

# The Sixth Grade Reading List



# How It Works

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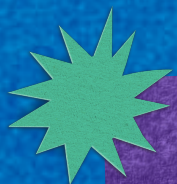
Click on a book title to be sent directly to its Amazon product page where you can learn more about any of the books.

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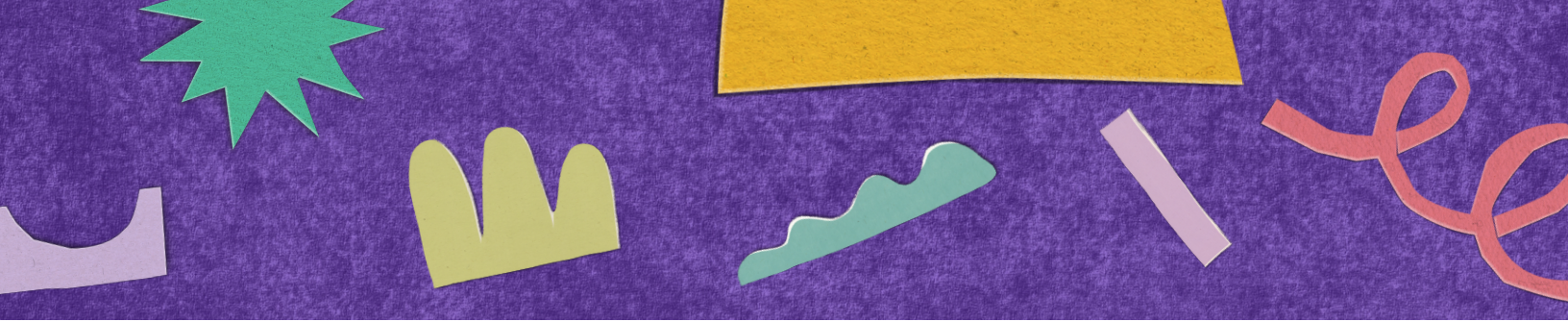
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***Happy Reading!***



### **1. The Boy At The Back Of The Class by Onjali Q. Rauf**

On the third Tuesday of the school year, nine-year-old Ahmet, a Syrian refugee, fills the empty chair at the back of Mrs. Khan's classroom. The whole class is curious about the boy because he seems unusual--he doesn't smile and talk much. But after learning that Ahmet fled a real war and was separated from his family as a result, a group of determined classmates tries to befriend him and come up with a plan to reunite Ahmet with his family. Throughout this heartwarming and hopeful story, we are reminded of the importance of friendship and the power of kindness.

### **2. Sweep: The Story Of A Girl And Her Monster by Jonathan Auxier**

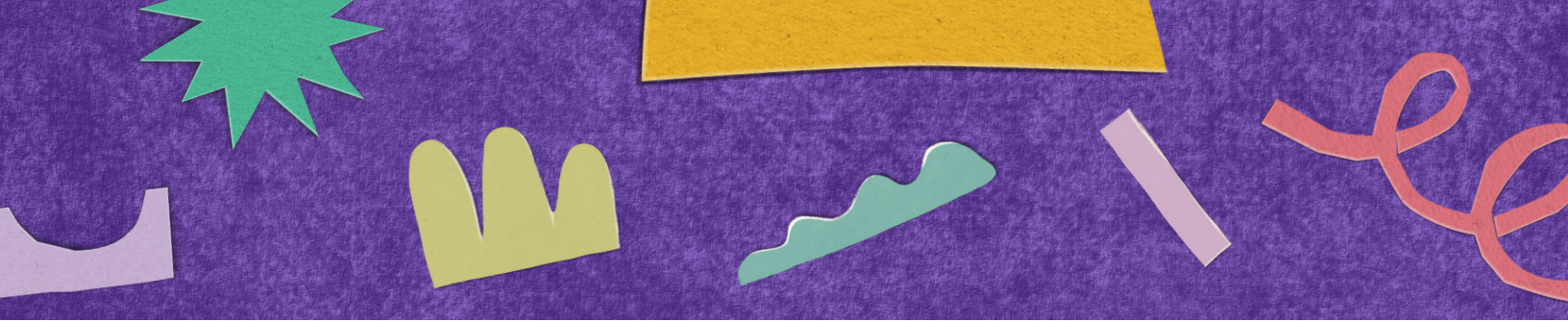
Eleven-year-old Nan Sparrow works for a ruthless chimney sweep named Wilkie Crudd and spends her days sweeping out chimneys. While the work is dangerous and brutal, Nan has managed to overcome the odds. When Nan gets trapped in a deadly chimney fire, she fears the worst. Yet, upon awakening, she discovers that she is unharmed in an abandoned attic. And she is not alone. A mysterious creature--a golem made of ash and soot--is huddled in the corner.

