Acton Memorial Library Children’s Department

5th Grade Suggested Reading

FICTION

J Fic Ancestor Smith, Cynthia Leitich, ed. Ancestor approved (2021)
Readers can join the fun in this collection of 18 contemporary stories and poems about loving families from various parts of the U.S. and Canada who travel to meet, dance, sing, socialize, and honor Native traditions at an intertribal powwow.

J Fic Avi Avi Gold Rush Girl (2020)
Victoria Blaisdell longs for independence and adventure, and she yearns to accompany her father as he sails west in search of real gold! But it is 1848, and Tory isn't even allowed to go to school, much less travel all the way from Rhode Island to California. Determined to take control of her own destiny, Tory stows away on the ship.

J Fic Blecher Blecher, Jennifer Stick With Me (2020)
Izzy’s best friend seems to be ditching her for the Queen of Mean, Daphne Toll! Twelve-year-old Izzy is no longer best friends with Phoebe. Instead, Phoebe has attached herself to the popular (but mean) Daphne, and Daphne makes a point of excluding Izzy.

J Fic Booraem Booraem, Ellen River Magic (2021)
Magic moves in next door in this hilarious fantasy. Donna's always liked her life by the river but an awful lot of strange things are happening. Kids at school speak of pixies. A new neighbor turns out to be an extremely powerful thunder mage, and Margily, a river dragon, carries her on thunder forays!

J Fic Caletti Caletti, Deb A Flicker of Courage (2020)
The story takes place in a world much like ours, but at the same time not at all like ours, in which the tyrant Vlad Luxor rules over a town with an iron fist. The evil leader also has magic, which he uses to punish anyone who speaks out against him. But in every classic tale with a despicable villain, there must also be a truly noble hero—in this case, four of them! Henry, Apollo, Pirate Girl, and JoJo must be their most brave and clever to break the spell Vlad Luxor has cast on Apollo’s brother, Rocco.

J Fic Chadda Chadda, Sarwat City of the plague god (2021)
Best-selling author Rick Riordan presents a new adventure series based on ancient Mesopotamian mythology. Thirteen-year-old Iraqi American Sikander Aziz must stop the ancient Mesopotamian plague god Nergal from raining destruction and pestilence on New York City.
It’s been a hard year for Maisie Cannon, ever since she tore her ACL and could not keep up with her ballet training. Her blended family is loving and supportive, but Maisie knows that they just can’t understand how hopeless she feels. During an annual midwinter vacation, she realizes that her dreams of being a dancer may not come true. With the help of her family and therapist, Maisie learns that even though life may not work out the way she wants, she can still move forward.

In this series opener, Filomena is thrust into the world of evil fairies and princesses, sorcerers and slayers, where an evil queen drives her ruthless armies to destroy what is left of the Fairy tribes. To save herself and the kingdom of Westphalia, Filomena must find the truth behind the fairytales and set the world back to rights before the cycle of sleep and destruction begins once more.

Yusuf’s family is one of 11 Muslim families in the small town of Frey, Tex., and the Islamophobia, xenophobia, and racism the family has faced have only intensified in the weeks leading up to the 20th anniversary of 9/11. Ethan Grant is Yusuf’s nemesis: he’s a vicious bully. Yusuf tries to keep his head down, but when Ethan accuses him of carrying a bomb in his backpack—actually a micro:bit “virtual cat”--and Yusuf suffers repercussions, he gathers his friends to take on Ethan and his hateful father.

When Bug’s summer routine is shaken up, her entire life changes. It’s the summer of 1987, and all Bug wants to do is go to the beach with her older brother Danny and hang out on the boardwalk. But Danny wants to be with his own friends so Bug is stuck with their neighbor’s nephew, Frankie. Bug’s not too excited about hanging out with a kid she’s never met. But as the summer unfolds, they find themselves learning some important lessons about each other, and the world.

A story of friendship with touches of science fiction, fantasy, and mystery. Max and Josie are best friends attending an exclusive school with a fleet of students known as Whatnots, modern androids capable of flawless human imitation. Max is devastated when Josie seemingly disappears after fifth grade. A bewildered Max sets out to uncover the truth and find his way back to his best friend, but the stakes are higher than he could possibly imagine.

