

**SUMMER READING LIST 2021**  
**GRADES 3 & 4**

*All book summaries are written by committee members or provided by the publishers.*

*Any available unabridged edition of a title is acceptable.*

- Alexander, Kwame. ***Out of Wonder: Poems Celebrating Poets***. Candlewick, 2017. From Maya Angelou to Naomi Shihab Nye, Robert Frost to Walter Dean Myers – this multicultural collection of original poems celebrates renowned poets from across the globe and across centuries of shared stories.
- Applegate, Katherine. ***Endling: The Last***. Harper, 2018. Byx, believed to be the last dairne, goes on a quest to search for more of her species and is joined by various allies as they uncover many secrets in this exciting series opener. *Series*
- Arnold, Elana K. ***A Boy Called Bat***. Walden Pond Press, 2017. When his veterinarian mom brings home a stray baby skunk that needs rehabilitation before it can be placed in a wild animal shelter, Bat, who has autism, resolves to prove that he is up to the challenge of caring for the skunk permanently.
- Aston, Dianna Hutts. ***A Beetle Is Shy***. Chronicle Books, 2016. From flea beetles to bombardier beetles, an incredible variety of these beloved bugs are showcased in this carefully researched, visually striking book that is poetic in voice and elegant in design, perfect for sparking children's imaginations.
- Barton, Chris. ***What Do You Do with a Voice Like That?*** Beach Lane Books, 2018. A picture book biography about the life of Houston native Barbara Jordan, who was best known for her work as a lawyer, politician and civil rights leader.
- Becker, Helaine. ***Counting on Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Saved Apollo 13***. Holt, 2018. From Katherine's early beginnings as a gifted student to her heroic accomplishments as a prominent mathematician at NASA, this is the story of a groundbreaking American woman who not only calculated the course of moon landings but, in turn, saved lives and made enormous contributions to history.
- Boothby, Ian. ***Sparks!*** Graphix, 2018. Two cats, August and Charlie, wear a dog suit and attempt to save humans while their arch nemesis, Princess, tries to conquer the world. *Graphic novel*
- Brooks, Molly. ***Sanity & Tallulah***. Hyperion, 2018. In this rollicking graphic novel, Sanity and Tallulah, who live in a space station, search the galaxy for Sanity's three-headed kitten. *Graphic novel*
- Brown, Don. ***Older Than Dirt: A Wild but True History of Earth***. Houghton Mifflin, 2017. In this one-of-a-kind, wild, but true history of Earth, Sibert Honor medalist Don Brown takes on big concepts with humor and ease.
- Brown, Jeffrey. ***Lucy and Andy Neanderthal***. Crown, 2016. Lucy and her brother Andy, two Neanderthal siblings living 40,000 years ago, take on a wandering baby sibling, bossy teens, cave paintings and a mammoth hunt, but the real adventure begins when they encounter a group of humans. *Series*

