



PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE READERS LIST GRADES PREK-4



By Judy Freeman

The titles on this list are all marvelous recently published read-alouds and read-alones, books that younger children, from preschool to grade 4, will enjoy hearing and reading over and over. Use the list for summer reading, for holidays, birthday parties, and other special day presents, and for all the kids in your life, not just your own!

If your kids are in the mood to read but you don't want to break the bank at the bookstore, don't forget to support your school and public libraries; librarians 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 reading longer chapter books, be sure to investigate the titles on the accompanying booklist for older readers, grades 5-8. For other stellar books to read, check out the many book reviews on www.READKIDDOREAD.com.

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EASY FICTION / PICTURE BOOKS

***Are You a Horse?* by Andy Rash. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

For his birthday, Roy's friends give him a saddle, which comes with instructions: "1. Find a horse. 2. Enjoy the ride." "What's a horse?" he wants to know.

Are You Ready to Play Outside?* by Mo Willems. Hyperion, 2008. (Gr. PreK-1) *S

Before Piggy gets the chance to run, skip, and jump outside with her best pal, Elephant, it starts to pour.

Bandit* by Karen Rostoker-Gruber. Illus. by Vincent Nguyen. Marshall Cavendish, 2008. (Gr. PreK-2) *S

"Something's fishy around here," mutters orange and yellow cat, Bandit, watching the couch being carried out of the house. That's because it's moving day.

***Bats at the Library* by Brian Lies. Houghton Mifflin, 2008. (Gr. PreK-3)**

The bats are bored, so when they hear a window has been left ajar at the public library, they swoop inside for Bat Night, including storytime for the little ones.

***Benny and Penny in The Big No-No!* by Geoffrey Hayes. TOON Books, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

"You can't just take stuff," declares Benny, a pink-eared brown mouse, when he thinks the new kid next door stole his pail. Should he steal it back?

***Big Bad Bunny* by Fanny Billingsley. Illus. by G. Brian Karas. Atheneum, 2008. (Gr. PreK-1)**

Big Bad Bunny is on a rampage, chomping on trees and roaring ferociously. "But wait! Where is Baby Boo-Boo?" Mama Mouse cries.

***Billy & Milly, Short & Silly* by Eve Feldman. Illus. by Tuesday Mourning. Putnam, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

Each of the fourteen shorter-than-short stories is a mini adventure about two children, told in only three or four rhyming words.

Binky the Space Cat* by Ashley Spires. Kids Can, 2009. (Gr. 1-4) *S

Black and white house cat, Binky, protects his human family from aliens (which they call bugs) and is building himself a rocket ship, hidden in his litter box.

A Birthday for Bear* by Bonny Becker. Illus. by Kady MacDonald Denton. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2) *S

Mouse is determined to wish Bear a Happy Birthday and throw him a little party, but grumpy Bear insists he does not like balloons, presents, or birthday cake.

***Bring Me Some Apples and I'll Make You a Pie: A Story about Edna Lewis* by Robbin Gourley. Clarion, 2009. (Gr. 1-4)**

In a tribute to the childhood of a groundbreaking African American chef, Edna and her family harvest the crops on their farm as the seasons roll by.

***Buster Goes to Cowboy Camp* by Denise Fleming. Henry Holt, 2008. (Gr. PreK-2)**

With his owner, Brown Shoes, going on vacation, Buster the dog is none too happy to be dropped off at Sagebrush Kennels' Cowboy Camp for the weekend.

***Button Up!: Wrinkled Rhymes* by Alice Schertle. Illus. by Petra Mathers. Harcourt, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

Fifteen lighthearted, easy-to-read, rhyming poems, each about a different article of clothing, are narrated by the clothes themselves.

***Chicken Cheeks: The Beginning of the Ends* by Michael Ian Black. Illus. by Kevin Hawkes. Simon & Schuster, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

To reach the honey at the top of a tall tree, a bear stacks an array of animals atop his head, with each one's bottom facing out, including a polar bear derriere and a deer rear.

EASY FICTION / PICTURE BOOKS

- Chicken Little* by Rebecca Emberley and Ed Emberley. Roaring Brook, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**
Not the "brightest chicken in the coop," when Chicken Little, is knocked senseless by a falling acorn, he panics, calling, "The sky is falling! We must run for our lives!"
- The Chicken of the Family* by Mary Amato. Illus. by Delphine Durand. Putnam, 2008. (Gr. K-3)**
"We have a secret to tell you," says Kim to Henrietta, the youngest of three sisters. "You're a chicken. Mom got you from Barney's farm." Could it be true?
- A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever* by Marla Frazee. Harcourt, 2008. (Gr. PreK-2)**
James and his best friend, Eamon, spend an unforgettable week at the beach house of Eamon's grandparents, Bill and Pam.
- Dinosaur vs. Bedtime* by Bob Shea. Hyperion, 2008. (Gr. PreK-1)**
"ROAR! I'M A DINOSAUR. ROAR! NOTHING CAN STOP ME!" says a little red dinosaur boy, until he faces his biggest challenge—bedtime.
- Duck! Rabbit!* by Amy Krouse Rosenthal. Illus. by Tom Lichtenheld. Chronicle, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**
Look at the white animal head on the cover. Is it a duck or is it a rabbit? It all depends on how you look at it.
- Epossumondas Plays Possum* by Coleen Salley. Illus. by Janet Stevens. Harcourt, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2) *S***
Mama warns Epossumondas not to go into the scary and dangerous swamp by himself, but he never listens.
- Finn Throws a Fit* by David Elliott. Illus. By Timothy Basil Ering. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**
Finn usually likes peaches, but not today. The toddler's earthshaking tantrum brings on an avalanche, an earthquake, and a blizzard before it's over.
- The Frogs and Toads All Sang* by Arnold Lobel. Illus. by Arnold Lobel and Adrienne Lobel. HarperCollins, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**
In ten nursery rhyme-like poems and watercolors, frogs and toads sing, cook, eat, play waltzes on a violin, and even jump to the moon.
- Goose and Duck* by Jean Craighead George. Illus. by Priscilla Lamont. HarperCollins/Laura Geringer, 2008. (Gr. PreK-2)**
When a boy finds a goose egg and it hatches, he becomes the baby goose's mother. When the duck egg he finds hatches, Goose becomes Duck's mother.
- Grace for President* by Kelly DiPucchio. Illus. by LeUyen Pham. Hyperion, 2008. (Gr. 1-5)**
Appalled that there have never been any women presidents, Grace Campbell, a spunky African American schoolkid, decides to run for president in her own school.
- Gracias Thanks* by Pat Mora. Illus. by John Parra. Lee & Low, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**
As a boy moves through his day, he gives thanks in English and Spanish for the good things in his life.
- Higher! Higher!* by Leslie Patricelli. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**
"Higher! Higher!" a little brown-pigtailed girl calls to her grinning dad as he pushes her on a swing at the playground.
- Hook* by Ed Young. Roaring Brook, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**
A Native American boy finds an abandoned egg and gives it to a mother chicken. She hatches that strange-looking chick with a hook nose and names him Hook.
- I Spy Fly Guy!* by Tedd Arnold. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1) *S***
Playing hide-and-seek, Buzz's pet, Fly Guy, hides in the garbage can. Uh, oh. Here comes the garbage truck!