Meet Wick. He’s the son of the Dark Lord, heir to the throne of black and broken glass, and next in line to be the leader of the Grim World. Too bad he’s stuck in Remedial Spell Casting (he can barely even cast the fart-revealer spell), he’s allergic to fire and brimstone, and the bullies at school insist on calling him Dork Lord. Follow Wick through the pages of his journal as he comes up with a genius plan to defeat his foes, achieve greatness . . . and survive Middle Ages School.
J Fic Jones    Jones, Ena
Six Feet Below Zero (2020)
A dead body. A missing will. An evil relative. The good news is, Great Grammy has a plan. The bad news is, she's the dead body. Rosie and Baker are hiding something. Something big. Their great grandmother made them promise to pretend she's alive until they find her missing will and get it in the right hands.

J Fic Kapit    Kapit, Sarah
Get a grip, Vivy Cohen! (2020)
Eleven-year-old Vivy is a girl with a passion for baseball; she wants to be a pitcher more than anything else. Her life changes when a baseball coach scouts her at the park playing with her brother. But Vivy's mother is concerned about her joining the team, mainly because she will be the only child with autism and the only girl. A positive, upbeat, feel-good story about a girl's fight to play the game she loves.

J Fic Kim    Kim, Graci
The Last Fallen Star (2021)
Riley can’t wait to see her sister Hattie get initiated into a powerful lineage of Korean healing witches their family has belonged to for generations. Although Riley is desperate to follow in Hattie's footsteps, she's a saram - without magic. Then Hattie gets an idea: what if the two of them could cast a spell that would allow them to share Hattie’s magic?

J Fic Lane    Lane, Kathleen
Pity Party (2021)
Welcome to Pity Party, where the social anxieties that plague us all are twisted into funny and ultimately reassuring psychological thrills. Come to the party for a grab bag of delightfully dark stories that ultimately offers a life-affirming reminder that there is hope and humor to be found amid our misery.

J Fic Levithan    Levithan, David
The mysterious disappearance of Aidan S. (as told to his brother) (2021)
Eleven-year-old Lucas' big brother, Aidan, has gone missing. No one can find him until, on the sixth evening of his absence, Lucas hears the thump of something falling in the attic. Curious, he investigates and finds Aidan lying on the floor, looking lost. When Lucas asks where he has been, Aidan admits that he's been to a fantasy world with a green sky, blue trees, a silver sun, and animals (including unicorns)!

J Fic Lukoff    Lukoff, Kyle
Too bright to see (2021)
11-year-old Bug, a transgender boy, lives in a haunted house, but the ghosts of long ago never bothered them before this summer. When a ghost begins following Bug and their dreams turn to nightmares, they search for answers about who is haunting them and why. A chilling, suspenseful ghost story!

J Fic Lupica    Lupica, Mike
Triple Threat (2020)
When twelve-year-old Alex makes up her mind to join her middle school's football team, she doesn't expect it to be easy. But she also never anticipated she'd be met with scorn from her exclusively male teammates. Football has always been a source of happiness for Alex, but the guys suck the joy right out of the game for Alex--going out of their way to trip her up during tryouts, and teaming up against her just to watch her fail. Suddenly, Alex is the lowest she's ever felt. But if getting QB is worth it to her, she's going to have to fight for it.
J Fic Mbalia

Mbalia, Kwame

*Tristan Strong punches a hole in the sky (2020)*


J Fic Murdock

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert

*Da Vinci's cat (2021)*

Two unlikely friends--Federico, in sixteenth-century Rome, and Bee, in present-day New Jersey--are linked through an amiable cat, Leonardo Da Vinci’s mysterious wardrobe, and an eerily perfect sketch of Bee. Da Vinci's Cat is a thrilling, time-slip fantasy full of action, mystery, history, art, and friendship--and features one unforgettable cat.

J Fic O'Connor

O'Connor, Barbara

*Halfway to Harmony (2021)*

Walter Tipple is looking for adventure. He keeps having a dream that his big brother, Tank, appears before him and says, "Let's you and me go see my world, little man." But Tank went to the army and never came home, and Walter doesn't know how to see the world without him. Then he meets Posey, the brash new girl from next door, and an eccentric man named Banjo, who's off on an adventure of his own. What follows is a summer of taking chances, becoming braver, and making friends.

