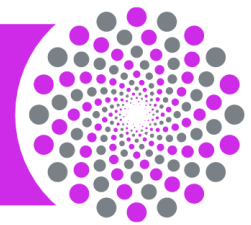


❖ 4th & 5th Grade ❖

Best Books of 2021



We aim to provide high quality lists featuring books of different genres, interests, maturity levels, and content for children & teens. You and your parents/guardians are the best judge of what's appropriate for you.

Best Books lists from previous years may be obtained by request at the Youth Services desk.

***Additional formats available from other libraries and/or downloadable from OverDrive/Libby.**

Ahmed, Samira – *Amira & Hamza: The War to Save the Worlds*

+Ahmed, Fiction; +Ahm, Digital Audio Players*

A brother and sister must prevent a civil war or risk unleashing jinn and other terrifying creatures into our world.

Allen, Peter – *Atlas of Amazing Architecture*

+720.9 All, Non-Fiction

Explore the world of architecture, from tiny shacks to vast palaces and everything in between!

Alston, B. B. – *Amari and the Night Brothers* +Alston, Fiction; +Als, CD-Audio Books; +Als, Digital Audio Books*

Thirteen-year-old Amari, a poor Black girl from the projects, gets an invitation from her missing brother to join the Bureau of Supernatural Affairs and join in the fight against an evil magician.

Appelt, Kathi – *Once Upon a Camel*

+Appelt, Fiction*

In 1910, Zada the camel treks across the West Texas desert to save two baby kestrels from an approaching haboob, a mountain-sized storm, sharing adventures from her youth in Turkey to keep them calm.

Applegate, Katherine – *Willodeen*

+Applegate, Fiction*

When the annual migration of hummingbirds, a source of local pride and income, dwindles and no one knows why, Willodeen, inspired by a magical birthday gift, speaks up for the animals she loves and vows to uncover this mystery.

Barone, Rebecca E. F. – *Race to the Bottom of the Earth: Surviving Antarctica* +919.89 Bar, Non-Fiction*

In 1910, Captain Robert Scott prepared his crew for a trip that no one had ever completed: a journey to the South Pole. He vowed to get there any way he could. Then, right before he set out, a telegram arrived, making the expedition a race.

Beer, Julie – *Brain Candy 3: Seriously Sweet Facts to Satisfy Your Curiosity* +031.02 Bee, Non-Fiction

Elephants have thick skin, but just how thick? Turns out it's 50 times thicker than human skin and can add as much as 2,000 pounds (900kg) to the weight of this massive animal! Dive into this book for an appetizing assortment of fun facts.

Black Boy Joy (various authors)

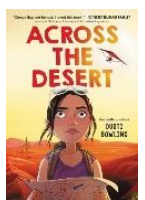
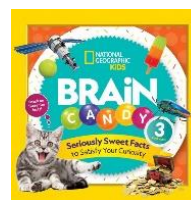
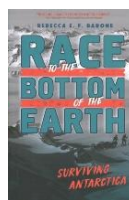
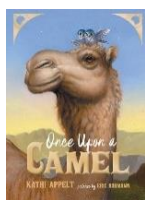
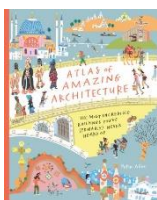
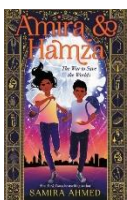
+Black SC, Fiction*

From seventeen acclaimed Black male and nonbinary authors comes a vibrant collection of stories, comics, and poems about the power of joy and the wonders of Black boyhood.

Bowling, Dusti – *Across the Desert*

+Bowling, Fiction*

While using a public library computer to find help for her mother who is addicted to pain medicine, twelve-year-old Jolene witnesses a friend's livestreamed crash-landing in the Arizona desert and embarks on a journey to rescue her.

