

# The Fifth Grade Reading List



# How It Works

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2.

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*Happy Reading!*



### **1. I Am The Ice Worm by Maryann Easley**

Fourteen-year-old Allison Atwood from Southern California is flying to visit her mom in Alaska when her plane crashes above the Arctic Circle. The pilot is killed, and Allison is the sole survivor, cold and alone in the wilderness. She is rescued by an Inupiat hunter who takes her to their village where she is called the "ice worm," an outsider far away from her life in California. Through the villagers, Allison learns over time that life is much more than material wealth and begins to see the world from a new perspective.

### **2. Baseball In April And Other Stories by Gary Soto**

Based on Mexican American author Gary Soto's own experience growing up in California's Central Valley, *Baseball in April And Other Stories* is a wonderful collection of short stories with themes of love, growing up, and friendship and portrays the daily life of kids living in California. In addition to being entertaining and humorous, this book features honest and realistic messages that will appeal to middle school students, as well as those who enjoy reading short stories.

### **3. Moon Over Manifest by Clare Vanderpool**

Set in 1938, Abilene Tucker, an adventurous twelve-year-old girl, was sent by her father to the small town of Manifest, Kansas where he grew up. A pastor took Abilene in, and in the house's floorboards, Abilene found a box full of mementos and some letters that mentioned a spy known as the "Rattler" which they believed was a German spy in 1918. These sent Abilene and her new friends on a spy hunt that led them to discover secrets they never expected to find.

### **4. The Million Dollar Shot by Dan Gutman**

Eddie "Air" Ball has the chance of a lifetime: to sink a free throw at the NBA Finals halftime and win the million-dollar prize, only he has to win the Finkle Food poetry contest first. With the help of his best friend, Annie "Oakley" Stokely, Eddie won the poetry contest. Though someone is trying to sabotage Eddie's chances of winning the million-dollar shot, Eddie is determined to practice every day to provide a better future for his family. As Eddie tries to make the shot in this inspiring story of determination and hope, sports fans and non-sports fans alike will surely root for Eddie.



### **5. Love That Dog by Sharon Creech**

Second-grader Jack hates poetry. He thinks that girls only write it, and every time he tries to write one, he feels like his brain is empty. However, the more Jack writes poetry and the more poetry assignments his teacher gives him, the more he learns to enjoy it. Written in free verse from a 7-year-old's point of view, *Love That Dog* is a clever, funny, and sweet poetry book which is suitable for middle-grade readers as it is easy to follow and a wonderful way for them to get introduced to poetry.

### **6. A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold**

Starring an unforgettable young boy on the autism spectrum named Bixby Alexander Tam aka Bat, *A Boy Called Bat* chronicles his experiences at school with his friends and teachers and his family life. In the first book of this middle-grade series, Bat's veterinarian mom brought home a baby skunk that needs to be taken care of before handing it off to a wild-animal shelter. Bat thinks the baby skunk may make a wonderful pet, but he has to convince his mom to allow him to keep it. The adventures of Bat make for a delightful read that readers will enjoy.

### **7. First Light by Rebecca Stead**

Peter is very excited to go on an expedition to Greenland with his scientist parents where they are studying the effects of global warming. Once there, he started to experience strange headaches and have frightening, unexplainable visions. Meanwhile, Thea lives in Gracehope, a remarkable underground colony deep in the Arctic ice founded centuries earlier by people persecuted for witchcraft. When Thea and Peter cross paths, they will learn secrets about their pasts that will change their lives forever. *First Light* is a thrilling science fiction adventure that middle-grade readers will enjoy.

### **8. My Side Of The Mountain by Jean Craighead George**

Living in a cramped apartment in New York City with his large family, 12-year-old Sam Gibley is miserable. So he decided to run away to his great-grandfather's abandoned farm in the Catskill Mountains to live off the land. As he eats and hunts for food, he also learns to make fire and befriends animals. Despite blizzards, harsh conditions, and loneliness push Sam to go back home, his need for independence and freedom prevails. There are several interesting wilderness facts in the book that will make this a fun read for readers who love outdoor and adventure stories.