J Fic Ott

Ott, Alexander

*Seekers of the Wild Realm (2020)*

Twelve-year-old Bryn has always dreamed of becoming a Seeker, just like her dad. Only the Seekers are allowed to journey from their small village into the fantastical, untamed wilderness of their island known as the Wild Realm. Once there, they obtain magical items for the village and use magic to protect and heal the incredible creatures native to the Realm. When one of the elderly Seekers retires, leaving a vacant position, Bryn knows this may be her chance. There's just one problem: Only boys have ever been Seekers. And the training master makes it clear he will not be training a girl.

J Fic Paulsen

Paulsen, Gary

*Northwind (2022)*

After growing up on fishing boats, orphan Leif is abandoned at a fish camp; when the camp's men become infected with cholera, its leader instructs the 12-year-old to head north to safety in a canoe. Finding himself alone with few supplies in early summer, Leif struggles to survive along shorelines and inlets that teem with bears and whales. As he survives various obstacles, Leif begins to feel at one with nature. Beautifully written, it's classic Paulsen at his best.

J Fic Palacio

Palacio, R. J.

*Pony (2021)*

An enthralling adventure about a boy on a quest to rescue his father, with only a ghost as his companion and a mysterious pony as his guide. They journey together through a scary wood to save Silas' father from a gang of counterfeiters. Along the way, they partner with a cantankerous U.S. Marshall, who is also hot on the trail of the nefarious baddies. This is a rip-roaring adventure story!
Becoming Muhammad Ali (2020)

This fictionalized biography of boxer, activist, and cultural icon Muhammad Ali begins with his early life as Cassius Clay. Alternating narrators tell the story: Lucky, a childhood friend of Cassius's, gives readers a front-seat view of the boxer's young life in the West End of Louisville, Ky.--his supportive working-class parents, his dislike of school, and his experiences with segregation--and his gradual ascent from Golden Gloves hopeful to three-time world heavyweight champion.

Time villains (2021)

A wacky, hilarious, and fast-paced series starter, with the perfect combination of magic, imagination, and adventure. Trouble arises when Javi uses his family's magical antique dining room table to accidentally pull historical guests into the present day...and Blackbeard the Pirate is turning out to be the worst guest of all time!

Seven Clues to Home (2020)

Joy Fonseca is dreading her 13th birthday, dreading being reminded again about her best friend Lukas's senseless death on this day, one year ago. This year, she's decided she's going to finally open the first clue to their annual birthday scavenger hunt Lukas left for her the morning he died, hoping the rest of the clues are still out there.

Windswept (2022)

When children (or Youngers) venture Outside, they are often Windswept, or blown away by the wind, never to be seen again. This was the case of Tag's sisters Iris, Lily, and Rose, when they broke the rules and went to the Outside. Tag, now 13, has never been Outside until the day she receives an invitation to meet Finn and three other boys--they are all ready to journey into the Unknown to find their windswept siblings.

Cece Rios and the desert of souls (2021)

When a powerful desert spirit kidnaps her sister, Cece Rios must learn forbidden magic to get her back. With strong ties to Aztec lore and culture, this story is the first in an enthralling series.

The Mulberry Tree (2020)

Immy and her family have moved to a tiny cottage in England. But their new home comes with one downside: in the backyard, there is an ancient, dark, and fierce-looking mulberry tree. There's a legend that the towering tree steals away girls who live in the cottage on the eve of their eleventh birthday. Of course, Immy thinks this is all ridiculous. But then she starts to hear a strange song in her head...

Barakah Beats (2021)

Twelve-year-old Nimra Sharif has spent her whole life in Islamic school, but now it's time to go to "real school". To fit in, Nimra accepts an unlikely invitation to join the school's popular 8th grade boy band, Barakah Beats. The only problem is, Nimra was taught that music isn't allowed in Islam, and she knows her parents would be disappointed if they found out.
J Fic Soontornvat
Soontornvat, Christina
*The last mapmaker* (2022)
Twelve-year-old Sai secures a spot on a royal ship bound for the south—the direction of a mysterious, shadowy continent and rumored dragons. An engrossing high-seas exploits in search of mythical lands!