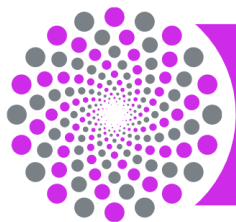


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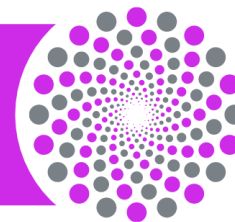
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❖ 4th & 5th Grade ❖

Best Books of 2021



Bruchac, Joseph – *Rez Dogs*

+Bruchac, Fiction*

Twelve-year-old Malian lives with her grandparents on a Wabanaki reservation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currie, Lindsay – *What Lives in the Woods*

+Currie, Fiction*

Ginny's family moves into a 1930s mansion for her father to restore, and she hears rumors about strange mutant creatures nearby. An aspiring mystery writer, Ginny investigates the possibility of her house being haunted.

Day, Christine – *The Sea in Winter*

+Day, Fiction*

After an injury sidelines her dreams of becoming a ballet star, Maisie is not excited for her blended family's midwinter road trip along the coast, near the Makah community where her mother grew up.

DiCamillo, Kate – *The Beatryce Prophecy*

+DiCamillo, Fiction; +DiC, CD-Audio Books*

Beatryce, the key to a prophecy, ventures into a dark wood in search of the castle of the one who wants her dead, knowing that if she loses her way, those who love her will never stop searching for her.

Ewing, Eve L. – *Maya and the Robot*

+Ewing, Fiction

A forgotten homemade robot comes to life when aspiring 5th grade scientist Maya needs a friend and science fair project.

Fipps, Lisa – *Starfish*

+Fipps, Fiction*

Bullied and shamed her whole life for being fat, twelve-year-old Ellie finally gains the confidence to stand up for herself, with the help of some wonderful new allies.

Fleming, Candace – *The Curse of the Mummy: Uncovering Tutankhamun's Tomb* +932 Fle, Non-Fiction*

The boy pharaoh Tutankhamun ruled Egypt, died tragically young, and was buried with treasure in a cursed tomb. If curses are fake, what else explains the mysterious illnesses, accidents, and deaths surrounding the tomb's uncovering?

Foody, Amanda – *Wilderlore: The Accidental Apprentice*

+Foody, Fiction

Eleven-year-old Barclay Thorne yearns for the quiet life of a mushroom farmer, but after unwittingly bonding with a beast in the forbidden Woods, he must seek Lore Keepers to break the bond and return home.

Frazier, Sundee T. – *Mighty Inside*

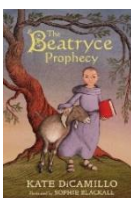
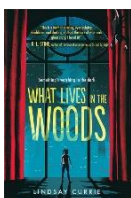
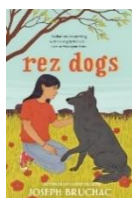
+Frazier, Fiction; +Fra, Digital Audio Books*

Melvin wants a strong He-Man voice, but starting high school only makes his stutter worse. His growing awareness that racism is everywhere, not just in the South where a boy was brutally killed, makes him realize he can't mutely stand by.

Gardner, Whitney – *Long Distance*

+Gardner, Graphic Novels

After moving to Seattle, Vega's dads send her to the very strange Camp Best Friend, where she discovers that one can make new friends without forgetting old ones.

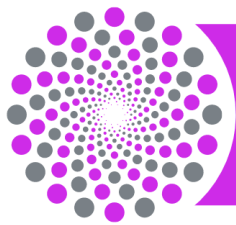


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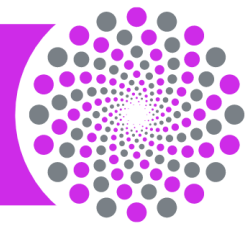
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❖ 4th & 5th Grade ❖

Best Books of 2021



Hamza, Nina – *Ahmed Aziz's Epic Year*

+Hamza, Fiction*

An Indian American Muslim boy endures a family move from Hawaii to frigid Minnesota and, with the help of three life-changing books he reads in school, he learns to like reading, and ultimately, himself.

Harper, Charise Mericle – *Bad Sister*

+Harper, Graphic Novels

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? What does it mean to be a good sister?

Harrell, Rob – *When Pigs Fly: A Batpig Book*

+Harrell, Graphic Novels*

After a bite from his radioactive bat best friend, Gary goes from ordinary pig to a world-saving, high-flying superhero.

Higuera, Donna Barba – *The Last Cuentista*

+Higuera, Fiction*

Earth has been destroyed by a comet, and only a few hundred scientists and their children have journeyed to a new planet. Hundreds of years later, Petra wakes to the discovery that she is the only person who remembers Earth.