### **9. The Year I Flew Away by Marie Arnold**

A magical middle-grade novel features 10-year-old Gabrielle, who is excited to move from Haiti to America. Since her parents can't join her yet, she will be living with her Uncle's family in Brooklyn, New York. As Gabrielle adjusts to her new life in New York, she also realizes that American life isn't exactly what she envisioned. Learning a new language proved difficult for Gabrielle, especially when she is bullied due to her accent. So when a witch offered her to become a "perfect American girl" as a trade, she took it. She must, however, be careful what she is wishing for as it may not be what she really wants.

### **10. The Phantom Tollbooth by Norton Juster**

Everything is boring and dull for Milo. So when a tollbooth mysteriously appeared in his room, he stepped into it right away. In this other land, everything is different. Milo begins with Expectations, where he seeks direction from Whether Man, who is full of endless talk. As Milo drives on, he encounters strange characters and places and even meets a talking, oversized dog named Tock. Experience Milo's adventures in the Lands Beyond in this educational and entertaining book filled with wordplay that will surely improve young readers' vocabulary.

### **11. Chasing Vermeer by Blue Balliett**

Sixth-graders Calder Pillay and Petra Andalee are classmates at the University School in Hyde Park, Chicago. Through their teacher, Ms. Hussey, they learned about the artist, Johannes Vermeer, and one of his paintings called "A Lady Writing". A few days later, the invaluable Vermeer painting disappeared on its way to Hyde Park. Calder and Petra drawn to this mysterious disappearance, decide to investigate.

### **12. Wonderstruck by Brian Selznick**

Ben and Rose both secretly wish for better lives. Ben's story starts in 1977, in Minnesota. Ben was born deaf in his left ear. His mother, the town librarian, died in a car crash, and he has never known his father. Meanwhile, Rose's story starts in New Jersey in 1927. She is deaf and is kept at home. Unhappy and lonely, she decides to go to New York City to see her idol, actress Lillian Mayhew. These two independent stories, set fifty years apart, seamlessly weave back and forth with Ben's story told in words and Rose's in pictures.



### **13. The Magician's Nephew (The Chronicles of Narnia) by C.S. Lewis**

The story begins in London in the summer of 1900. One day, when Digory and Polly explore the attic that connects the houses, they take the wrong door and surprise Digory's Uncle Andrew, who believes he is a magician. His uncle then transports them to a different world, where they begin their journey to Narnia. The Magician's Nephew is a standalone novel, but if you want to continue your Narnia journey, you can read *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*, the second book in *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

### **14. The Invention Of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick**

Hugo, a 12-year-old orphan, lives within the walls of a crowded Paris train station. To survive, he keeps the clocks running and steals food. By day, he works with clocks; by night, he works on an automaton, a human-like mechanical robot, determined to pick up where his father left off. Hugo's world is turned upside down when he meets a mysterious toy seller and his eccentric and bookish goddaughter.

### **15. Counting By 7s by Holly Goldberg Sloan**

A touching story about Willow Chance, a twelve-year-old genius girl who is obsessed with plants, diagnosing medical conditions, and finding comfort in counting by 7s. Because her fellow middle-grade students cannot relate to her interests, she has a hard time making friends and fitting in at school. When she loses her adoptive parents in a car accident, her life is turned upside down. As a result, Willow is left to navigate a world that does not seem to understand her. Will she find a place to belong? As a heartwarming, coming-of-age story about family, belonging, and the power of love, *Counting By 7s* will resonate with readers of all ages.

### **16. A Wrinkle In Time by Madeleine L'Engle**

It was a dark and stormy night when the Murry family was visited by a strange visitor. Because of this bizarre encounter, Meg Murry and her little brother, Charles Wallace end up going on an extraordinary adventure--to the 5th dimension, to save their scientist father, who is missing for several years. With tesseracts, time travel, and alien planets, this fast-paced book will appeal to all science fiction fans.