EASY FICTION / PICTURE BOOKS

- I'm Bad!* by Kate McMullan. Illus. by Jim McMullan. HarperCollins, 2008. (Gr. PreK-2) *S***
"Are you BAD? I'm REALLY bad. Scare-the-tails-off-all-the-other-dinosaurs BAD." So says a fearsome Tyrannosaurus Rex, whose big empty belly is growling for grub.
- I'm Your Bus* by Marilyn Singer. Illus. by Evan Polenghi. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**
Meet the smilingest, friendliest, most helpful talking yellow school bus ever in a rhyming description of his day on the job.
- It's a Secret!* by John Burningham. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**
When Marie Elaine finds her cat, Malcolm, dressed for a party late one night, he takes her along for a glorious midnight feast upon a rooftop with the Queen of the Cats.
- LaRue for Mayor: Letters from the Campaign Trail* by Mark Teague. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 1-4) *S***
After former police chief and present mayoral candidate, Hugo Bugwort, calls for a "canine crackdown," a mysterious, dog-friendly candidate throws his hat into the ring.
- Let's Do Nothing!* by Tony Fucile. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. K-3)**
Skinny red-haired Sal and his bespectacled, chubby blond pal, Frankie, try to do absolutely nothing, but it's not easy.
- The Lion & the Mouse* by Jerry Pinkney. Little, Brown, 2009. (Gr. PreK-3)**
This wordless "retelling" of the Aesop fable about the lion that spares a mouse and is, in turn, saved by the mouse, is told entirely in magnificent watercolors.
- Little Mouse Gets Ready* by Jeff Smith. TOON Books, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**
"Oh boy, I love going to the barn!" Little Mouse says as he gets ready, putting on his outfit of blue jeans, a red shirt, white socks, and sneakers.
- Llama Llama Misses Mama* by Anna Dewdney. Viking, 2009. (Gr. PreK-K) *S***
On his first day of preschool, everything seems strange and unfamiliar to little Llama Llama, and he doesn't like it when his Mama Llama leaves him there alone.
- Looking Like Me* by Walter Dean Myers. Illus. by Christopher Myers. Egmont, 2009. (Gr. 1-5)**
Who is the real Jeremy? He says he's a "real handsome dude," but he's also a little brother to his sister, a son to his father, plus an artist, a dancer, and a dreamer.
- Lousy Rotten Stinkin' Grapes* by Margie Palatini. Illus. by Barry Moser. Simon & Schuster, 2009. (Gr. PreK-3)**
In a comical reworking of the well-known fable, Fox, who considers himself sly, clever, and smart, makes a plan to reach a bunch of grapes.
- Maybe a Bear Ate It!* by Robie H. Harris, Illus. by Michael Emberley. Orchard, 2008. (Gr. PreK-1)**
When a little long-tailed cat-like creature climbs into bed with his stuffed animals and a big red book, somehow his book goes missing.
- The Mitten* by Jim Aylesworth. Illus. by Barbara McClintock. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**
On a cold winter day, a little boy loses one of his new red mittens in the snow, but the forest animals put it to good use.
- Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed* by Mo Willems. Disney/Hyperion, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**
All the other mole rats are upset with Wilbur, who likes dressing up in a suit and tie. "NAKED MOLE RATS DON'T WEAR CLOTHES!" they holler.
- Night Lights* by Susan Gal. Knopf, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**
A little brown and white dog and his little girl owner celebrate the night together with a back yard barbecue and a birthday cake by lantern light and firelight.

EASY FICTION / PICTURE BOOKS

***Otis* by Loren Long. Philomel, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**

A friendly little tractor named Otis befriends a baby calf on the farm.

***Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day* by Kate McMullan. Illus. by R. W. Alley. Dial, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

Phooey! Wagner, a little brown mouse, has a good sense of humor, but it's April 1 and everyone keeps trying to fool him at school.

The Pigeon Wants a Puppy* by Mo Willems. Hyperion, 2008. (Gr. PreK-1) *S

Pigeon promises he'll take good care of a new puppy, water it once a month, and play tennis with it, if you'll just say yes.

Pigs Make Me Sneeze!* by Mo Willems. Disney/Hyperion, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1) *S

Could Elephant actually be allergic to his best friend, Piggie?

***Princess Hyacinth (the Surprising Tale of a Girl Who Floated)* by Florence Parry Heide. Illus. by Lane Smith. Schwartz & Wade, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

Princess Hyacinth has a problem. Unless she is attached to something or weighted down, she floats.

***Rhyming Dust Bunnies* by Jan Thomas. Simon & Schuster/Beach Lane, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**

According to the scruffy, bulbous-nosed, googly-eyed dust bunnies, Ed, Ned, and Ted, "We rhyme . . . all the time!" Well, almost all of the time.

***The Sleepy Little Alphabet: A Bedtime Story from Alphabet Town* by Judy Sierra. Illus. by Melissa Sweet. Knopf, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**

In a merry, rhyming, bedtime story, it's "sleepytime in Alphabet Town," but all the little alphabet letters are wide awake,

***The Snow Day* by Komako Sakai. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**

With Kindergarten closed and Daddy's flight canceled, a little rabbit spends the day with Mama watching and then playing in the snow.

***Stagecoach Sal: Inspired by a True Tale* by Deborah Hopkinson. Illus. by Carson Ellis. Disney/Hyperion, 2009. (Gr. K-3)**

Driving her Pa's stagecoach from Ukiah to Willits to deliver the mail, Sal meets up with Poetic Pete, a rhyming outlaw who plans to rob her.

***Stinky* by Eleanor Davis. Little Lit Library, 2008. (Gr. K-3)**

In an easy-to-read graphic novel, Stinky, a round-headed purple swamp creature, is outraged when a human kid builds a treehouse on his turf.