Hosler, Jay – *The Way of the Hive: A Honey Bee's Story*

+Hosler, Graphic Novels

Relates the story of brand-new honey bee Nyuki as she grows and survives within the hive.

Ireland, Justina – *Ophie's Ghosts*

+Ireland, Fiction; +Ire, CD-Audio Books*

Discovering her ability to see ghosts when a cruel act ends her father's life and forces her to move in with relatives in 1920s Pittsburgh, young Ophelia forges a helpful bond with a spirit whose own life ended suddenly and unjustly.

Jarrow, Gail – *Ambushed! The Assassination Plot Against President Garfield* **+973.84 Jar, Non-Fiction***

This thrilling title for young readers blends science, history, and medical mysteries to tell the story of the assassination and ultimately horrible death of President James Garfield.

Kashiwaba, Sachiko – *Temple Alley Summer*

+Kashiwaba, Fiction*

Kazu discovers that his home is the location of an ancient temple that can bring people back to life when the ghost of a girl steps out of its entrance. Now it's up to Kazu to keep the girl and the power of the temple safe.

Khor, Shing Yin – *The Legend of Auntie Po*

+Khor, Graphic Novels

Aware of the racial tumult after the Chinese Exclusion Act, Mei tries to focus on her job, her close friendship with the camp foreman's daughter, and telling stories about Paul Bunyan, reinvented as Po Pan Yin (Auntie Po).

King, Thomas – *Borders*

+King, Graphic Novels

A boy and his mother refuse to identify themselves as American or Canadian at the border and become caught in the limbo between nations when they claim their citizenship as Blackfoot.

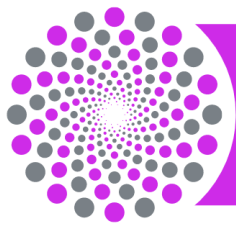


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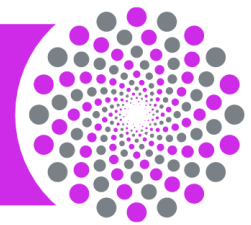
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❖ 4th & 5th Grade ❖

Best Books of 2021



Lai, Remy – *Pawcasso*

+Lai, Graphic Novels

Jo accidentally gets caught in a net of lies when she's mistaken to be the owner of the dog she calls Pawcasso, who comes to town by himself to grocery shop for his owner. Will she risk losing her new friends to tell the truth?

Lazar, Ralph – *Monday: Into the Cave of Thieves*

+Lazar, Fiction*

For Dash Candoo, every day is dangerous! On Monday, before he can even enjoy his cereal and wombat juice, he is attacked by a squad of combat-ready scallywags and the two-tailed Devil Cat. What will happen Tuesday?

Lee, Lori M. – *Pahua and the Soul Stealer*

+Lee, Fiction*

While trying to rescue her brother's soul from the spirit world, Hmong American Pahua discovers that she is the reincarnation of a legendary shaman warrior.

Lloyd, Megan Wagner – *Allergic*

+Lloyd, Graphic Novels*

Hoping to adopt a pet to find a sense of belonging in her busy family, Maggie is disappointed to discover she is severely allergic to anything with fur and tries to find a pet to love anyway.

McCann, Jacqueline – *If the World Were 100 People*

+304.6 McC, Non-Fiction*

With almost 7.8 billion people sharing the earth, it can be a little hard to picture what the human race looks like all together. But if we could shrink the world down to just 100 people, what could we learn about the human race?

Mone, Gregory – *Strange Nature: The Insect Portraits of Levon Bliss*

+595.7 Mon, Non-Fiction

A unique photographic study of insects in mind-blowing magnification that celebrates the wonders of nature and science. Levon Biss's photographs capture in breathtaking detail the beauty of the insect world.

Murdock, Catherine Gilbert – *Da Vinci's Cat*

+Murdock, Fiction*

Using a magic wardrobe to travel through time, Federico, a boy from the Italian Renaissance and Bee, a girl from present-day New Jersey, work together to prevent the bickering between two great artists from changing the future.