J Fic Steiger
Steiger, A.J.
*Cathedral of Bones* (2021)
Simon Frost lives in a curious place, where magic is used by the very best Animists to do wondrous things—like call upon imps, wraiths, and all manner of monsters to right wrongs, deliver justice, and accomplish feats no human could achieve. Simon Frost is not one of those Animists, though he's been trying to become one for years. When a plea arrives from a distant hamlet, preyed upon by an abominable monster, Simon sees the opportunity to finally prove his worth.

J Fic Wolo
Wolo, Mamie
*The kaya girl* (2022)
When Faiza, a Muslim migrant girl from northern Ghana, and Abena, a wealthy doctor's daughter from the south, meet by chance in Accra's largest market, where Faiza works as a porter or kaya girl, they strike up an unlikely and powerful friendship that transcends their social inequities and opens up new worlds to them both.

J FIC YEE
Yee, Lisa
*Maizy Chen's last chance* (2022)
Maizy has never been to Last Chance, Minnesota . . . until now. Her mom’s plan is just to stay for a couple weeks, until her grandfather gets better. But plans change, and as Maizy spends more time in Last Chance and at the Golden Palace—the restaurant that’s been in her family for generations—she makes some important discoveries about family secrets & histories, prejudice and Chinese American immigrants.

J Fic Young
Young, Brian
*Healer of the water monster* (2021)
Nathan, a young Navajo boy from Phoenix, Arizona, goes on an epic hero’s journey. One summer, when he is eleven, Nathan goes to visit his grandma, Nali, at her home on the Navajo reservation. One night, while lost in the nearby desert, Nathan finds someone extraordinary: a Holy Being from the Navajo Creation Story--a Water Monster. With the help of other Navajo Holy Beings, Nathan must save the life of a Water Monster--and comes to realize he's a hero at heart.

GRAPHIC

J Graphic Castellanos
Castellanos, Alexis
*Isla to island* (2022)
Follow the journey of a Pedro Pan child, one of thousands evacuated from Cuba to the United States during the Cuban revolution. When Castro comes to power in Cuba, Marisol's life in Havana turns upside down. Her parents sneak her out of the country in the hope of keeping her safe, and Marisol eventually arrives in New York City. Speaking no English, Marisol must learn to cope alone with a new school, bullies, and her first winter.
J Graphic Craft
Craft, Jerry

*New Kid* (2019)

Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. He soon finds himself torn between two worlds—and not really fitting into either one.

J Graphic Crewes
Crewes, Eleanor

*Lilla the accidental witch* (2021)

Lilla comes from a long line of witches, but she doesn't know this yet! She only knows that she enjoys going to her grandmother's house in Italy. This summer, her grandmother decides it is time to get her into the family business, and so gives her a magical book that teaches her the ways of the witch.

J Graphic Elliott
Elliott, Rachel

*The real Riley Mayes* (2022)

Riley Mayes is having a rough time in fifth grade. Everyone else is squared up—except Riley. Her best friend moved away. All she wants to do is draw, and her grades show it. After Riley despairs that no one understands her goofy sense of humor, her mother challenges her to seek out friends who do get her and promises to sign her up for art classes if she keeps her grades up and stays out of trouble at school. Can she rise to the occasion?

J Graphic Fajardo
Fajardo, Kat

*Miss Quinces* (2022)

Fifteen-year-old Sue is not looking forward to going to Honduras this summer with her family. She would rather be with her friends at Camp Willow, canoeing and hiking. Expecting to spend her time in Honduras bored or with her nose in a manga, she is horrified to find out that her mother had secretly been planning to surprise her with a grand quinceañera, against her wishes.

J Graphic Harper
Harper, Charise Mericle

*Bad sister* (2021)

Meet Charise. She's energetic, helpful, a model pet owner and full of inventions. But she's also a bad sister. When she goes too far and breaks little brother Daniel's tooth, can she redeem herself? Is an accident really an accident if you could have stopped it? But most importantly...what does it mean to be a good sister?

J Graphic Jamieson
Jamieson, Victoria

*When Stars Are Scattered* (2020)

Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, have spent most of their lives in Dadaab, a refugee camp in Kenya. Life is hard there: never enough food, achingly dull, and without access to the medical care Omar knows his nonverbal brother needs. When Omar has the opportunity to go to school, he knows it might be a chance to change their future. Heartbreak, hope, and gentle humor exist together in this novel of a young man who is able to create a sense of family and home in the most difficult of settings.