### **3. Homecoming by Cynthia Voigt**

When Dicey Tillerman and her three younger siblings were abandoned by their mother somewhere in the middle of Connecticut, they must find their way to Great-aunt Cilla's house in Bridgeport as this is their only hope for staying together as a family. When they reach Bridgeport, they discovered that Great-aunt Cilla has died. They instead find her daughter--and the home they are searching for isn't what they expected to be. Homecoming is a moving and adventurous story of survival, courage, and hope. It is a wonderful read recommended for students in the 6th grade and up.

### **4. The Lottery Rose by Irene Hunt**

Georgie Burgess never speaks about the abuse he receives at the hands of his mother. Apart from his difficult home life, he is also getting into trouble at school. He learns to hide his hurt and finds comfort and escape in books depicting beautiful gardens and brightly colored flowers. After winning a small rose bush in a supermarket lottery, Georgie nurtures it with love and care, something he has never experienced before. Georgie is soon placed in a new, safe home, away from his mother, which changes his life; however, he must still find a home for his rose bush.



### **5. Crash by Jerry Spinelli**

Meet seventh-grader super-jock Crash Coogan, the star of the school football team. Crash got his name by smashing his cousin Bridget flat on her back with his football helmet, and now he is bullying kids, particularly Penn Webb, the quiet, vegetarian kid who lives next door. But Crash's life begins to change when he encounters difficult challenges and surprises he never expected. The story of Crash gives readers a glimpse into the life of a bully in a funny and poignant way that teaches readers about stereotypes and shows them that winning doesn't always matter.

### **6. Front Desk by Kelly Yang**

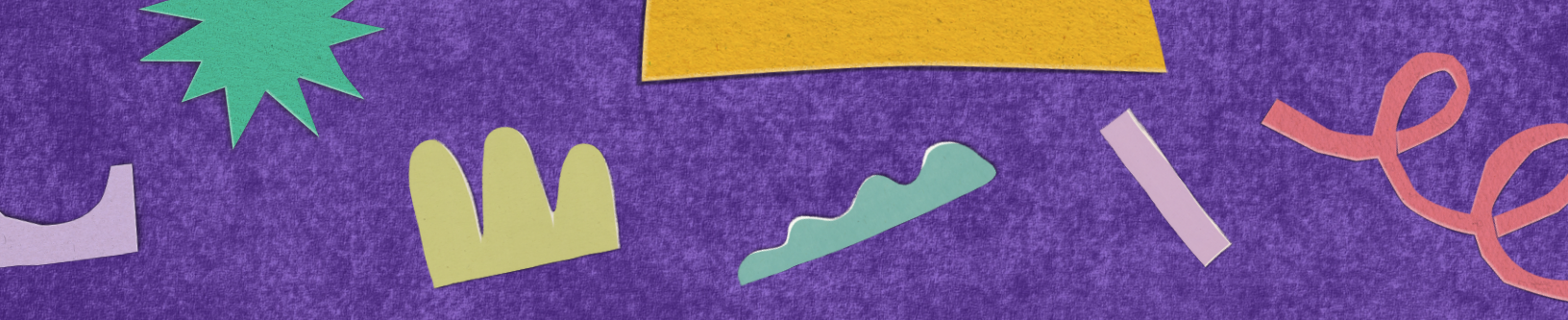
Mia is a Chinese-American girl who holds a lot of secrets. First, she lives in a motel, not a house, and is in charge of the front desk at the Calivista Motel, while her parents clean the rooms. Second, her parents hide immigrants and let them stay in the empty rooms for free. And third, Mia aspires to become a writer, but her mother tells her to focus on Math because English isn't her first language. Mia faces a lot of challenges as she helps her parents run the motel and chase her dreams. Can she accomplish them all?