Nguyen, Trang – *Saving Sorya: Chang and the Sun Bear*

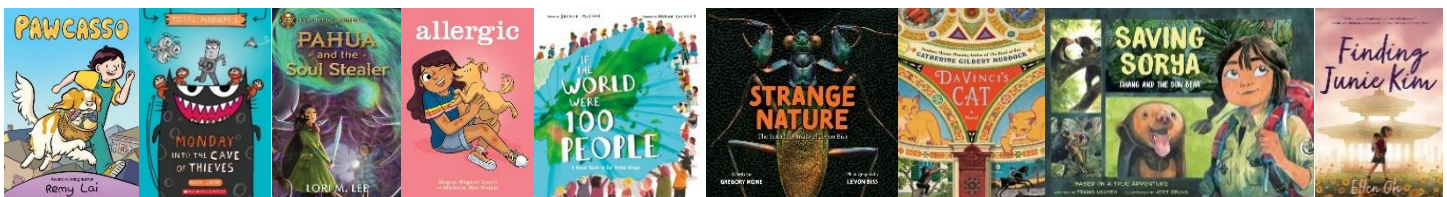
+Nguyen, Graphic Novels

After hard work and determination, twelve-year-old Chang is finally accepted as a rescue center volunteer and is faced with her toughest challenge yet: returning the sun bear she raised from infancy to the wild.

Oh, Ellen – *Finding Junie Kim*

+Oh, Fiction*

A tale based on true events follows the coming-of-age of a girl who is motivated by an act of racism at school to learn about her ancestral heritage and her grandparents' experiences as lost children during the Korean War.

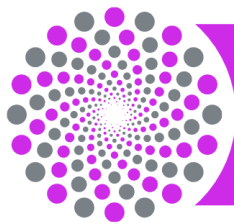


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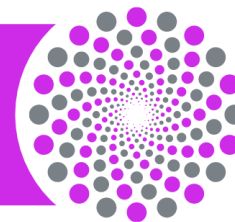
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❖ 4th & 5th Grade ❖

Best Books of 2021



Oshiro, Mark – *The Insiders*

+Oshiro, Fiction*

Twelve-year-old Héctor Muñoz, fleeing from classmates who bully him for his sexuality and style, discovers a magical closet that not only provides him sanctuary, but also unites him with two other kids facing similar problems.

Reynolds, Jason – *Stamped (for Kids): Racism, Antiracism, and You*

+305.8 Rey, Non-Fiction; +305.8 Rey, Digital Audio Players*

See where racist ideas came from, how they impact America today, and meet those who have fought racism with antiracism. Along the way, you'll see how you can identify and stamp out racist thoughts in your own life.

Reynolds, Jason – *Stuntboy, in the Meantime*

+Reynolds, Fiction*

Portico Reeves' secret identity as Stuntboy allows him to use his superpower keep everybody safe, but when his superhero parents start fighting a lot he feels the responsibility to save them.

Riordan, Rick (editor) – *The Cursed Carnival and Other Calamities: New Stories about Mythic Heroes*

Stories by authors from the Rick Riordan Presents imprint that remix myths for modern readers. +Cursed SC, Fiction*

Riordan, Rick – *Daughter of the Deep*

+Riordan, Fiction*

Ana, a freshman at a school that graduates the best marine scientists, naval warriors, navigators, and underwater explorers in the world, makes astounding discoveries about her heritage and faces deadly enemies from a rival school.

Rissi, Anica Mrose – *Hide and Don't Seek: And Other Very Scary Stories*

+Rissi, Fiction*

If you're feeling brave, turn the page. A game of hide-and-seek goes on far too long, a look-alike doll makes itself right at home, and more! This collection of all-new spooky stories is sure to keep readers up past their bedtimes.

Rivera, Kaela – *Cece Rios and the Desert of Souls*

+Rivera, Fiction*

Privately questioning her remote community's superstitions about dangerous powerful spirits in their Devil's Alley home, Cecelia Rios experiments with the forbidden art of brujería to rescue her kidnapped sister.