### **17. Redwall by Brian Jacques**

The gentle mice of Mossflower Wood are celebrating an abundance of peace and prosperity. All is well until Cluny the Scourge, the terrible one-eyed rat and his savage horde, threatened the tranquil community of Redwall Abbey. Hence begins the epic journey of a bumbling young apprentice to recover the lost sword of the legendary Martin the Warrior, and Mossflower's peace-loving inhabitants are compelled to become warriors to defend themselves from the invaders. As the first book in the beloved Redwall saga, this book is a great choice for fantasy and adventure book lovers.

### **18. Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbitt**

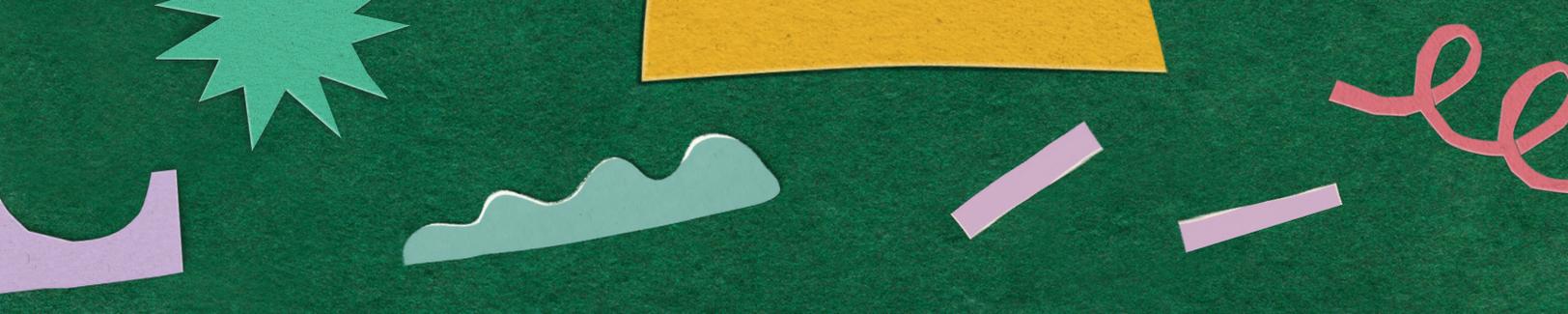
Winifred "Winnie" Foster, a young girl who lives at the edge of the village of Treegap, runs away from her overbearing parents. The next morning, Winnie discovers a small spring on her family's property and met a young man named Jesse Tuck. She learns that the spring grants immortality and that members of the Tuck family have drunk from it. While Winnie quickly develops a fondness for the Tuck family, will she be able to keep the family's secret of never getting old?

### **19. Echo Mountain by Lauren Wolk**

Echo Mountain is an untamed wilderness where Ellie and her family are trying to start a new life after losing everything in the Great Depression. With her new life in the mountains, Ellie has discovered a love of nature and newfound freedom. However, a terrible accident has left her father in a coma, for which Ellie is blamed. In hopes of finding a cure for her father, she climbs up to the top of the mountain in search of "the hag," the woman who possesses the healing secrets that can restore her father's health. Echo Mountain is a stunning tale of courage, resilience, and finding your own path.

### **20. Fuzzy Mud by Louis Sachar**

Since elementary school, Tamaya Dhilwaddi and Marshall Walsh have walked together to and from Woodbridge Academy. The two friends' routine is disrupted when Marshall is challenged to a fight by the bully Chad. The two then take the shortcut on their way home through the off-limits woods to avoid Chad and not escalate the situation. They lost their way and found themselves in even more trouble than they could have ever imagined. The kind of trouble that could impact their future and the future of the world.



### **21. When You Trap A Tiger by Tae Keller**

The summer before seventh grade, Lily and her family move from California to Sunbeam, Washington to live with her Korean grandmother who is very ill. Lily and her big sister, Sam, had always enjoyed hearing Halmoni's Korean folktales, but when a magical tiger straight out of Halmoni's stories appears before Lily, she will uncover a family secret. Halmoni stole something from the tigers long ago, and now they want it back. When You Trap a Tiger weaves together several themes, such as loss, grief, identity, heritage, family, and friendships, all in a way that makes the story magical.