- Bryan, Ashley. ***Freedom Over Me: Eleven Slaves, Their Lives and Dreams Brought to Life.*** Atheneum, 2016. Using original slave auction and plantation estate documents and his own bold and vivid illustrations, the author creatively contrasts the monetary value of a slave with the priceless value of life experiences and dreams that a slave owner could never take away.
- Cleary, Beverly. ***Beezus and Ramona.*** HarperTrophy, 2006. Four-year old Ramona has an imagination that makes her a menace to everyone around her, particularly her older sister, Beezus. *Series*
- Clements, Andrew. ***The Losers Club.*** Random House, 2017. Alec, a sixth grade bookworm always in trouble for reading instead of listening and participating in class, starts a book club solely to have a place to read and discovers that real life, although messy, can be as exciting as the stories in his favorite books.
- Cline-Ransome, Lesa. ***Before She Was Harriet: The Story of Harriet Tubman.*** Holiday House, 2018. An evocative poem and opulent watercolors come together to honor a woman of humble origins whose courage and compassion make her larger than life.
- Cline-Ransome, Lesa. ***Finding Langston.*** Holiday House, 2018. Discovering a book of Langston Hughes' poetry in the library helps Langston cope with the loss of his mother, relocating from Alabama to Chicago as part of the Great Migration, and being bullied.
- Colfer, Chris. ***The Land of Stories: The Wishing Spell.*** Little, Brown, 2012. Through the mysterious power of a cherished book of stories, twins Alex and Conner leave their world behind and find themselves in a foreign land full of wonder and magic where they come face-to-face with the fairy-tale characters they grew up reading about. *Series*
- Creech, Susan. ***Saving Winslow.*** HarperCollins, 2018. When Louis' dad brings home a scrawny and sickly newborn donkey, their connection is instant; while the adults around him say that Winslow might not survive, Louis finds the faith and courage to believe in his donkey and himself.
- Dahl, Roald. ***Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.*** Puffin, first published in 1964. Delicious and mysterious adventures await our hero, Charlie Bucket, and four other lucky winners of the Golden Ticket contest on their private tour of Willy Wonka's infamous Chocolate Factory.
- Davies, Jacqueline. ***The Lemonade War.*** Houghton Mifflin, 2007. Evan and his younger sister, Jessie, react very differently to the news that they will be in the same class for fourth grade, and as the end of summer approaches, they battle it out through lemonade stands, each trying to be the first to earn 100 dollars. *Series*

- Divakaruni, Chitra Banerjee. ***Grandma and the Great Gourd: A Bengali Folk Tale***. Roaring Brook, 2013. On her way to visit her daughter on the other side of the jungle, Grandma encounters a hungry fox, bear, and tiger, and although she convinces them to wait for her return trip, she still must find a way to outwit them all.
- Eggers, Dave. ***Her Right Foot***. Chronicle Books, 2017. This beautifully illustrated book looks at the significance of the Statue of Liberty's right foot.
- Engle, Margarita. ***Dancing Hands: How Teresa Carreño Played the Piano for President Lincoln***. Atheneum, 2019. Teresa was a child prodigy at the piano, and as her fame spread in the United States after her family emigrated from Venezuela, she received an invitation from President Lincoln to play at the White House. *Pura Belpré Illustrator Award 2020*
- Engle, Margarita. ***The Flying Girl: How Aida de Acosta Learned to Soar***. Atheneum, 2018. This beautifully illustrated picture book tells the inspirational story of Aida de Acosta, the first woman to fly a motorized aircraft.
- Eszterhas, Suzi. ***Sea Otter Rescue***. Owlkids, 2016. A visit to the Alaska SeaLife Center explores, through engaging text and striking photography, how sea otters have become orphaned or hurt by a range of threats and how the dedicated teams at the clinic help them heal and rehabilitate.
- Farley, Walter. ***The Black Stallion***. Random House, first published in 1941. Set in the 1940s, a young boy and a wild stallion build a relationship of trust and a lifelong friendship after being shipwrecked and surviving on a deserted island together.
- Fleming, Candace. ***Ben Franklin's in My Bathroom***. Schwartz & Wade, 2017. When ten-year-old Nolan and his little sister, Olive, find Ben Franklin in their kitchen, they do their best to guide Ben through the new world he helped form. *Series*
- Fleming, Candace. ***Giant Squid***. Roaring Brook, 2016. A nonfiction picture book exploring the mysterious life of the elusive giant squid.
- Fleming, Candace. ***Strongheart: Wonder Dog of the Silver Screen***. Schwartz & Wade, 2018. In the 1920s, movie director Larry Trimble travels to Berlin where he meets Etzel, an intelligent but fierce German Shepherd, who then returns to Hollywood with Larry and is transformed into the silent screen movie star, Strongheart, with Larry's love and care. Based on real events.
- Florence, Debbi Michiko. ***Jasmine Toguchi, Mochi Queen***. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017. Eager to do something her big sister has not done first, Jasmine Toguchi, eight, decides to pound mochi with the men and boys when her family gets together for New Year's. *Series*