### **7. Dead End In Norvelt by Jack Gantos**

Dead End In Norvelt is a mixture of true story and fantasy about a boy named Jack Gantos. Jack is looking forward to an awesome summer. Nevertheless, his excitement was quickly shut down when he was grounded for the entire summer for accidentally firing his father's rifle and mowing down his mother's corn. Now, he is forced to do chores and help his elderly neighbor, Mrs. Volker, write the town's obituaries. By helping Mrs. Volker, Jack is launched on a strange adventure involving a homemade airplane, a dancing plague, Girl Scout cookies, and Eleanor Roosevelt.

### **8. Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz Ryan**

Esperanza assumed that she'd always live a privileged life on her family's ranch in Mexico. However, when her family is suddenly struck by tragedy, she and her mother are forced to flee Mexico and settle in a farm labor camp. Now, Esperanza must adjust to her new life, filled with hardships and struggles brought on by the Great Depression, which she isn't prepared for. With her mother's sickness, labor strikes, and poor living conditions, Esperanza must find a way to endure and rise above the challenges.



### **9. Slider by Pete Hautman**

David is a teenager who is obsessed with professional eating. He can eat an entire sixteen-inch pepperoni pizza in four minutes and thirty-six seconds. A big fan of eating contests, David makes an online purchase of a half-eaten hotdog leftover from his favorite competitive eater, Jooky Garafalo. But there is one big mistake. He accidentally bids \$2000 instead of \$20 for the hotdog! To make up for his mistake, David plans to enter as many eating contests as possible to raise enough money to pay his mother before discovering the charge on her credit card. He also hopes to win the Super Pigorino--the world's greatest pizza-eating contest.

### **10. Frindle by Andrew Clements**

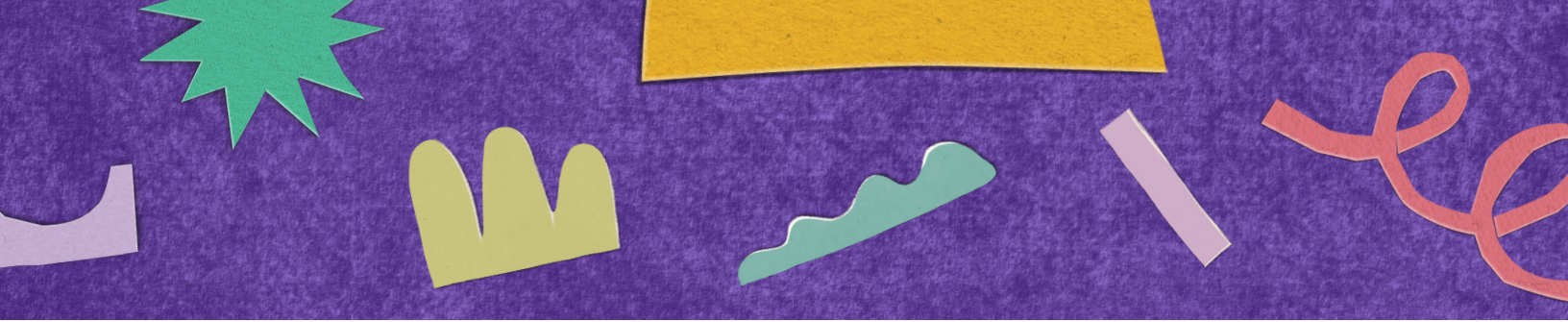
In Frindle, Nick is a creative and curious fifth-grader who likes to learn while having fun. Upon learning some interesting information about how words are created, Nick got inspired to make up his own word for "pen"--"frindle". He soon gets his friends to refer to pens as "frindles". The new word spread around the whole school, around town and despite opposition from his English teacher, Mrs. Granger, "frindle" eventually gained national attention! An enjoyable book that explores the power of words that will spark creativity among young readers.

### **11. Listening For Lions by Gloria Whelan**

Shortly after World War I, Rachel Sheridan and her family lives in Kenya. Her father is a doctor, and her mother runs the mission school. When the Spanish Influenza struck her missionary parents, she was taken in by their greedy and malicious neighbors. Soon, Rachel found herself in England when her neighbors forced her to participate in a deceitful scheme. Young readers will have to wait and see if Rachel will be able to find her way back home in this suspenseful and exciting book.