### **22. Chomp by Carl Hiaasen**

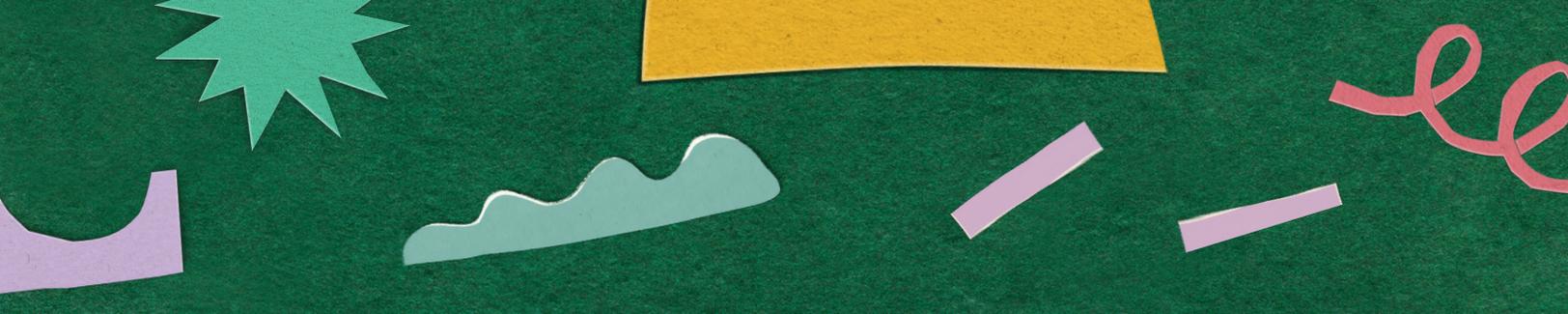
Wahoo Cray and his father, Mickey Cray, a professional animal wrangler, takes a job with a reality series entitled, "Expedition Survival!" Aside from handling animals, Wahoo must deal with his short-tempered father and the reality show's obnoxious host, Derek Badger, who insists on using wild animals in his stunts. You'll find out what happens next when you join Wahoo Cray in this fantastic adventure set among the Florida Everglades.

### **23. Almost Home by Joan Bauer**

Twelve-year-old Sugar and her mother lose their home in Missouri when her grandfather dies, and her gambling father takes off again. They move to Chicago to start over, but being homeless makes it hard. Despite their hardships, Sugar always tries to be grateful and kind no matter what. Sugar learns that, no matter what life throws at her, she can always hold her head high and remain optimistic with the help of her rescue dog Shush, her supportive teacher, and her love of writing. It is a story that inspires hope, resilience, and new beginnings.

### **24. Mrs. Frisby And The Rats Of NIMH by Robert C. O'Brien**

A widowed mouse named Mrs. Frisby must move her four small children to their summer home, as the farmer, Mr. Fitzgibbon, begins preparing for spring plowing in the garden where her family lives. However, her youngest son, Timothy, is ill with pneumonia. Timothy must not be moved and most certainly will not be able to survive the trip. Fortunately, the rats of NIMH, an extremely intelligent breed, help her out with her dilemma in an incredibly creative way. Mrs. Frisby And The Rats Of NIMH is an award-winning classic that has captured the hearts of children and adults alike for many years.



### **25. Dolphin Summer by Catherine Hapka**

Lily is looking forward to a fun summer with her best friends. However, her summer plans are quickly shattered as her best friends leave for sleep-away camp. Lily is now stuck with a long list of summer reading while all she wants to do is hang out at the Coney Island Aquarium as she dreams of becoming a marine biologist someday. After discovering a stray dolphin in a nearby canal, Lily decides to watch over it. Lily and the dolphin formed a bond over time, but when the dolphin seems sick, Lily must find a way to help the dolphin find its way back home.