J Graphic Liu
Liu, Marjorie

*Wingbearer* (2022)

Zuli is extraordinary—she just doesn’t realize it yet. Raised by mystical bird spirits in the branches of the Great Tree, she’s never ventured beyond this safe haven. Until now. When a sinister force threatens the life-giving magic of the tree, Zuli must get to the root of it. So begins an adventure bigger than anything Zuli could've ever imagined—one that will bring her, face-to-face with an ancient dragon, the so-called Witch-Queen, and most surprisingly of all: her true identity.
J Graphic Steinkellner  
*The okay witch (2019)*

With her frizzy hair, her gap teeth, and her lack of friends, 13-year-old Moth Hush doesn't fit in at school. She discovers why she doesn't belong--she's not like everyone else. As her powers activate for the first time, Moth learns that she's from a family of witches!

J Graphic Tarshis  
*I survived the attack of the grizzlies, 1967 (2022)*

No grizzly has ever killed a human in Glacier National Park before... until tonight. Eleven-year-old Melody Vega and her family come to Glacier every year. Mel loves it here. Then Mel comes face-to-face with a mighty grizzly. She knows basic bear safety: Don't turn your back. Don't make any sudden movements. And most importantly: Don't run! Lauren Tarshis’s “I Survived” series comes to vivid life in this graphic novel series.

J Graphic Biography 920 N784  
*Noisemakers: 25 women who raised their voices & changed the world (2020)*

This inspiring graphic biography of 25 women who rocked history and changed the world, from shark scientist Eugenie Clark to entrepreneur Madam C.J. Walker to reporter Nelly Bly to author Mary Shelley.

**BIOGRAPHY**

J BIO CLEMENTE, R.  
*Roberto Clemente (2022)*

Meet Puerto Rican Baseball Hall of Famer Roberto Clemente! Once just a kid from Puerto Rico, who loved to play baseball on the streets of his hometown with friends and family. As a right fielder, Roberto played eighteen seasons with Major League Baseball, but his life was tragically cut short when a plane he chartered to bring earthquake relief supplies to Nicaragua crashed.

J Biography Crazy Horse  
*Crazy Horse and Custer: born enemies (2021)*

In this action-packed double biography, S. D. Nelson draws fascinating parallels between Crazy Horse and Custer, whose lives were intertwined. Lakota chief Crazy Horse helped lead his people's resistance against the white man's invasion of the northern Great Plains. One of the leaders of the US military forces was Army Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer. These men were alike in many ways, yet they often collided in deadly rivalry.

J BIO MEITNER, L.  
*Hidden powers (2022)*

This account of physicist Meitner's life: her youth in Austria, the struggle to find employment in her field, the difficulties of living in Berlin during Hitler's rise to power, and the satisfaction she found in her work, which led to the discovery of nuclear fission and altered the course of history.

J BIO MENDES, C.  
*Forest fighter: the story of Chico Mendes (2022)*

This inspiring and beautifully illustrated biography tells the important story of Chico Mendes, who led the fight to protect the Amazon rainforest and demanded fair treatment for the people whose livelihoods depended on it.
J BIO THUNBERG, G.  Turner, Tracey  
*Greta Thunberg (2022)*
Meet the young activist who’s standing up to climate change! Before she was a well-known environmentalist activist, Greta was just a girl living in Stockholm, Sweden. At the age of eight, Greta's world was turned upside down when she learned of global warming. As a young adult, Greta continues to fight for climate change--and continues to prove that you're never too young to make a difference!

J Biography 920 M122  McCallum, A.  
*Thrill Seekers: 15 Remarkable Women in Extreme Sports (2021)*
Highlighting a diverse selection of women in extreme and unique sports, this book shares the stories of bold and daring thrill-seekers. What is the allure of the extreme? Who are the women who seek out and excel at sports outside the conventional, such as cave diving, wingsuit flying, or Formula 1 racing?

