you breathless.

***Owen & Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship* by Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff, and Paula Kahumbu. Photos. by Peter Greste. Scholastic, 2006. (All Ages) \*S\***

This color photo essay shows how, after the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 26, 2004, an orphaned baby hippo was brought to an animal sanctuary in Kenya where it befriended a 130-year-old giant tortoise.

***Pale Male: Citizen Hawk of New York City* by Janet Schulman. Illus. by Meilo So. Knopf, 2008. (Gr. 1-6)**

Starting with the day in 1991 that the young red-tailed hawk arrived in Central Park, this appealing and informative nonfiction picture book chronicles the life, loves, and troubles of Pale Male in New York City.

***Onward: A Photobiography of African American Polar Explorer Matthew Henson* by Dolores Johnson. National Geographic, 2005. (Gr. 4-8)**

Robert Peary may have organized and financed the 1909 North Pole expedition, but his assistant, Matthew Henson, actually got there first, as described in this photo-filled account.

***Pompeii: Lost & Found* by Mary Pope Osborne. Illus. by Bonnie Christiensen. Knopf, 2006. (Gr. 2-6)**

Hazy paintings that look like ancient frescoes take us back to ancient Pompeii on August 24, A.D. 79, the day Mount Vesuvius erupted.

***Quest for the Tree Kangaroo: An Expedition to the Cloud Forest of New Guinea* by Sy Montgomery. Illus. by Nic Bishop. Houghton Mifflin, 2006. (Gr. 5-8) \*S\***

As part of the "Scientists in the Field" series, here is a profile of Lisa Dabek, a woman who has dedicated her life to studying the Matschie's tree kangaroo of New Guinea, easily the cutest mammal you've never seen.

***A River of Words: The Story of William Carlos Williams* by Jen Bryant. Illus. by Melissa Sweet. Eerdmans, 2008. (Gr. 3-6)**

New Jersey doctor and poet, William Carlos Williams, 1883-1963, will earn a place in children's hearts with this innovative and attractive picture book biography that incorporates his spare poems on every page.

***Runny Babbit: A Billy Sook* by Shel Silverstein. HarperCollins, 2005. (Gr. 2-6)**

Fut a whunny book! There are tworty-foo pyming rhoems about Runny Babbit and pots of his lals in this bazy crook.

***The Story of Salt* by Mark Kurlansky. Illus. by S. D. Schindler. Putnam, 2006. (Gr. 3-6)**

A lively and fascinating text, liberally seasoned with pen and ink and watercolor illustrations, leads us through how salt is made, its uses, and its history throughout human civilization.

***Strong Man: The Story of Charles Atlas* by Meghan McCarthy. Knopf, 2007. (Gr. 2-5)**

After working out with his own fitness plan, 97-pound weakling Angelo Siciliano built up his muscles and became Charles Atlas, "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man."

***The Tarantula Scientist* by Sy Montgomery. Photos. by Nic Bishop. Houghton Mifflin, 2004. (Gr. 3-8) \*S\***

In a fascinating photo-filled book, an entry in the Scientists in the Field series, meet arachnologist Sam Marshall as he studies the habits and habitat of the Goliath birdeater tarantula.

***Technically, It's Not My Fault: Concrete Poems* by John Grandits. Clarion, 2004. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

Meet Robert in all his hilariously snarpy moods, in poems that spin around and wake you up with his take on school, sisters, skateboards, talking backwards, and bloodcurdling screams.

***To Dance: A Memoir* by Siena Cherson Siegel. Illus. by Mark Siegel. Atheneum, 2006. (Gr. 4-8)**

In a visually rich graphic autobiography, told in Siena's words and her artist husband Mark's expressive pen and ink and watercolor pictures, follow Siena from her childhood in Puerto Rico to her training with the American School of Ballet in New York City.

***The Voice That Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights* by Russell Freedman. Clarion, 2004. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

The most dramatic and moving part of this stately photobiography of opera star, Marian Anderson, is the description of her groundbreaking concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. on Easter Sunday, 1939.

***To Fly: The Story of the Wright Brothers* by Wendie Old. Illus. by Robert Andrew Parker. Clarion, 2002. (Gr. 2-6)**

Old's stellar picture book biography of the two brothers who never graduated from high school and ran a print shop and then a bicycle store before getting back to their first love, flight, is a thrilling adventure and lesson in determination.

***The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain* by Peter Sís. Farrar/Frances Foster, 2007. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

In this remarkable autobiographical picture book, author/illustrator Sís describes growing up in Prague, Czechoslovakia, back when creativity was discouraged and free thought was considered dangerous.

***Washington at Valley Forge* by Russell Friedman. Holiday House, 2008. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

What an eloquent and gripping account of the punishing winter that George Washington and his bedraggled army spent at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania in 1776.

***The Way We Work: Getting to Know the Amazing Human Body* by David Macaulay and Richard Walker. Illus. by David Macaulay. Houghton Mifflin/Walter Lorraine, 2008. (Gr. 6 and Up)**

There's a whole universe that Macaulay uncovers, under the skin of the human body, and his colored pencil illustrations, showing cross-sections of every system of the human body, are so spectacular, kids will pore over them to figure out how their own bodies work.

***We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball* by Kadir Nelson. Hyperion/Jump at the Sun, 2008. (Gr. 3 and Up)**

This imposing and unforgettable sports book is filled with true stories about the Negro Leagues and breathtaking full-page oil paintings.