***The Storyteller's Candle / La Velita de los Cuentos* by Lucia Gonzalez. Illus. by Lulu Delacre. Children's Book Press, 2008. (Gr. 1-4)**

Moving from Puerto Rico to New York City in 1929, Hildamar and her brother Santiago find a warm welcome at the public library with the storytelling librarian, Pura Belpré.

***There Are Cats in This Book* by Viviane Schwartz. Candlewick, 2008. (Gr. PreK-1)**

There are three kitties sleeping under the quilt—one blue, one yellow, and one red—in this fun lift-the-flaps book, and they would love to play with you.

***The Three Little Tamales* by Eric A. Kimmel. Illus. by Valeria Docampo. Marshall Cavendish, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

Three little tamales build casitas of sagebrush, cornhusks, and cactus, but when Señor Lobo comes calling, that wicked wolf tries to get inside.

***Thunder-Boomer!* by Shutta Crum. Illus. by Carol Thompson. Clarion, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

On a sizzling summer day, when dark clouds roll in, Mom, Dad, Tom, and his little sister rush back to the farmhouse before the storm bursts.

EASY FICTION / PICTURE BOOKS

Tortuga In Trouble* by Ann Whitford Paul. Illus. by Ethan Long. Holiday House, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2) *S

Iguana, Conejo (Rabbit), and Culebra (Snake) follow their friend, Tortuga (Tortoise), when he sets out with a basket of goodies for his Abuela (Grandmother).

***Trouble Gum* by Matthew Cordell. Feiwel & Friends, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

When Grammy gives gum to Julius and Reuben, the piglets break all of Mom's rules about not swallowing, playing, or blowing bubbles with it.

***Tsunami!* by Kimiko Kajikawa. Illus. by Ed Young. Philomel, 2009. (Gr. 2-6)**

A wise and wealthy old rice farmer called Ojiisan, or grandfather, tends to his rice fields on a high cliff until the day he sees the sea pulling away from the beach.

***Wave* by Suzy Lee. Chronicle, 2008. (Gr. PreK-2)**

In a saucy wordless picture book, a little girl visits the ocean with her mother and spends a joyful afternoon playing in the waves.

***What Really Happened to Humpty? (From the Files of a Hard-Boiled Detective)* by Jeanie Franz Ransom. Illus. by Stephen Axelsen. Charlesbridge, 2009. (Gr. K-3)**

Narrator and Detective, Joe Dumpty, Humpty's brother, thinks it's no accident that the good egg fell off the Wall. In fact, he thinks it's a crime.

***Wombat Walkabout* by Carol Diggery Shields. Illus. by Sophie Blackall. Dutton, 2009. (Gr. PreK-1)**

"Early one morning when the sun came out, / SIX woolly wombats went walkabout." A hungry dingo snatches them up, one by one, and puts them in his swag bag.

FICTION

Allie Finkle's Rules for Girls: Moving Day* by Meg Cabot. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 3-5) *S

Allie's parents tell her three startling things: they've just bought a falling-down Victorian house, she'll be starting fourth grade in a new school, *and* she can get a kitten.

Alvin Ho: Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things* by Lenore Look. Illus. by LeUyen Pham. Schwartz & Wade, 2008. (Gr. 1-4) *S

Second grader, Alvin Ho, a Chinese American boy, is afraid of elevators, substitute teachers, and especially school, where he has never uttered a single word.

Bad Kitty Gets a Bath* by Nick Bruel. Roaring Brook, 2008. (Gr. 1-4) *S

This companion book to picture books *Bad Kitty* and *Poor Puppy* is a zany little graphic novel. Bad Kitty needs a bath? Uh, oh. Don't you know CATS HATE BATHS?

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

In a dramatically illustrated version of the ninth century hero poem, the stalwart young knight, Beowulf, fights the ogre, Grendel, and his evil mother, and a dragon, too.

Big Nate: In a Class by Himself* by Lincoln Peirce. HarperCollins, 2010. (Gr. 3-6) *S

Sixth grader Nate Wright's fortune cookie fortune reads, "Today you will surpass all others," but the only thing he seems to be excelling at today is getting in trouble and getting detention. Based on the author's syndicated comic, this new "Wimpy Kid"-like illustrated novel will be a huge hit with readers.

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 series ever.

Dragonbreath* by Ursula Vernon. Dial, 2009. (Gr. 3-5) *S

Danny Dragonbreath and his iguana pal, Wendall, take a tour of the Sargasso Sea with Cousin Edward, a sea serpent, so Danny can rewrite his science report.

***The Dunderheads* by Paul Fleischman. Illus. by David Roberts. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. 2-5)**

When their teacher, Miss Breakbone, calls them "dunderheads" and confiscates Theodore/Junkyard's one-eared china cat, the kids plans a heist to get it back.

***11 Birthdays* by Wendy Mass. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. 4-6)**

Amanda awakens on Saturday morning after her awful eleventh birthday only to find that it's Friday all over again.

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, "Try being bad for once. You might like it."

Frankie Pickle and the Closet of Doom* by Eric Wight. Simon & Schuster, 2009. (Gr. 2-4) *S

Franklin Lorenzo Piccolini, AKA Frankie Pickle, a daydreamy kid who imagines himself an adventurer and superhero, makes a deal with his mom not to clean his own bedroom.

***Highway Robbery* by Kate Thompson. Illus. by Jonny Duddle and Robert Dress. Greenwillow, 2009. (Gr. 3-7)**

A barefoot street urchin describes how he watched over a gentleman's a big black mare all day, waiting to earn a golden guinea.

FICTION

Horrid Henry* by Francesca Simon. Illus. by Tony Ross. Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2009. (Gr. 1-4) *S

In four dreadfully funny chapters about a horribly-behaved boy, Horrid Henry tries to be perfect at the dinner table, gets kicked out of dance class, makes ghastly Glop with his neighbor, Moody Margaret, and goes on an awful camping trip with his family.

***How to Save Your Tail: If You Are a Rat Nabbed by Cats Who Really Like Stories about Magic Spoons, Wolves with Snout-Warts, Big, Hairy Chimney Trolls . . . and Cookies Too* by Mary Hanson. Illus. by John Hendrix. Schwartz & Wade, 2007. (Gr. 2-5)**

Meet a storytelling rat named Bob, who talks his way out of becoming dinner for the Queen's two mean and hungry cats.

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

Hugo, a 12-year-old orphan, secretly winds the clocks in a Paris train station and steals toys from the old toymaker's shop to restore a mechanical man built from clockworks.