**NONFICTION**

J 001.942 FLE  Fleming, Candace  
*Crash from outer space (2022)*
Unravel the mystery of flying saucers, alien beings and Roswell! In 1947, a field in Roswell, New Mexico was disturbed by a strange crash. Some say the bodies of extraterrestrial beings were strewn across the ground, that a UFO had crashed there, and that the government was covering up the evidence in a massive conspiracy. But what really happened at Roswell?

J 304.2 GRE  Greenfield, Rob  
*Be the Change (2022)*
An inspiring, lively guide to sustainable living from YouTube star and zero-waste activist Rob Greenfield featuring kid-friendly information on the highly popular movement towards zero-waste living, as well as information on the climate crisis and solutions.

J 363.738 B415  Beer, J.  
*Kids Vs Plastic (2020)*
It's in your toothbrush ... your clothes ... your earbuds. Chances are, you're touching it right now. We're talking about plastic! Plastic is absolutely everywhere and in practically everything we touch, from pens to water bottles to sports equipment. And a lot of it is used once and then thrown away. Unfortunately, it takes a REALLY long time for plastic to break down and it can be harmful to our environment, especially wildlife. But why and when did we start using it in so much stuff? And how do we stop?

J 500.9 G  Grandin, Temple  
*The Outdoor Scientist (2021)*
Temple Grandin’s new book is about exploring the world around us, asking questions, and making sense of what we see—with 40 fun outdoor activities, which kids can enjoy all year round!

J 509 BAL  Ball, Leo  
*Timelines of science (2022)*
Smithsonian’s Timelines of Science takes you on an astonishing journey through history, showing how dedication, disasters, and eureka moments have brought us antibiotics, electricity, space exploration, and so much more! Packed with fascinating facts, amazing images, and some seriously staggering science.
J 520 W177 Walker, Sally M.  
*Out of This World: Star-Studded Haiku (2022)*

A poetic tour of the galaxy! This stunning meeting of poetry and luminous artwork transports us out of the bounds of Earth, past a lunar eclipse, beyond the orbiting planets, and into glowing galaxies and twinkling constellations.

J 591.5 COU Couch, Christina  
*Detector Dogs, Dynamite Dolphins, and More Animals with Super Sensory Powers (2022)*

From echolocation to electroreception, find out about the super senses animals use to navigate their world. As you learn about these amazing animals, you will get a chance to test out your own senses with hands-on activities.

J 612.82 B753 Gill, Leanne Boucher  
*Big brain book (2021)*

Readers are welcomed to the Lobe Labs and Dr. Brain activities in this brightly illustrated, highly engaging book that uses science to answer interesting questions that kids have about the brain and human behavior.

J 629.45 O89 Ottaviani, Jim  
*Astronauts: Women On The Final Frontier (2020)*

In the graphic novel, Jim Ottaviani and illustrator Maris Wicks capture the great humor and incredible drive of Mary Cleave, Valentina Tereshkova, and the first women in space.

J 794.8 Fortnite Gregory, J.  
*The Making of Fortnite (2020)*

With hundreds of millions of players around the world, Fortnite is the video game sensation that has taken the world by storm. Its unique design combines the construction and problem solving of games like Minecraft with competitive online battles. In this book, readers will learn all about the creation of this incredible game, from how it was first conceived to how its developers are continuing to tweak and improve it today.

J 910.453 D339 Delargy Flora  
*Rescuing Titanic (2021)*

Learn about what happened after the *Titanic* went down. While many readers may know the tragic history of the *Titanic*, few will know the important part the RMS *Carpathia* played in the saga—until now.

J 910.2 T536 Thuras, Dylan  
*Atlas Obscura explorer’s guide for the world’s most adventurous kid (2019)*

A thrilling expedition to 100 of the most surprising, mysterious, and weird-but-true places on earth. For curious kids, this is the chance to embark on the journey of a lifetime--and see how faraway countries have more in common than you might expect!

J 998.9 B265 Barone, Rebecca  
*Race to the bottom of the Earth: surviving Antarctica (2021)*

This exciting account relates four of the most perilous feats of exploration ever attempted: the early twentieth-century race to the South Pole, which pitted Robert Scott of England against Norwegian Roald Amundsen, and the twenty-first-century contest between American Colin O’Brady and Louis Rudd of England to see who would be the first to achieve a solo crossing of Antarctica.