- Fulton, Kristen. ***Flight for Freedom: The Wetzel Family's Daring Escape from East Germany.*** Chronicle Books, 2020. Set in 1979, this is the true story of Peter Wetzel and his family who made the daring escape over the Berlin Wall in their handmade hot air balloon, succeeding where others had failed, making freedom a reality and inspiring hope for their fellow East Berliners.
- Gibbs, Stuart. ***Spaced Out.*** Simon & Schuster, 2016. In 2041 twelve-year-old Dashiell Gibson is a resident of Moon Base Alpha, and at the moment he is faced with a number of problems: coping with the nasty Sjoberg twins, finding out how the commander of the base has managed to disappear from a facility no bigger than a soccer field, and dealing with the alien Zan who communicates with him telepathically from afar--and who is hiding a secret which may threaten the whole Earth. *Series*
- Giovanni, Nikki. ***I am Loved.*** Atheneum, 2018. This collection of poems and art celebrates individuality, personal histories, diversity, and the universal and powerful value of love on all levels for everyone.
- Grabenstein, Chris. ***Home Sweet Motel: Welcome to Wonderland.*** Random House, 2016. P.T. and his friend Gloria must solve a mystery at the world's wackiest motel: The Wonderland. *Series*
- Gratz, Alan. ***Ban This Book.*** Tom Doherty, 2017. Amy Anne, who never gets in trouble, finds herself in the battle of a lifetime when a concerned parent in her school has her favorite book taken off the library shelf.
- Griffiths, Andy. ***The 13-Story Treehouse.*** Feiwel and Friends, 2013. Under pressure by their publisher to finish their next book, two young authors graphically describe all the extraordinary distractions they face living in their 13-storytreehouse. *Series*
- Hale, Nathan. ***Alamo All-Stars.*** Amulet Books, 2016. Hale recounts the story of the Alamo, featuring the exploits of historical legends Jim Bowie and Davy Crockett. *Graphic novel series*
- Harper, Charise Mericle. ***The Amazing Crafty Cat.*** First Second, 2017. A new graphic novel trilogy for elementary-age readers about a little girl who can craft her way out of any situation. Each volume includes fun and simple instructions for do-it-yourself crafting activities. *Series*
- Harris, Chris. ***I'm Just No Good at Rhyming and Other Nonsense for Mischievous Kids and Immature Grown-ups.*** Little, Brown, 2017. In the vein of Shel Silverstein, this collection of poems is filled with humor, nonsensical language, rhyme, wordplay, and even codes to crack.
- Henry, Marguerite. ***Misty of Chincoteague.*** Aladdin, first published in 1947. Paul's and his sister Maureen's determination to own a pony from the herd on Chincoteague Island, Virginia, is greatly increased when the Phantom and her colt are among the ponies rounded up for the yearly auction.

- Holub, Joan. ***Zeus and the Thunderbolt of Doom***. Aladdin, 2012. When ten-year-old Zeus is kidnapped, he discovers he can defend himself with a magic thunderbolt. *Series*
- Humphrey, Anna. ***Megabat***. Tundra Books, 2018. When Daniel moves into a new house in a new town, he thinks it might be haunted, but he is surprised to find a new friend who happens to be a fruit bat in need of some help to make the long journey back home. *Series*
- Jenkins, Steve. ***The Frog Book***. Harcourt, 2019. An introduction to an assortment of the world's frog species, discussing a myriad of topics such as their colors, shapes and sizes to their various habitats to how they find food, escape danger and attract a mate.
- Johannes, Shelley. ***Beatrice Zinker, Upside Down Thinker***. Disney-Hyperion, 2017. When third grade begins, Beatrice fears she is losing her best friend, so she uses her topsy-turvy ways of thinking to get things looking up. *Series*
- Khan, Hena. ***Power Forward***. Salaam Press, 2018. Fourth-grader Zayd yearns to play basketball on the Gold Team, but when he skips orchestra rehearsals to practice, his parents forbid anything basketball related, and tryouts are coming soon. *Series*
- Krull, Kathleen. ***Fly High, John Glenn: The Story of an American Hero***. Harper, 2020. John Glenn was the first American astronaut to orbit Earth; he was also a devoted family man, a U.S. Senator, and a national hero, who for 95 years never lost his love of flying.
- Lamothe, Matt. ***This Is How We Do It: One Day in the Lives of Seven Kids from Around the World***. Chronicle Books, 2017. An illustrated take on how seven real kids from different countries go about a typical day.
- Latham, Irene, and Charles Waters. ***Can I Touch Your Hair?: Poems of Race, Mistakes, and Friendship***. Carolrhoda Books, 2018. Two students, one black and one white, learn to communicate, relate, and celebrate differences in this collection of poems in conversation.
- MacLachlan, Patricia. ***The Truth of Me: About a Boy, His Grandmother, and a Very Good Dog***. Katherine Tegen, 2013. Robbie and his dog, Ellie, spend the summer at his grandmother Maddy's house, where Robbie learns many things about his emotionally distant parents and himself.
- McCarthy, Meghan. ***The Wildest Race Ever: The Story of the 1904 Olympic Marathon***. Simon & Schuster, 2016. The exciting and bizarre true story of the 1904 Olympic marathon, which took place at the St. Louis World's Fair.
- McKissack, Patricia C. ***What is Given from the Heart***. Schwartz & Wade, 2019. James Otis and his family live in poverty, yet his mother insists they need to help seven-year-old Sarah, whose family lost everything in a fire.