Ivy + Bean* by Annie Barrows. Illus. by Sophie Blackall. Chronicle, 2006. (Gr. 1-3) *S

Seven-year-old tomboy, Bean, thinks the new girl across the street looks nice, which is just another word for boring, but, as it turns out, Ivy is anything but dull.

***Joey Fly, Private Eye, In Creepy Crawly Time* by Aaron Reynolds. Illus. by Neil Numberman. Henry Holt, 2009. (Gr. 2-5)**

Gumshoe, Joey Fly, and his fresh-mouthed young assistant, a scorpion named Sammy Stingtail, look for a missing diamond pencil box in this comic book-style graphic novel.

Julian Rodriguez: Episode One: Trash Crisis on Earth* by Alexander Stadler. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 2-4) *S

In a hilarious graphic novelette, meet young narrator, Julian Rodriguez, who claims he's been disguised as an Earthling juvenile for eight long years now.

***The Lemonade War* by Jacqueline Davies. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. (Gr. 3-5)**

Jessie Treski and her older brother Evan each open a lemonade stand and make a bet: whoever makes the most money by Saturday wins the loser's cash as well.

***The Magician's Elephant* by Kate DiCamillo. Illus. by Yoko Tanaka. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. 3-6)**

Peter Augustus Duchene, a ten-year-old orphan, asks a fortuneteller if his younger sister is alive and is told, "She lives . . . You must follow the elephant. She will lead you there."

Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel!* by Nikki Grimes. Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. Putnam, 2009. (Gr. 2-4) *S

Since moving to Washington Heights, NY with her single-parent mom, Dyamonde misses her best friend but soon finds two new pals. Continue the series with *Rich*.

***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, and James, a boy, work together try to solve an art heist.

***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.

Moxy Maxwell Does Not Love Writing Thank You Notes* by Peggy Gifford. Photos by Valorie Fisher. Schwartz & Wade, 2008. (Gr. 3-5) *S

Will ten-year-old Moxy keep her promise to her mother to write twelve thank-you notes today, the day after Christmas? Not a chance.

FICTION

***A Nest for Celeste: A Story About Art, Inspiration, and the Meaning of Home* by Henry Cole. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, 2010. (Gr. 3-6)**

On plantation near New Orleans, Celeste, a basket-weaving house mouse, finds safety and friendship with Joseph, the 14-year-old assistant to bird painter, Mr. Audubon.

***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.

***Oggie Cooder* by Sarah Weeks. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 2-5)**

Using his front teeth, fourth grader Oggie has taught himself to charve—chew and carve—slices of American cheese into each of the 50 states. It could make him famous.

Phineas L. MacGuire . . . Gets Slimed!* by Frances O'Roark Dowell. Illus. by Preston McDaniels. Atheneum, 2007. (Gr. 1-4) *S

Scientifically speaking, Mac, who agrees to help his best friend Ben run for class president, would much rather put together a mold museum in the school basement.

***Roman Diary: The Journal of Iliona of Mytilini, Who Was Captured by Pirates and Sold as a Slave in Rome, AD 107* by Richard Platt. Illus. by David Parkins. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. 4-7)**

On a voyage to Alexandria, Egypt, Iliona and her younger brother are orphaned when pirates invade the ship.

***The Secret of Zoom* by Lynne Jonell. Henry Holt, 2009. (Gr. 4-6)**

As her father, the top scientist at Loompski Laboratories, insists, overprotected, motherless ten-year-old Christina is not permitted to associate with the orphans outside.

***Snake and Lizard* by Joy Cowley. Illus. by Gavin Bishop. Kane Miller, 2008. (Gr. K-4)**

In 15 delightful short stories, two new reptile friends learn to tolerate each other's differences in food tastes, bad moods, and family secrets.

The Talented Clementine* by Sara Pennypacker. Illus. by Marla Frazee. Hyperion, 2007. (Gr. 1-4) *S

Unlike her fourth grade friend Margaret, who has a whole alphabet of talents, Clementine can't think of anything she could do for the upcoming Talent-Palooza.

Toy Dance Party: Being the Further Adventures of a Bossyboots Stingray, a Courageous Buffalo, & a Hopeful Round Someone Called Plastic* by Emily Jenkins. Illus. by Paul O. Zelinsky. Schwartz & Wade, 2008. (Gr. 1-4) *S

When the Girl and her parents are gone for days, her best friends, the toys Sting Ray, Lumphy the buffalo, and Plastic, the bouncy red ball, worry that something is wrong.

***Tumtum & Nutmeg: Adventures Beyond Nutmouse Hall* by Emily Bearn. Illus. by Nick Price. Little, Brown, 2009. (Gr. 1-5)**

In three short adventures, meet a mouse couple who live in a thirty-six-room mansion in the closed-off closet behind the kitchen of Rose Cottage.

***Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* by Grace Lin. Little, Brown, 2009. (Gr. 2-5)**

On her quest to find Never-Ending Mountain and the Old Man of the Moon to ask how to change her family's bad fortune, Minli, a poor young girl, rescues a red dragon.

NONFICTION

***Adventures in Cartooning* by James Sturm, Andrew Arnold, and Alexis Frederick-Frost. First Second, 2009. (Gr. 2-6)**

A little, green-clad Magic Cartooning Elf gives an education in cartooning to a young princess who thinks she can't draw well enough to make an awesome comic.

***Astronaut Handbook* by Meghan McCarthy. Knopf, 2008. (Gr. K-3)**

This easy-to-follow picture book takes you through the steps for getting mentally and physically prepared to be an astronaut, and the tough training that follows.

***The Bill Martin Jr Big Book of Poetry* by Bill Martin, Jr. and Michael Sampson. Illus. by Steven Kellogg and others. Simon & Schuster, 2008 (Gr. PreK-3)**

Browse through this beautiful anthology of 200 children's poems by favorite poets, with art by 13 well-known children's book illustrators.

***The Boy Who Invented TV: The Story of Philo Farnsworth* by Kathleen Krull. Illus. by Greg Couch. Knopf, 2009. (Gr. 2-5)**

At age 14, plowing the potato fields on his family's farm, Philo conceived of his idea for television, leading, in 1928, at age 22, to his greatest invention

***Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman* by Marc Tyler Nobleman. Illus. by Ross MacDonald. Knopf, 2008. (Gr. 2-5)**

In the 1930's, two high school students, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, came up with the idea for the comic strip superhero we still celebrate today.