### **12. Ungifted by Gordon Korman**

Donovan Curtis considers himself a prankster and a troublemaker. One day, he pulls a major prank at his middle school, leaving the gym destroyed. The district superintendent, Dr. Shultz, catches Donovan red-handed. When he listed Donovan's name down, one of the administrators thinks it is the list of candidates that will be sent to the Academy of Scholastic Distinction (ASD), a special program for the gifted and talented students. For Donovan, he thinks that ASD is a good place to hide for the moment until the mishap is over. That is if he can manage to fool his genius classmates and teachers.



### **13. Wonder by R.J. Palacio**

August "Auggie" Pullman is home-schooled and living with his parents in Manhattan. He was born with a facial difference that has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. As Auggie's parents wanted him to experience more of the outside world, they enrolled him in a private school for the start of fifth grade. Auggie, who only wanted to be treated like a regular kid, must now navigate a whole new world, with new rules, dealing with teachers, and making friends. Auggie's smart and funny personality will keep readers cheering for him as he faces life's challenges.

### **14. The Science Of Breakable Things by Tae Keller**

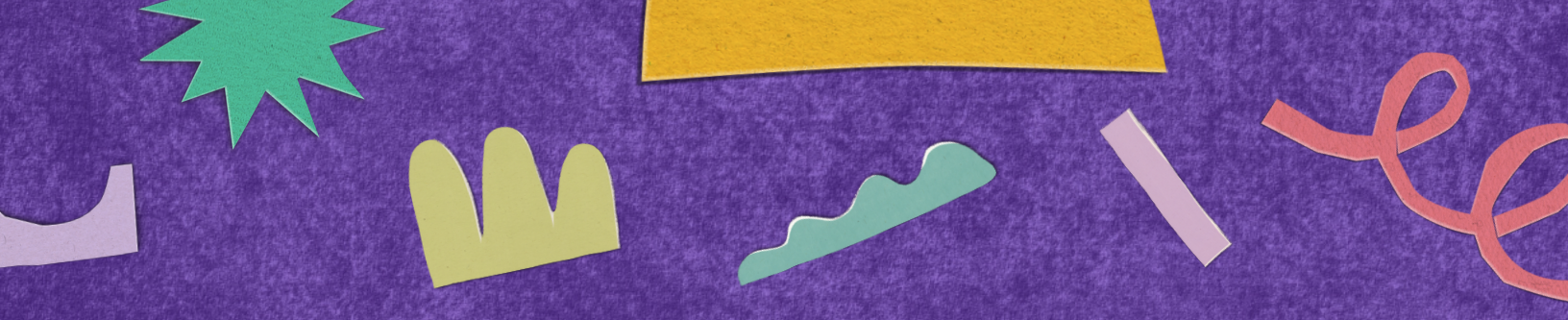
Natalie's botanist mother is suffering from depression. Natalie believes that to "save" her mother, she must fly her to see the miraculous Cobalt Blue Orchids--flowers that are so resilient, they survive against impossible odds. Her science teacher, Mr. Neely encourages her to enter the Egg Drop competition. She is hopeful that if she wins the prize money, she can show her mother the orchids, and perhaps her mother can fall in love with life again.

### **15. The Truth As Told By Mason Buttle by Leslie Connor**

Seventh-grader Mason Buttle is the biggest and the sweatiest kid in his grade. Mason can't read or write well, causing him to be teased relentlessly. To make matters worse, his best friend, Benny, died in Mason's family's orchard. Now, Lieutenant Baird, investigating his friend's death, won't believe Mason's story and won't stop asking him questions. Soon, Mason becomes friends with the tiny Calvin Chumsky, but when Calvin goes missing too, the poor luck Mason has been having makes him wonder if it is a curse he will never be able to break.

### **16. 24 Hours In Nowhere by Dusti Bowling**

13-year-old Gus lives with his grandmother in Nowhere, Arizona. Gus dreams of getting out of his poverty-stricken town and going to college. But in the meantime, Gus has to deal with the town bully, Bo Taylor. When Bo forces Gus to eat a dangerous, spiny cactus, Gus's friend, Rossi, comes to his rescue. Rossi offered Bo her prized dirt bike in exchange for leaving Gus alone. As Gus is determined to get the bike back to Rossi, he agrees to go and search for gold in the Dead Frenchman Mine with his old friends and Rossi herself.