- McMullan, Kate. ***Have a Hot Time, Hades!*** Stone Arch Books, 2012. In this story with a modern twist, Hades tells his own version of how he became King of the Underworld and Zeus became King of the Gods. *Series*
- McNamara, Margaret. ***The Dinosaur Expert.*** Schwartz & Wade, 2018. When a classmate tells Kimmy, who dreams of being a paleontologist, that “girls aren’t scientists,” their teacher Mr. Tiffin teaches them otherwise.
- Messner, Kate. ***The Next President: The Unexpected Beginnings and Unwritten Future of America’s Presidents.*** Chronicle Books, 2020. Explore our nation’s presidents, learn what they were doing before they were president, and imagine what the next president could be doing right now – it could be you!
- Newman, Lesléa. ***Gittel’s Journey: An Ellis Island Story.*** Abrams Books, 2019. When it’s time for nine-year-old Gittel and her mother to leave their homeland and immigrate to America to start a new life, a health inspection forces Gittel to find the courage within to leave her family behind; based on true stories told by the author’s grandmother.
- Nobleman, Marc Tyler. ***Thirty Minutes Over Oregon: A Japanese Pilot’s World War II Story.*** Houghton Mifflin, 2018. In this important and moving true story of reconciliation after war, beautifully illustrated in watercolor, a Japanese pilot bombs the continental U.S. during WWII—the only enemy ever to do so—and comes back 20 years later to apologize.
- Nolan, Janet. ***Seven and a Half Tons of Steel.*** Peachtree, 2016. This powerful story reveals how seven and a half tons of steel that had once been a beam in the World Trade Center became a navy ship’s bow showing how something remarkable can emerge from a devastating event.
- Patent, Dorothy Hinshaw. ***Dogs on Duty: Soldiers’ Best Friends on the Battlefield and Beyond.*** Walker, 2012. Explains the many ways that dogs are used in the military and describes how they are cared for and trained.
- Patterson, James. ***Jacky Ha-Ha.*** Little, Brown, 2016. Twelve-year-old Jacky “Ha-Ha” Hart is a class clown with a penchant for pranking, and when she’s required to act in the school play to appease her frustrated teachers, she must conquer her stutter. *Series*
- Patterson, James and Kwame Alexander. ***Becoming Muhammad Ali.*** Little, Brown, 2020. This biographical novel tells the story of Cassius Clay, the determined boy who would one day become Muhammad Ali, one of the greatest boxers of all time.
- Pearson, Luke. ***Hilda and the Stone Forest.*** Nobrow, 2016. Hilda is hardly at home anymore, seeking days filled with excitement, and her mother can’t help but worry... In a moment of tension, the pair find themselves flung far away into a mysterious, dark forest--the land of the trolls! Can they work together to escape the clutches of these sinister stone creatures? *Graphic novel series*