***The Day-Glo Brothers: The True Story of Bob and Joe Switzer's Bright Ideas and Brand-New Colors* by Chris Barton. Illus. by Tony Persiani. Charlesbridge, 2009. (Gr. 3-6)**

In a nonfiction picture book, meet the brothers, Bob and Joe Switzer, who wanted to be a doctor and a magician, respectively, but ended up inventing Day-Glo paint in 1935.

***Down, Down, Down: A Journey to the Bottom of the Sea* by Steve Jenkins. Houghton Mifflin, 2009. (Gr. 2-6)**

Illustrations done in cut and torn paper collage depict some of the ocean life in the Pacific Ocean, descending from sea level down to 35,000 feet.

***Elizabeth Leads the Way: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Right to Vote* by Tanya Lee Stone. Illus. by Rebecca Gibbon. Henry Holt, 2008. (Gr. 2-6)**

At age 13, in 1833, Elizabeth Cady decided that she could do anything a boy could do, and spent her life working for equality.

***Go, Go America* by Dan Yaccarino. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 1-4)**

Away we go with the Farley family on a "fun fact-filled journey from Maine to Hawaii as they discover our weird and wondrous United States of America."

***Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story* by Ellen Levine. Illus. by Kadir Nelson. Scholastic, 2007. (Gr. 2-6)**

In 1849, after his wife and children were sold at the slave market, Henry had himself sealed into a crate and mailed from Richmond, Virginia to Philadelphia, 350 miles away.

***Inside-Outside Dinosaurs* by Roxie Munro. Marshall Cavendish, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2)**

In a veritable visual panorama of dinosaurs, eight classic dinosaurs are presented first as skeletons and then as living creatures.

***Julie Andrews' Collection of Poems, Songs and Lullabies* by Julie Andrews and Emma Walton Hamilton. Illus. by James McMullan. Little, Brown, 2009. (Gr. K-6)**

This stunning collection of 136 poems and watercolor illustrations includes a classy mix of classic and contemporary selections.

NONFICTION

***May I Pet Your Dog?: The How-to Guide for Kids Meeting Dogs (and Dogs Meeting Kids)* by Stephanie Calmenson. Illus. by Jan Ormerod. Clarion, 2007. (Gr. PreK-2)**

Harry, a longhaired dachshund, encounters a young boy and gives him a series of practical instructions on how to approach and be friends with a dog.

***Mermaid Queen: The Spectacular True Story of Annette Kellerman, Who Swam Her Way to Fame, Fortune, & Swimsuit History!* by Shana Corey. Illus. by Edwin Fotheringham. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. 2-5)**

Born in 1886 in Sydney, Australia, swimmer Annette Kellerman set records, originated water ballet, and revolutionized bathing suit fashions for women.

***Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11* by Brian Floca. Atheneum, 2009. (Gr. 1-5)**

Follow the preparations of Aldrin, Armstrong, and Collins on their historic July, 1969 mission to the moon and back in this handsome, oversized nonfiction picture book.

***Mr. Lincoln's Boys: Being the Mostly True Adventures of Abraham Lincoln's Troublemaking Sons, Tad and Willie* by Staton Rabin. Illus. by Bagram Ibatoulline. Viking, 2008. (Gr. 1-4)**

Written like a story, this is a lively account of the mischievous Lincoln lads, eight-year-old Tad and ten-year-old Willie, and the pranks they played in the White House.

***My Dog May Be a Genius* by Jack Prelutsky. Illus. by James Stevenson. Greenwillow, 2008. (Gr. 1-5)**

How delicious, how delightful, how utterly sensational it is to dig into this chunky-sized collection of 105 Prelutsky poems.

***Never Smile at a Monkey* by Steve Jenkins. Houghton Mifflin, 2009. (Gr. PreK-3)**

In another Steve Jenkins gem, the paper and torn paper collage artist cautions his readers to beware of 17 dangerous, poisonous, and/or deadly animals.

***Nic Bishop Butterflies and Moths* by Nic Bishop. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. PreK-4)**

Using the same format as *Nic Bishop Spiders* (2007) and *Nic Bishop Frogs* (2008), the award-winning photographer zooms in on 18 different types of butterflies and moths.

***One Giant Leap* by Robert Burleigh. Illus. by Mike Wimmer. Philomel, 2009. (Gr. 1-5)**

This majestic nonfiction picture book takes back 40 years for the first moon landing and moon walk with Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong on July 20, 1969.

***Orangutan Tongues: Poems to Tangle Your Tongue* by Jon Agee. Disney/Hyperion, 2009. (Gr. 1-5)**

The 35 tongue twisting poems and funny watercolors in this seriously silly book are best shared with friends.

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

Starting with the young red-tailed hawk's arrival in Central Park in 1991, this picture book chronicles the life, loves, and troubles of Pale Male in New York City.

***Panda Kindergarten* by Joanne Ryder. Illus. by Katherine Feng. HarperCollins/Collins, 2009. (Gr. PreK-3)**

The cute factor is off the charts in this color photo essay about the giant pandas at the Wolong Nature Reserve in China.

***Pelé, King of Soccer / Pelé, El Rey del Fútbol* by Monica Brown. Illus. by Rudy Gutierrez. Trans. by Fernando Gayesky. HarperCollins/Rayo, 2009. (Gr. 1-4)**

Though it's been three decades since Pelé played professional soccer, this picture book biography, written in English and Spanish, shows why his fame endures.

NONFICTION

***Redwoods* by Jason Chin. Roaring Brook/Flash Point, 2009. (Gr. 1-4)**

While a dark-haired young Asian-American boy reads a fact-filled book about redwood trees, everything in the book appears to come to life around him.

***Roadwork* by Sally Sutton. Illus. by Brian Lovelock. Candlewick, 2008. (Gr. PreK-2)**

In a rhyming explanation of how a new road is constructed, road workers band together to move the earth, load the dirt, tip the stones, pack the ground, and seal the road.

***Sojourner Truth's Step-Stomp Stride* by Andrea Davis Pinkney. Illus. by Brian Pinkney. Disney/Jump at the Sun, 2009. (Gr. 1-4)**

The stirring words of Sojourner Truth fill this inspirational picture book bio of the ex-slave, abolitionist, and feminist who was sold away from her parents at age nine.

***Stand Tall, Abe Lincoln* by Judith St. George. Illus. by Matt Faulkner. Philomel, 2008. (Gr. K-4)**

This picture book biography digs deep into Lincoln's early hardscrabble years on his family's meager farm in Kentucky with his adored mother and older sister, Sarah.