### **17. Wonderland by Barbara O'Connor**

Mavis Jeeter's mother has uprooted the family again to a new home to work as a housekeeper for the Tully family. Mavis has never lived in one place long enough to have a real best friend until she becomes friends with Rose, the Tullys' daughter. Like Mavis, Rose has never had a real best friend either. Readers will enjoy reading about Mavis and Rose's adventures as they try to find a new dog for a lonely man whose beloved dog died. Wonderland teaches us about the meaning of friendship, as well as growing up and its challenges.

### **18. How To Steal A Dog by Barbara O'Connor**

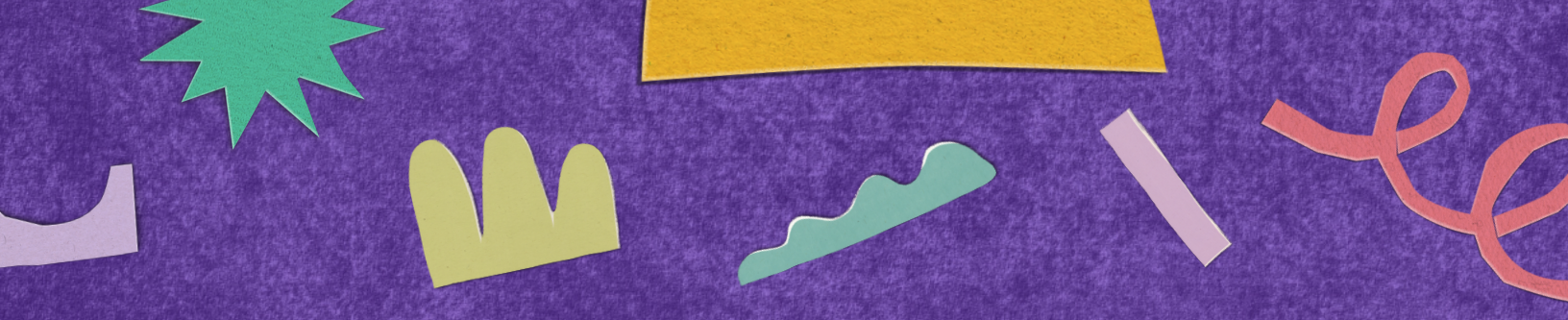
Georgina Hayes lives in a car with her brother Toby and her mother. Her family once lived in an apartment, but now her father has left them without anything, while her mother works multiple jobs. One day, Georgina finds a missing dog poster with a reward of \$500. She thinks that with the reward money, her family could get a place to stay. Georgina and her brother Toby attempt to steal a dog for the reward money, but things don't go as planned, and it's not what Georgina anticipated.

### **19. The Secret Garden by Francis Hodgson Burnett**

Mary Lennox is an orphan, sent to live at her uncle's large country house on the Yorkshire Moors. As she settles into the large mansion, she discovers how full of secrets it is. In the middle of the night, a cry echoes from a corridor of the mansion, and her uncle remains locked up in his room. One day, Mary discovers a beautiful walled garden behind a locked gate. Mary will find her way into the secret garden through some unexpected help, which in turn will reveal the secrets of the mansion's inhabitants, and transform her life.

### **20. The Thing About Jellyfish by Ali Benjamin**

When Suzy Swanson's best friend, Franny, dies in a drowning accident, Suzy is convinced that the cause of death must have been a rare jellyfish sting. Refusing her mother's explanation that things just happen, Suzy is determined to find out what caused the tragedy as she confides in her science teacher and even contacts scientists who study jellyfish to help her formulate her theory. The Thing About Jellyfish is a moving and heartfelt story about loss, acceptance, healing, and the complicated and beautiful bond between friends.



### **21. The Wish Giver: Three Tales of Coven Tree by Bill Brittain**

Coven Tree's people are no strangers to magic, as even the town's name comes from a gnarled old tree where witches used to congregate. One day, a strange man named Thaddeus Blinn shows up at the Coven Tree carnival, claiming to be able to grant the wishes of anyone for only fifty cents. Only four people in the town take Thaddeus up on his offer. Finally, their wishes are granted, but not exactly as they had hoped. Through three stories that are well-written, intriguing, and fast-paced, *The Wish Giver: Three Tales of Coven Tree* is a fun and quick read for middle-grade readers.