- Phelan, Matt. ***Knights vs. Dinosaurs.*** Greenwillow, 2018. Merlin sends the Knights of the Round Table on their most exciting and dangerous quest to date -- to face dinosaurs! *Series*
- Pipe, Jim. ***You Wouldn't Want to Be Cleopatra! : An Egyptian Ruler You'd Rather Not Be.*** Franklin Watts, 2017. Humorous illustrations and facts combine to provide a portrait of what life might be like as Cleopatra in Ancient Egypt. *Series*
- Pizzoli, Greg. ***The Quest For Z: The True Story of Explorer Percy Fawcett and a Lost City in the Amazon.*** Viking, 2017. The true story of the British explorer Percy Fawcett, an adventurer who set out on a doomed expedition to find a lost city in the Amazon jungle.
- Raczka, Bob. ***Wet Cement: A Mix of Concrete Poems.*** Roaring Brook, 2016. A collection of concrete poetry written and shaped in surprising ways.
- Robinson, Sharon. ***The Hero Two Doors Down: Based on the True Story of Friendship Between a Boy and a Baseball Legend.*** Scholastic, 2017. Eight- year-old Steve Satlow is thrilled when Jackie Robinson moves into his Jewish neighborhood in Brooklyn in 1948, although many of his neighbors are not, and when Steve actually meets his hero he is even more excited--and worried that a misunderstanding over a Christmas tree could damage his new friendship.
- Rockliff, Mara. ***Anything But Ordinary Addie: The True Story of Adelaide Herrmann, Queen of Magic.*** Candlewick, 2016. Traces the story of dancer- turned-magician's assistant Adelaide Herrmann, placing her achievements against a backdrop of period conventions about women in the arts and her determination to continue her work after the death of her husband.
- Russell-Brown, Katheryn. ***A Voice Named Aretha.*** Bloomsbury, 2020. From a shy girl with a big voice to the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin touched millions acrossgenerations, not only with her songs but with her exemplary life, inspiring hope, respect, and freedom.
- Ruurs, Margriet. ***The Elephant Keeper: Caring for Orphaned Elephants in Zambia.*** Kids Can Press, 2017. Documents the story of a devoted advocate for elephant conservation who, as a child in Zambia, rescued a baby elephant and reevaluated his beliefs about elephants as violent predators while visiting a wildlife sanctuary.
- Sachar, Louis. ***Wayside School Beneath the Cloud of Doom.*** Harper, 2020. The kids and teachers of Wayside School are back, but the looming Cloud of Doom has them all in a tizzy as they race to collect toenail clippings and prepare for the Ultimate Test. *Series*
- Stabler, David. ***Kid Athletes: True Tales of Childhood from Sports Legends.*** Quirk Books, 2015. Hilarious childhood biographies and full-color illustrations show how Tiger Woods, Gabby Douglas, Bruce Lee, Billie Jean King, and other budding sports champions faced kid-sized challenges growing up. *Series*