***The Story of Snow: The Science of Winter's Wonder* by Mark Cassino, with Jon Nelson. Illus. by Nora Aoyagi; photos by Mark Cassino. Chronicle, 2009. (Gr. PreK-5)**

Gray and lavender-toned watercolor and ink illustrations and close-up color photographs show how snow crystals grow.

***Teedie: The Story of Young Teddy Roosevelt* by Don Brown. Houghton, Mifflin, 2009. (Gr. 2-4)**

Theodore Roosevelt, the Rough Riding cowboy president, was timid, small, frail, and delicate as a boy until he built up his body, lifting weights, riding horses, and boxing.

***Testing the Ice: A True Story About Jackie Robinson* by Sharon Robinson. Illus. by Kadir Nelson. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. K-6)**

Sharon Robinson, daughter of the first African American player in major league baseball, recalls the winter her dad agreed to take his kids ice-skating on a newly-frozen lake.

***United Tweets of America* by Hudson Talbott. Putnam, 2008. (Gr. PreK-6)**

What a hoot: a picture book about each of the fifty states, set up as a bird beauty pageant, narrated by a bespectacled bald eagle holding a microphone.

***What Bluebirds Do* by Pamela F. Kirby Boyds Mills, 2009. (Gr. PreK-5)**

A pair of eastern bluebirds that nested in the author's backyard in North Carolina is the subject of a riveting full color photo essay.

***What to Do About Alice?: How Alice Roosevelt Broke the Rules, Charmed the World, and Drove Her Father Teddy Crazy!* by Barbara Kerley. Illus. by Edwin Fotheringham. Scholastic, 2008. (Gr. 1-4)**

Meet the headstrong oldest child of Theodore Roosevelt about whom he said, "I can be president of the United States, or I can control Alice. I cannot possibly do both."

***Wild Tracks! A Guide to Nature's Footprints* by Jim Arnosky. Sterling, 2008. (Gr. K-6)**

With this information-packed illustrated guide, readers can identify the tracks, actual size, of hoofed mammals, bears, small mammals, felines, canines, reptiles, and birds.

***Wolfsnail: A Backyard Predator* by Sarah C. Campbell. Photos by Sarah C. Campbell and Richard P. Campbell. Boyds Mills, 2008. (Gr. PreK-3)**

Close-up color photographs track a typical day in the life of a wolfsnail, emerging from its shell to look for food.

***You Are the First Kid on Mars* by Patrick O'Brien. Putnam, 2009. (Gr. 2-5)**

Follow a boy space traveler as he takes a Nuclear Thermal Rocket and travels four months and 35 million miles to spend time at a space colony on the red planet.



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The Not-Just-for-Summer Reading List: 100+ Best Recent Children's Books to Read Over and Over

OLDER READERS LIST, GRADES 5-8 By Judy Freeman

SUMMER, 2010

The titles on this list are all marvelous, recently published books that older children, grades 5 to 8, 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 still more 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.

JUDY FREEMAN (www.JudyReadsBooks.com), children's literature consultant and workshop presenter, is the author of *Once Upon a Time: Using Storytelling, Creative Drama, and Reader's Theater with Children in Grades PreK-6* (Libraries Unlimited, 2007), *Books Kids Will Sit Still For 3* (2006), and *The Winners! Handbook: A Closer Look at Judy Freeman's Top-Rated Children's Books of 2009* (2010). Judy writes children's book reviews and other content for 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, it doesn’t get easier when he decides to transfer to Reardan, an all-white high school 22 miles from the Spokane Indian Reservation where he lives.

***After Ever After* by Jordan Sonnenblick. Scholastic, 2010. (Gr. 6 and Up)**

You met Jeffrey Alper when he was diagnosed with leukemia at age five in his older brother, Steven’s story, *Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie*. Now he’s in eighth grade, doing much better, though his brother is off in Africa, his best friend Tad is in a wheelchair, and he’s smitten with Lindsay, the new girl at school.

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

“Welcome to our nightmare,” says 14-year-old Max, introducing the five other kids in her close-knit “family” in the first book of the thrilling Maximum Ride fantasy adventure series. They’re 98% human, and 2% avian. They’ve all got wings. And they can fly.

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

Fourteen-year-old Anthony “Antsy” Bonano aims to help 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.

***Anything but Typical* by Nora Raleigh Baskin. Simon & Schuster, 2009. (Gr. 4-7)**

Diagnosed with ASD (autistic spectrum disorder) in third grade, sixth grader Jason Blake knows kids find him weird, which is why he tries to tell his story so others can understand him.

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

In a wordless graphic novel, follow the bittersweet journey of a poor man who leaves his family behind to immigrate to a marvelous new land filled with fantastical wonders.

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

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

Big Nate: In a Class by Himself* by Lincoln Peirce. HarperCollins, 2010. (Gr. 3-7) *S

Sixth grader Nate Wright’s fortune cookie fortune reads, “Today you will surpass all others,” but the only thing he seems to be excelling at today is getting in trouble and getting detention. Based on the author’s syndicated comic, this new “wimpy Kid”-like series will be a huge hit with readers.

***The Big Splash* by Jack D. Farraiolo. 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.

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

Death himself narrates this unforgettable Holocaust novel about, as he says, “*A girl, *Some words, *An accordionist, *Some fanatical Germans, *A Jewish fist fighter, *And quite a lot of thievery.”

***Bystander* by James Preller. Feiwel & Friends, 2009. (Gr. 5-8)**

New kid Eric Hayes thinks he should stay on Griffin Connelly’s good side, but how long can he put up with Griffin’s lying, stealing, and bullying?

***Callie’s Rules* by Naomi Zucker. Egmont, 2009. (Gr. 4-6)**

Eleven-year-old Callie takes on the establishment to try and save Halloween when the Town Council votes to ban trick-or-treating and all scary costumes.

FICTION

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

Fergal Banfield amasses 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 just come from the Norse world, where she saved her master, Baldur, the Golden Boy, from death.

***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 opponent yet: Ergent Seth, #6 on the 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 the Alaskan bush, begs her mom to let her mush the dogs out to her grandparents' house.

Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days* by Jeff Kinney. Amulet, 2009. (Gr. 4-8) *S

"For me, summer vacation is basically a three-month guilt trip." That's Greg Heffley complaining, in the first entry of his latest journal, in another fall-off-your-bed-laughing addition to the Wimpy Kid series.

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

At first, Alabaster Prep sophomore Frankie 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, and wants in.

***The Dragon of Trelian* by Michelle Knudsen. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. 4-7)**

When Calen, slacker apprentice to the castle's mage, is befriended by Meg, AKA Her Royal Highness Princess Meglynn, she confides a secret: she's been hiding a young dragon in a cave deep in the forest.