### **22. The Iceberg Hermit by Arthur Roth**

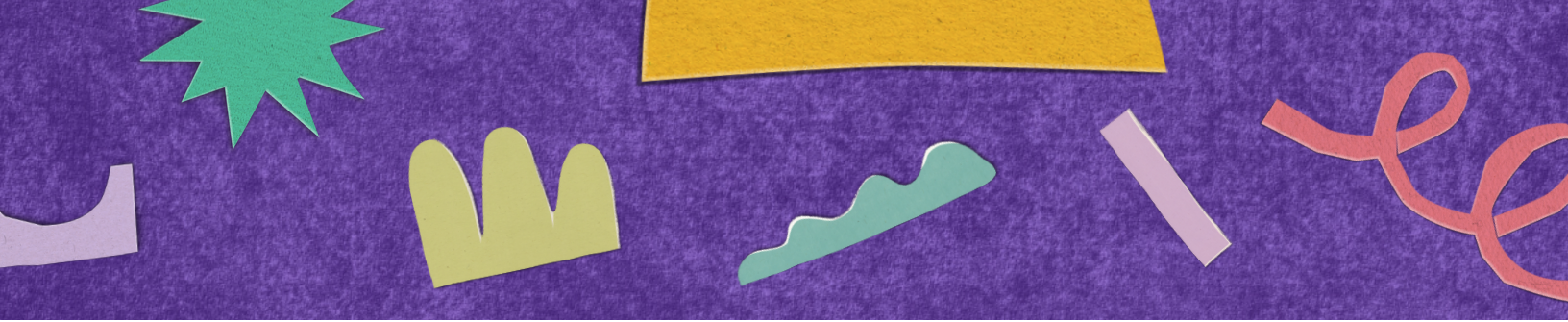
A seventeen-year-old boy, Allan Gordon, signed onto a Scottish whaling ship, unaware of the dangers that loom ahead. As the sole survivor after being shipwrecked on an iceberg in the year 1757, Allan begins a seemingly hopeless struggle for survival. He takes in an orphaned polar bear and raises it, making it his only companion as Allan journeys through the unforgiving Arctic winter that will keep readers riveted to the story as he fights to survive and yearns to return home one day.

### **23. Where The Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein**

A collection of poetry that are outrageously funny and deeply profound, *Where the Sidewalk Ends* is where you will meet a boy who turns into a TV set. The Unicorn and the Bloath live there, as well as a girl who eats a whale and Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout, who will not take the garbage out. It is a place where crocodiles go to the dentist, where you can wash your shadow, and plant diamond gardens. This book is one of those books in which you will find something new each time you read it.

### **24. Here In The Real World by Sara Pennypacker**

11-year-old Ware is a thoughtful, introverted kid who enjoys spending his summer days alone with his imagination, dreaming about medieval knights, or hanging out in the swimming pool at his grandmother's retirement center. Due to family circumstances, his parents sent him to the dreaded Rec camp--where he must endure what they call "Meaningful Social Interaction". On his first day, Ware meets Jolene, a street-smart and secretive girl planting a garden in the abandoned church lot next to the camp. Soon Ware begins to skip Rec camp and spends his days in the abandoned lot, dreaming of turning the demolished church into his own castle-like space.



### **25. The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin**

Sixteen unlikely people gather to read Samuel W. Westing's will, which sets off a bizarre chain of events. The will is structured like a puzzle, with the sixteen people challenged to find a solution. Those who crack the mystery will then inherit Mr. Westing's enormous fortune. Readers will be on the edge of their seats as they try to figure out the mystery through the unforgettable characters and the puzzles filled with baffling clues. The Westing Game is a great pick for readers who enjoy a fun, quirky, and clever mystery.