Royce, Eden – *Root Magic*

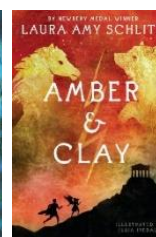
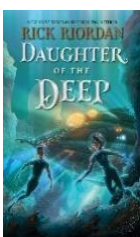
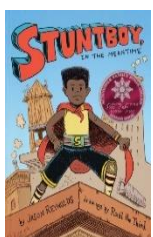
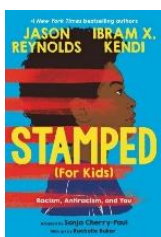
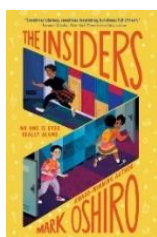
+Royce, Fiction*

Jez and her twin brother have always been fascinated by the African American folk magic that is the legacy of their family, and when evil shows itself in town, it's going to take every bit of the magic she has inside her to see her through.

Schlitz, Laura Amy – *Amber & Clay*

+Schlitz, Fiction; +Sch, Digital Audio Players*

A Thracian slave in a Greek household, Rhaskos is as common as clay, a stable boy worth less than a donkey. He nurtures his passions for art and philosophy in secret. Melisto is a spoiled aristocrat, a girl as precious as amber but willful and wild. She'll marry and be tamed, but risk her life for a season first to serve Artemis, goddess of the hunt.

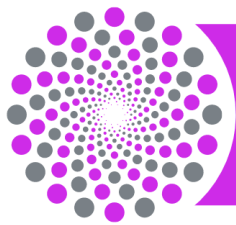


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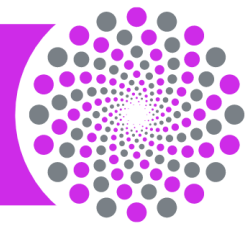
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❖ 4th & 5th Grade ❖

Best Books of 2021



Siddiqui, Maleeha – *Barakah Beats*

+Siddiqui, Fiction

Nimra finds public school tough, especially being the only student wearing a hijab. She plans to quit the band she joined, to avoid parental disapproval, but then it gets popular, and she wants to save her friendships new and old.

Smith, Cynthia Leitich – *Sisters of the Neversea*

+Smith, Fiction*

In this modern twist on Peter Pan, stepsisters Lily and Wendy are spirited away to Neverland and must find a way home.

Stone, Nic – *Fast Pitch*

+Stone, Fiction

Shenice dreams of leading the Fulton Firebirds to the U12 softball regional championship, but a career-ending-and family-name-ruining-crime is revealed to be a setup, and it's up to Shenice to discover the truth about her family.

Thermes, Jennifer – *Horse Power: How Horses Changed the World*

+636.1 The, Non-Fiction

Tackles the history of the horse when they worked and played side by side with humans and, ultimately, explores the shift from "horse power" to "horsepower," when humans traded manure in the street for pollution in the air.

Ursu, Anne – *The Troubled Girls of Dragomir Academy*

+Ursu, Fiction*

Marya's parents believed her brother Luka would make the family's fortune, so when he displays no magical talent, they send Marya to Dragomir Academy, a school for wayward girls where she finds friendship and discovers her own talents.

Vandorn, Kaeti – *Monster Friends*

+Vandorn, Graphic Novels*

Despite their differences, monster neighbors Reggie and Emily make the perfect explorers, and with a beach party to plan and a sea monster to find, Reggie needs to learn to talk about his feelings and let new friends in.

Venable, Colleen A. F. – *Katie the Catsitter*

+Venable, Graphic Novels

Katie dreads the boring summer until she realizes the mysterious neighbor who hired her to catsit is a great supervillain.

Venkatraman, Padma – *Born Behind Bars*

+Venkatraman, Fiction

In Chennai, India, after spending his whole life in jail with his mother, who is serving time for a crime she did not commit, nine-year-old Kabir is suddenly released and has to figure out how to survive on his own in the outside world.

Warga, Jasmine – *The Shape of Thunder*

+Warga, Fiction*

Estranged from the best friend whose brother killed her sister in a school shooting, a grieving Cora receives a message on her twelfth birthday from her friend, asking for her help with creating a time portal to prevent the tragedy.

Weatherford, Carole Boston – *Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre*

+976.6 Wea, Non-Fiction*

Celebrated author Carole Boston Weatherford and illustrator Floyd Cooper provide a powerful look at the 1921 Tulsa race massacre, one of the worst incidents of racial violence in our nation's history.



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