

Summer Reading Book List for students entering grades 5  
Annotations from Amazon.com (\*challenging title)

Swindle by Gordon Korman

After a mean collector named Swindle cons him out of his most valuable baseball card, Griffin Bing must put together a band of misfits to break into Swindle's compound and recapture the card. There are many things standing in their way -- a menacing guard dog, a high-tech security system, a very secret hiding place, and their inability to drive -- but Griffin and his team are going to get back what's rightfully his . . . even if hijinks ensue.

\*Theodore Boone, Kid Lawyer by John Grisham

In the small city of Strattenburg, there are many lawyers, and though he's only thirteen years old, Theo Boone thinks he's one of them. Theo knows every judge, policeman, court clerk—and a lot about the law. He dreams of being a great trial lawyer, of a life in the courtroom.

But Theo finds himself in court much sooner than expected. Because he knows so much—maybe too much—he is suddenly dragged into the middle of a sensational murder trial. A cold-blooded killer is about to go free, and only Theo knows the truth. The stakes are high, but Theo won't stop until justice is served

The Lost Hero by Rick Riordan

Jason has a problem. He doesn't remember anything before waking up on a school bus holding hands with a girl. Apparently she's his girlfriend Piper, his best friend is a kid named Leo, and they're all students in the Wilderness School, a boarding school for "bad kids." What he did to end up here, Jason has no idea—except that everything seems very wrong.

11 Birthdays by Wendy Mass

It's Amanda's 11th birthday and she is super excited---after all, 11 is so different from 10. But from the start, everything goes wrong. The worst part of it all is that she and her best friend, Leo, with whom she's shared every birthday, are on the outs and this will be the first birthday they haven't shared together. When Amanda turns in for the night, glad to have her birthday behind her, she wakes up happy for a new day. Or is it? Her birthday seems to be repeating itself. What is going on?! And how can she fix it? Only time, friendship, and a little luck will tell. . .

\*Iron Thunder by Avi

When his father is killed fighting for the Union in the War Between the States, thirteen-year-old Tom Carroll must take a job to help support his family. He manages to find work at a bustling ironworks in his hometown of Brooklyn, New York, where dozens of men are frantically pounding together the strangest ship Tom has ever seen. A ship made of *iron*.

Lawn Boy by Gary Paulsen

One day I was 12 years old and broke. Then Grandma gave me Grandpa's old riding lawnmower. I set out to mow some lawns. More people wanted me to mow their lawns. And more and more. . . One client was Arnold the stockbroker, who offered to teach me about "the beauty of capitalism. Supply and Demand. Diversify labor. Distribute the wealth." "Wealth?" I said. "It's groovy, man," said Arnold.

Mr. Blue Jeans: A Story about Levi Strauss by Maryann N. Weidt and Lydia M. Anderson

Traces the life of the immigrant Jewish peddler who went on to found Levi Strauss & Co., the world's first and largest manufacturer of denim jeans.

The Witches by Roald Dahl

This is not a fairy tale. This is about *real* witches. Grandmamma loves to tell about witches. Real witches are the most dangerous of all living creatures on earth. There's nothing they hate so much as children, and they work all kinds of terrifying spells to get rid of them. Her grandson listens closely to Grandmamma's stories—but nothing can prepare him for the day he comes face-to-face with The Grand High Witch herself!

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\*The Phantom Tollbooth by Norton Juster

For Milo, everything's a bore. When a tollbooth mysteriously appears in his room, he drives through only because he's got nothing better to do. But on the other side, things seem different. Milo visits the Island of Conclusions (you get there by jumping), learns about time from a ticking watchdog named Tock, and even embarks on a quest to rescue Rhyme and Reason! Somewhere along the way, Milo realizes something astonishing. Life is far from dull. In fact, it's exciting beyond his wildest dreams. . . .

We are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball by Kadir Nelson

The story of Negro League baseball is the story of gifted athletes and determined owners; of racial discrimination and international sportsmanship; of fortunes won and lost; of triumphs and defeats on and off the field. It is a perfect mirror for the social and political history of black America in the first half of the twentieth century. But most of all, the story of the Negro Leagues is about hundreds of unsung heroes who overcame segregation, hatred, terrible conditions, and low pay to do the one thing they loved more than anything else in the world: play ball.

The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate

Having spent twenty-seven years behind the glass walls of his enclosure in a shopping mall, Ivan has grown accustomed to humans watching him. He hardly ever thinks about his life in the jungle. Instead, Ivan occupies himself with television, his friends Stella and Bob, and painting. But when he meets Ruby, a baby elephant taken from the wild, he is forced to see their home, and his art, through new eyes.

Trapped By the Ice by Michael McCurdy

Describes the events of the 1914 Shackleton Antarctic expedition when, after being trapped in a frozen sea for nine months, the expedition ship, the Endurance, was finally crushed and Shackleton and his men made the very long and perilous journey across ice and stormy seas to reach inhabited land.

Ben and Me by Robert Lawson

Ever wonder where inventors get their ideas? As it turns out, the great inventor Benjamin Franklin got his best ideas from a mouse named Amos! Funny, interesting and wise, this classic tale has been a favorite for generations. Once you've met Amos and read his account, you'll never think of Ben Franklin-or American history-quite the same way. Explore this historical time period even further in this new edition of award-winning author Robert Lawson's classic tale, with additional bonus material, including a map of Ben Franklin's travels!

Ungifted by Gordon Korman

When Donovan Curtis pulls a major prank at his middle school, he thinks he's finally gone too far. But thanks to a mix-up by one of the administrators, instead of getting in trouble, Donovan is sent to the Academy of Scholastic Distinction, a special program for gifted and talented students.

Although it wasn't exactly what Donovan had intended, the ASD couldn't be a more perfectly unexpected hideout for someone like him. But as the students and teachers of ASD grow to realize that Donovan may not be good at math or science (or just about anything), he shows that his *gifts* may be exactly what the ASD students never knew they needed.

Smile by Raina Telgemeier

Raina just wants to be a normal sixth grader. But one night after Girl Scouts she trips and falls, severely injuring her two front teeth. What follows is a long and frustrating journey with on-again, off-again braces, surgery, embarrassing headgear, and even a retainer with fake teeth attached. And on top of all that, there's still more to deal with: a major earthquake, boy confusion, and friends who turn out to be not so friendly.