### **26. Beyond The Bright Sea by Lauren Wolk**

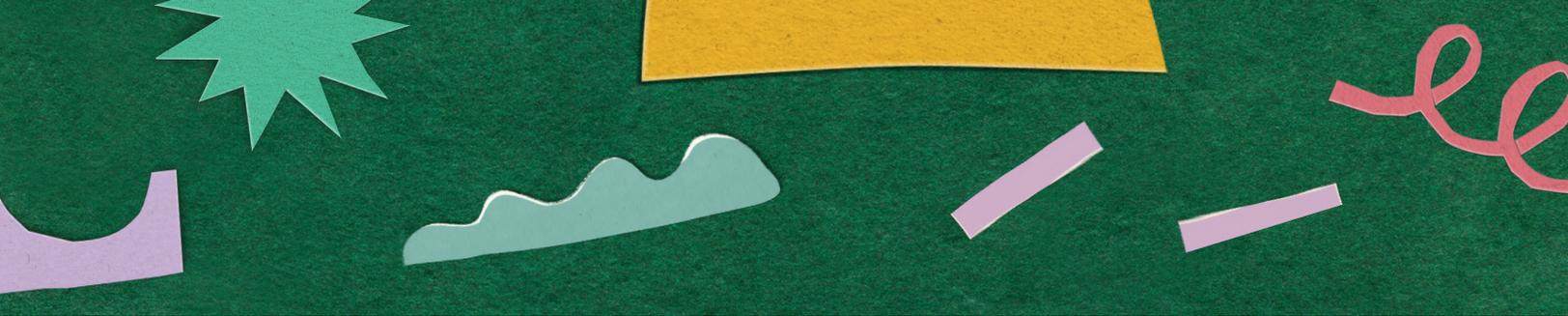
Beyond The Bright Sea is a historical fiction novel, set in the 1920s that follows a twelve-year-old girl named Crow. Crow has lived her entire life in tiny and isolated Elizabeth Islands off the coast of Massachusetts. She arrived in the islands as a small baby, abandoned and stranded on a small boat. Osh, the man who raised her, and Miss Maggie, their neighbor, are her only companions. Crow discovers a mysterious fire across the water one night, which sets in motion her quest to discover where she came from and what family truly means.

### **27. The Dreamer by Pam Muñoz Ryan**

Neftali has always found beauty and wonder in the world since he was a young boy. Even as he endures taunts from other children and his domineering father, he perseveres by following his heart and following his passion for writing. The Dreamer is a fictionalized retelling of the early life of the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda that explores the power of imagination and creativity and serves as an inspiration for young writers and artists.

### **28. The Indian In The Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks**

During Omri's birthday, his best friend Patrick gives him a plastic Indian toy as a birthday present. Slightly disappointed, Omri puts his present in a metal cupboard and turns the key. What Omri doesn't know is that by turning the key, the plastic toy will come to life as a living and breathing Iroquois Indian named Little Bear. Omri and Little Bear soon become friends, but for how long will Omri keep this secret? A fun and enjoyable book for middle-grade readers, The Indian In The Cupboard is sure to become a favorite.



### **29. The Lightning Thief: Percy Jackson And The Olympians by Rick Riordan**

During a school trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, one of Percy Jackson's teachers, Mrs. Dodds, turns into a monster and tries to kill him. Percy's mother learns of the attack, so she sends him to Camp Half-Blood, a summer camp for demigods, where she knows he will be safe. Percy discovers at the camp that he is the son of Poseidon, God of the Sea. Percy soon embarks on a quest with his friends, a satyr and the demigod daughter of Athena, to track down Zeus's missing lightning bolt in the realm of Hades. Fans of Greek mythology will enjoy this fast-paced and thrilling fantasy story full of magic, mystery, and adventure.

### **30. The Last Kids On Earth by Max Brallier**

Thirteen-year-old Jack Sullivan lives in a treehouse equipped with rocket launchers, catapults, flatscreen TV, video games, and an unlimited supply of Oreos and Mountain Dew scavenged from abandoned stores after a zombie outbreak hits his hometown. He is then accompanied by his best friend Quint, who loves inventing and experimenting; Dirk, the local bully, and Rover, his pet monster. He and his friends are busy keeping the monsters at bay and Jack trying to find and rescue his crush, June. This action-packed children's illustrated novel features Jack and his friends toughing out the zombie apocalypse in a playful and funny story perfect for zombie and monster fans.



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