### **26. The Hatchet by Gary Paulsen**

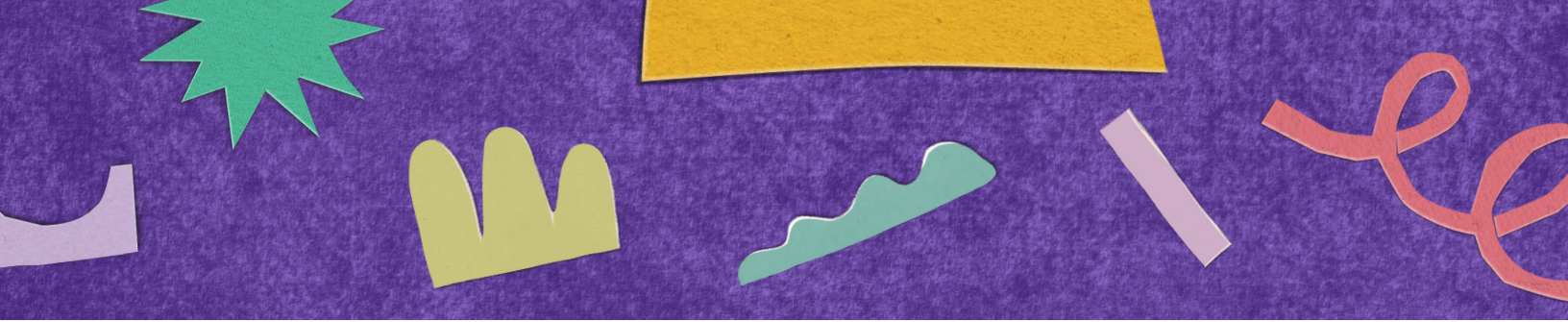
Brian Robeson is flying to Canada aboard a single-engine plane to visit his father for the summer. When the plane's pilot suffers a heart attack and dies, Brian is forced to crash-land the plane in a lake. Now Brian is stranded in the remote Canadian wilderness, and all he has left is his clothing and a hatchet--a gift his mother gave him as a present before his departure. Brian fights to stay alive, forage for food, and even survives a devastating tornado. This award-winning, classic novel of wilderness survival, Hatchet, is a coming-of-age story about survival, determination, and overcoming challenges.

### **27. The Crossing by Gary Paulsen**

Fourteen-year-old Manny Bustos is a homeless orphan living in the dangerous streets of Juarez, Mexico. To survive, he fights with bigger, older rivals for coins American tourists throw off the bridge between El Paso, Texas and his town. Manny dreams of crossing into the USA for a better life. On the night that he decided to cross the Rio Grande, past the searchlights and the border patrol, a man confronts him that could change the course of his life forever.

### **28. Greenglass House by Kate Milford**

Milo is looking forward to his Christmas break. His family owns and runs the Greenglass House--a 200-year-old inn where it's very quiet during the winter. But soon after Milo finishes his school work and is ready to start his break, several guests appear at the inn's door, each with a strange reason for their visit. When things start to go missing, Milo and the cook's daughter, Meddy, soon find themselves in a role play game as they uncover the mysterious thefts and strange happenings inside the Greenglass House. With a cast of peculiar, unforgettable characters and intriguing plot twists, this book will keep readers on their toes all the way to the end!



### **29. The Girl Who Drank The Moon by Kelly Barnhill**

As a long-held tradition, the people of the Protectorate offer a baby each year as an offering to the witch that lives in the forest, hoping that the sacrifice will keep the witch from terrorizing their town. However, the forest witch, Xan, is gentle and kind. She shares her home with a wise swamp monster named Glerk and a tiny dragon, named Fyrian. She takes the abandoned children through the woods to the Free Cities, where she sends them to loving families. One day, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, which gifted the child with extraordinary magic. Xan then decides that she must raise the girl as her own and names her Luna. As Luna reaches her thirteenth birthday, she begins to manifest magical abilities--but with unexpected consequences. The Girl Who Drank The Moon will be an instant favorite among middle-grade readers, as well as older readers. It is an enchanting story filled with adventure, love, hope, and wisdom.

### **30. Every Missing Piece by Melanie Conklin**

Maddy Gaines has been anxious ever since her father died. She conducts regular safety checks in her small North Carolina town, earning the sheriff's ire for raising false alarms too often. When Maddy thinks she has spotted Billy Holcomb--the boy who went missing months earlier--in her town, she decides to dig deep to uncover the truth about the missing boy. All the while adjusting to major changes in her life--including evolving friendships, grappling with loss, and adjusting to her new relationship with her stepfather. Maddy's courage and resilience in the face of uncertainty make this a story that will appeal to young readers who are adjusting to their own changes.



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