- Stanley, Diane. ***Ada Lovelace, Poet of Science: The First Computer Programmer.*** Simon & Schuster, 2016. This is the story of how an important but little-known woman – a brilliant scientist and mathematician - envisioned the computer-driven world we know today.
- Stone, Tanya Lee. ***Pass Go and Collect \$200: The Real Story of How Monopoly Was Invented.*** Holt, 2018. This exciting nonfiction picture book tells the bold and fascinating story behind one of the world's most beloved board games.
- Tarshis, Lauren. ***I Survived the Hindenburg Disaster, 1937.*** Scholastic, 2016. Eleven-year-old Hugo, his parents, and his sister Gertie are making the thrilling four thousand mile journey across the Atlantic in a zeppelin as big as the Titanic when disaster strikes and fire consumes the ship. *Series*
- Tavares, Matt. ***Crossing Niagara: The Death-Defying Tightrope Adventures of the Great Blondin.*** Candlewick, 2016. An illustrated account of the daredevil of Niagara Falls, the Great Blondin, who walked from America to Canada across the Niagara River on a rope.
- Temple, Bob. ***The Golden Age of Pirates: An Interactive History Adventure.*** Capstone, 2016. Describes the people and events of the Golden Age of Piracy. The reader's choices reveal historical details from the perspectives of a pirate, a navy sailor, and a merchant ship crewmember. *Series*
- Tonatiuh, Duncan. ***Soldier for Equality: José de la Luz Sáenz and the Great War.*** Abrams Books, 2019. Sáenz, a Mexican-American World War I war hero, fought for equality and created the oldest Latino civil rights organization in the United States.
- Turk, Evan. ***You are Home: An Ode to the National Parks.*** Atheneum, 2019. The beauty of all living things, animals, plants, and people is celebrated in rich verse and art in a coast to coast tour of the United States, emphasizing the precious nature of all life and experience.
- Vande Velde, Vivian. ***Three Good Deeds.*** Houghton Mifflin, 2005. Caught stealing some goose eggs from a witch, Howard is cursed for his heartlessness and turned into a goose himself, and he can only become human again by performing three good deeds.
- Vernick, Audrey. ***The Kid from Diamond Street: The Extraordinary Story of Baseball Legend Edith Houghton.*** Clarion, 2016. A historical picture book about Edith Houghton, a female baseball phenomenon who joined the professional women's team the Bobbies in 1922 at the age of 10.
- Walker, Sally M. ***Earth Verse: Haiku from the Ground Up.*** Candlewick, 2018. A collection of haiku poems that celebrates the planet Earth, including such topics as rocks, earthquakes, fossils, volcanoes and the water cycle. Factual information about each topic is included.



- Wallace, Sandra Neil. ***Between the Lines: How Ernie Barnes Went from the Football Field to the Art Gallery***. Simon & Schuster, 2018. The true story of NFL star Ernie Barnes, a man who pursued his lifelong dream of being an artist after his football career ended.
- Wang, Jen. ***Stargazing***. First Second, 2019. "Growing up in the same Chinese- American suburb, perfectionist Christine and artistic, confident, impulsive Moon become unlikely best friends, whose friendship is tested by jealousy, social expectations, and illness." *Graphic novel*
- Watson, Renée. ***Ways to Make Sunshine***. Bloomsbury, 2020. Ten-year old Ryan is learning that life means lots of changes, like moving, her father's new job, a frustrating older brother, and her best friend moving away, but Ryan makes sunshine out of it all, shining it back on those around her.
- Weeks, Sarah, and Gita Varadarajan. ***Save Me a Seat***. Scholastic, 2016. Ravi has just moved to the United States from India and has always been at the top of his class. Joe has lived in the same town his whole life and has learning problems. When their lives intersect in the first week of fifth grade, they are brought together by a common enemy (the biggest bully in their class) and the need to take control of their lives.
- Winick, Judd. ***Hilo: The Boy Who Crashed to Earth***. Random House, 2016. When a mysterious boy falls from the sky, friends D.J. and Gina must discover the secrets of his identity and help him save the world. *Series*
- Winter, Jonah. ***Lillian's Right to Vote: A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965***. Schwartz & Wade, 2015. As an elderly woman, Lillian recalls that her great-great-grandparents were sold as slaves in front of the courthouse where only rich white men were allowed to vote, then remembers the long fight that led to her right--and determination--to cast her ballot since the Voting Rights Act gave every American the right to vote.
- Woods, Brenda. ***Zoe in Wonderland***. Nancy Paulsen, 2016. Because Zoe has such an active imagination, she does not think that her real life will ever be as interesting as her make-believe life.
- Yep, Laurence. ***A Dragon's Guide to the Care and Feeding of Humans***. Crown, 2015. Feisty dragon Miss Drake's new pet human, precocious ten-year-old Winnie, not only thinks Miss Drake is her pet, she accidentally brings to life her "sketchlings" of mysterious and fantastic creatures hidden in San Francisco, causing mayhem among its residents. *Series*