***The Dragonfly Pool* by Eva Ibbotson. Illus. by Kevin Hawkes. Dutton, 2008. (Gr. 5-8)**

In 1939, with war imminent, eleven-year-old Tally leaves London to escape its expected bombardment and attends Delderton, a progressive boarding school in the south of England.

***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.

FICTION

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.

***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. It isn't.

***Everything for a Dog* by Ann M. Martin. Feiwel & Friends, 2009. (Gr. 4-7)**

In alternating chapters, meet Bone, a stray dog; fourth grader Charlie Elliot, whose beloved older brother, RJ, has just died; and 11-year-old Henry, who has wanted a dog for as long as he can remember.

***The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* by Jacqueline Kelly. Henry Holt, 2009. (Gr. 5-8)**

In this spirited historical novel set in rural Fentress, Texas in 1899, eleven-year-old Callie Vee chafes at being a proper young lady, preferring to collect plant specimens outside with her gruff, nature-loving grandfather.

***Extra Credit* by Andrew Clements. Illus. by Mark Elliott. Atheneum, 2009. (Gr. 4-6)**

Sadeed Bayat, the best student in his mountainous Afghani village, and Abby Carson, from rural Linsdale, Illinois, an indifferent sixth grader whose best part of the school day is gym, become unwilling pen pals.

***Faith, Hope, and Ivy June* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Delacorte, 2009. (Gr. 4-7)**

Ivy June Mosley, who lives with her grandparents off a dirt road in the coal mining town of Thunder Creek, and Catherine Combs, from a middle class family in Lexington, are selected for a student exchange program between their two Kentucky schools.

Fang: A Maximum Ride Novel* by James Patterson. Little, Brown, 2009. (Gr. 5 and Up) *S

In Book 6 of the Maximum Ride series, Max and her flock go to Africa with the activist group, CSM, the Coalition to Stop the Madness, to work with a food distribution program in Chad. Danger will follow.

***A Faraway Island* by Annika Thor. Delacorte, 2009. (Gr. 4-6)**

In 1939, twelve-year-old Steffie Steiner and her seven-year-old sister, Nellie, are sent by train from Nazi-controlled Vienna to Sweden with 500 other Jewish children, to be taken in by Swedish families until they can be reunited with their parents.

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 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, or Bod for short.

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

As Kek 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 adjust to living with relatives in snowy Minnesota.

***How to Say Goodbye in Robot* by Natalie Standiford. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. 8 and Up)**

When her family moves once again, this time to Baltimore, high school senior, Beatrice Szabo, AKA Robot Girl, becomes friends with Jonah Tate, known to all as Ghost Boy.

FICTION

***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.

***Incarceron* by Catherine Fisher. Dial, 2010. (Gr. 7 and Up)**

Finn can dimly recall a time when he wasn't an inmate in the vast prison system of Incarceron and plans to break free into the sunlight, something no prisoner but one has ever done. Claudia, daughter of the Warden of Incarceron, is expected to marry the loathsome Caspar, Crown Prince of the Realm. Their lives are about to intersect.

***Jake Ransom and the Skull King's Shadow* by James Rollins. HarperCollins, 2009. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

Three years after his archaeologist parents vanished in a Central American jungle, Jake and his older sister, Kady, receive an invitation to attend the opening of the British Museum's new exhibit, "Mayan Treasures of the New World," on the evening of a total solar eclipse.

***January's Sparrow* by Patricia Polacco. Philomel, 2009. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

After overseers brutally beat runaway slave, January Drumm, eight-year-old Sadie Crosswhite and her family escape on the Underground Railroad to Marshall, Michigan, a place where they should be safe.

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.

Leviathan* by Scott Westerfeld. Illus. by Keith Thompson. Simon & Schuster/Pulse, 2009. (Gr. 6 and Up) *S

In a steampunk version of the events leading up to WWI, it's Austrian Clanker machinery versus the English Darwinist biotech airbeast, Leviathan.

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.

***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 big sister Kat puts it, but his obsessive analysis of every clue helps him figure out how their 13-year-old cousin, Salim, disappeared on the London Eye, a huge observation wheel.

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

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.

***Malice* by Chris Wooding. Scholastic, 2009. (Gr. 6 and Up)**

If you get a copy of a comic book called "Malice," and decide to try the ritual all the kids know, ending with the words, "Tall Jake, take me away!" you will probably regret it, maybe forever.

FICTION

***Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper. Atheneum, 2010. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

As a girl with cerebral palsy who can't walk or care for herself, Melody describes her situation: "I have never spoken one single word. I am almost eleven years old."

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

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 in Upstate New York, 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) *S

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.

***Pop* by Gordon Korman. HarperCollins/Balzer & Bray, 2009. (Gr. 6 and Up)**

Marcus Jordan, the new junior at Aldrich High School, is elated to join its undefeated football team, in spite of opposition from star quarterback, Troy Popovich, whose famous dad, former NFL star, "the King of Pop," has been coaching Marcus.

***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.

***The Red Pyramid* by Rick Riordan. Disney/Hyperion, 2010. (Gr. 4 and Up)**

On Christmas Eve, 14-year-old Carter and 12-year-old Sadie Kane go with their Egyptologist dad to the British Museum. In the Egyptian wing, when Dad unwittingly unleashes an ancient and vengeful god, the Rosetta Stone is blasted to pieces, the gallery is destroyed, and Dad vanishes. Welcome to Book 1 of The Kane Chronicles.

***Return to Sender* by Julia Alvarez. Knopf, 2009. (Gr. 5-8)**

After Dad's tractor accident, Tyler's parents hire three undocumented Mexican brothers to run their Vermont dairy farm. Mari, the daughter of one of the brothers, yearns to find her mother, who has disappeared, and Tyler pledges to help.

***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.

***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.

***Scat* by Carl Hiaasen. Knopf, 2009. (Gr. 5-8)**

When Nick's biology teacher, Mrs. Bunny Starch, the most feared teacher at the Truman School in Naples, Florida, disappears on a field trip to the Black Vine Swamp, Nick and his best friend, Marta, investigate.

FICTION

***A Season of Gifts* by Richard Peck. Dial, 2009. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

It's 1958, and preacher's kid, 11-year-old Bobby Barnhart, has just moved with his family into the parsonage next door to cantankerous, oversized, and unforgettable Mrs. Dowdell (whom you may recall fondly as Grandma Dowdell in the Newbery winners *A Long Way from Chicago* and *A Year Down Yonder*).

***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 Seems: 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 Seems, 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.

***Slob* by Ellen Potter. Philomel, 2009. (Gr. 5-8)**

Narrator Owen Birnbaum, a 156-pound, 12-year-old New York City kid, is trying to discover who stole the Oreos from his lunch bag, but he has a far more serious problem to work out.

***The Storm in the Barn* by Matt Phelan. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

During the Dust Bowl in Kansas in 1937, a farm boy named Jack takes on the Storm King, the mysterious and sinister man who has kept the rain from falling, in this gripping graphic novel.

***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 baseball card dealer, he assembles a crack team of classmates to steal it back.

***Tales From Outer Suburbia* by Shaun Tan. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, 2009. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

These 15 unconventional short stories are set in some weird neighborhood not even on the map, accompanied by surreal drawings, doodlings, and paintings.

***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 young pickpocket named Sticky Will, must find it before its curse brings down the whole British Empire.

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

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

***When You Reach Me* by Rebecca Stead. Random House/Wendy Lamb, 2009. (Gr. 5-8)**

Sixth grader Miranda reveals the story of her past year in her Manhattan neighborhood and school to an unidentified and mysterious someone who has sent her notes that have correctly predicted some of those events.

***Witch & Wizard* by James Patterson. Little, Brown, 2009. (Gr. 6 and Up)**

Fifteen-year-old Wisteria Allgood and her older brother, Whitney, are about to be hanged for the crime of having magical powers. In alternating voices, the two cheeky and resourceful sibs look back on their growing resistance to the New Order.

NONFICTION BOOKS

***Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream* by Tanya Lee Stone. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

In 1960, believing that women would make excellent astronauts, Randolph Lovelace, chairman of NASA's Life Sciences Committee, asked pilot Jerrie Cobb to undergo the same physical tests as the men. She aced all 87. Meet the "Mercury 13," who could have been the first American women in space, but weren't.

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

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, Florida, and concluding with the 2000 presidential election.

***Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshal* by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson. Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. Carolrhoda, 2009. (Gr. 3-7)**

In a picture book bio with handsome oil paintings and loads of action and gun-fighting, read how former slave, Bass Reeves, became a famed nineteenth century lawman in the dangerous Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).

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

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.

***Claudette Colvin: Twice toward Justice* by Phillip Hoose. Farrar/Melanie Kroupa, 2009. (Gr. 7 and Up)**

On March 2, 1955, eight months before Rosa Parks made history, 15-year-old Claudette Colvin was dragged off a public bus in Montgomery, Alabama and arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger. In this riveting account, she tells her side of the story for the first time.

***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.

***The Fastest Game on Two Feet: And Other Poems About How Sports Began* by Alice Low. Illus. by John O'Brien. Holiday House, 2009. (Gr. 3-6)**

In a collection of twenty winning poems, find out how each of 19 sports came to be, including skiing, swimming, gymnastics, bowling, soccer, lacrosse, and even Frisbee.

***A Foot in the Mouth: Poems to Speak, Sing, and Shout* selected by Paul B Janeczko. Illus. by Chris Raschka. Candlewick, 2009. (Gr. 3-6)**

These 37 splendid poems, with splashy collage illustrations, include tongue twisters, list poems, bilingual poems, and limericks.

NONFICTION

Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich* by Adam Rex. Harcourt, 2006. (Gr. 3 and Up) *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.

***The Great and Only Barnum: The Tremendous, Stupendous Life of Showman P. T. Barnum* by Candace Fleming. Schwartz & Wade, 2009. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

Meet the world's most memorable showman in this handsome and rousing biography of P. T. Barnum, the man whose name is still synonymous with "The Greatest Show on Earth," AKA the circus.

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

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.

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 to Scratch a Wombat: Where to Find It . . . What to Feed It . . . Why It Sleeps All Day* by Jackie French. Illus. by Bruce Whatley. Clarion, 2009. (Gr. 4-8)**

The author combines anecdotes, facts, and Bruce Whatley's charming black and white drawings to introduce wombats she has encountered over 30 years, from Bad Bart the Biter to Pudge, who could count.

***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.

***If America Were a Village: A Book about the People of the United States* by David J. Smith. Illus. by Shelagh Armstrong. Kids Can, 2009. (Gr. 3-6)**

America's 306 million residents are transposed into a village of 100 people, with each person representing 3 million Americans, to show fascinating statistics on who we are and how we live.

***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.

NONFICTION

***Lincoln Shot: A President's Life Remembered* by Barry Denenberg. Illus. by Christopher Bing. Feiweil & 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.

***Marching for Freedom: Walk Together, Children, and Don't You Grow Weary* by Elizabeth Partridge. Viking, 2009. (Gr. 6-12)**

In this compelling black and white photo essay, meet some of the courageous children and young adults from Selma, Alabama who took part in demonstrations and marches in 1965 to demand the right of black Americans to vote.

***Med Head: My Knock-down, Drag-out, Drugged-up Battle with My Brain* by James Patterson and Hal Friedman. Little, Brown, 2010. (Grades 7 and Up)**

Beginning at age four, Cory Friedman's life became a living horror as he and his family tried everything to help him deal with the increasingly debilitating effects of Tourette's Syndrome and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

***Mission Control, This Is Apollo: The Story of the First Voyages to the Moon* by Andrew Chaikin with Victoria Kohl. Illus. by Alan Bean. Viking, 2009. (Gr. 5 and Up)**

This oversized volume is filled with conversational and quote-filled accounts of all 12 of the piloted Apollo missions, large black and white and color photos, and spectacular full-page oil paintings by astronaut Alan Bean (the fourth man to walk on the moon in 1969 as part of the Apollo Twelve mission).

***Pharaoh's Boat* by David Weitzman. Houghton Mifflin, 2009. (Gr. 4-8)**

In 1954, workers clearing the base of the Great Pyramid at Giza uncovered an old limestone wall. Underneath was a deconstructed boat built after the death of the pharaoh, Cheops, 4,500 years ago. The text and Egyptian-style illustrations take us step by step through the construction and the modern day reconstruction of that boat.

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 and Up) *S

As part of the fascinating "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.

NONFICTION

***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 an artist 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 this is 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.

***You Never Heard of Sandy Koufax?!* by Jonah Winter. Illus. by Andre Carrilho. Schwartz & Wade, 2009. (Gr. 3-8)**

An unnamed narrator and teammate covers the career of the greatest lefty pitcher ever, from first joining the Dodgers as a "nineteen-year-old squirt" to his surprise retirement at the top of his game in 1966.