



# ❖ 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade ❖ Best Books of 2019



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 Libby.*

**Alexander, Kwame – *The Undeclared*** +811 Ale, Non-Fiction\*

Originally performed for ESPN's *The Undeclared*, this poem is a love letter to black life in the US. It highlights the trauma of slavery, the fire of the civil rights movement, and perseverance of the world's greatest heroes.

**Alvarez, Lorena – *Hicotea*** +Alvarez, Graphic Novels

Sandy wanders away on a field trip in the wetlands and discovers a magical new dimension inside an empty turtle shell.

**Andrews, Ryan – *This was Our Pact*** +Andrews, Graphic Novels

Ben and his classmates are determined to find out where the annual paper lanterns really go, and travel farther than anyone, down a winding road full of magic, wonder, and unexpected friendship (and a talking bear).

**Cervantes, Angela – *Lety Out Loud*** +Cervantes, Fiction\*

Can Lety find her voice before it's too late? When the shelter needs a volunteer to write animal profiles, Lety jumps at the chance. But grumpy classmate Hunter also wants to write profiles—and he's turned it into a competition.

**Choldenko, Gennifer – *One-Third Nerd*** +Choldenko, Fiction; +Cho, CD-Audio Books

Ten-year-old Liam and his two younger sisters, precocious third-grader Dakota and second-grader Izzy, who has Down syndrome, face the possibility of losing their beloved dog, Cupcake, who keeps urinating on their apartment's carpet.

**Craft, Jerry – *New Kid*** +Craft, Graphic Novels; +Cra, CD-Audio Books\*

7th grader Jordan Banks loves drawing cartoons about his life. Now enrolled in a new prestigious private school, he is one of the few kids of color. Jordan finds himself torn between two worlds and not really fitting into either one.

**Drimmer, Stephanie Warren – *Surprising Stories Behind Everyday Stuff*** +031.02 Dri, Non-Fiction

Who invented pizza? Why do people shake hands? Why do we wear underwear? You'll find the answers to these questions and more, and you'll be riveted with the impressive facts and stunning photos in this book!

**Durst, Sarah Beth – *Spark*** +Durst, Fiction

Naturally quiet since birth, Mina and her stormbeast, Pixit, lead others like themselves in defying authority and attempting to spread the truth that Alorria's idyllic weather comes at a steep cost.

**Funaro, Gregory – *Watch Hollow*** +Funaro, Fiction; +Fun, CD-Audio Books\*

Within the enchanted woods in Watch Hollow stands the Blackford House, whose halls hold a secret: a giant magical cuckoo clock. But when the clock's gears stop, an evil presence lurking in the trees begins to come out of the shadows.

**Gemeinhart, Dan – *The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise*** +Gemeinhart, Fiction\*

Coyote and her father rush to Washington in an old school bus to save a memory box buried in a park to be demolished.

**Giles, L. R. – *The Last Last-Day-of-Summer*** +Giles, Fiction\*

When adventurous cousins Otto and Sheed Alston accidentally extend the last day of summer by freezing time, they find the secrets between the unmoving seconds are not as much fun as they expected.

**Gratz, Alan – *Allies*** +Gratz, Fiction; +Gra, CD-Audio Books\*

It is June 6, 1944, D-Day, and Dee, an underage private in the US Army, is seeking revenge for his uncle, who was arrested by Nazis. Samira, a French-Algerian girl is looking for the French resistance, desperate to free her mother.

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**Haddix, Margaret Peterson** – *The Strangers*

+Haddix, Fiction; +Had, CD-Audio Books\*

Told from separate viewpoints, Chess, Emma, and Finn Greystone, ages twelve, ten, and eight, investigate why their mother went missing and uncover their ties to an alternate world.

**Heidicker, Christian McKay** – *Scary Stories for Young Foxes*

+Heidicker, Fiction\*

The haunted season has arrived in the Antler Wood. No fox kit is safe. When Mia and Uly are separated from their litters, they discover a dangerous world full of monsters.

**Henkes, Kevin** – *Sweeping Up the Heart*

+Henkes, Fiction\*

Amelia dreams about going to Florida for spring break, but her father, a cranky and stubborn English professor, has decided it's too much adventure. When new friend, Casey, claims to see the spirit of Amelia's mother (who died ten years before), the pair embarks on an altogether different journey in their attempt to find her.

**Hernandez, Carlos** – *Sal & Gabi Break the Universe*

+Hernandez, Fiction; +Her, CD-Audio Books\*

In order to heal after his mother's death, Sal learned how to meditate. But no one expected him to be able to 'relax' things into existence. Turns out he can reach into time and space to retrieve things from other universes.

**Jenkins, Steve** – *Earth by the Numbers: A Book of Infographics*

+550 Jen, Non-Fiction

How old is the earth? Where is the ice three miles thick? Why are volcanoes so dangerous? Where are the wettest and driest spots on the planet? Find the answers to these questions and many more!

**Kelly, Erin Entrada** – *Lalani of the Distant Sea*

+Kelly, Fiction; +Kel, Digital Audio Players\*

When Lalani Saritas mother falls ill with an incurable disease, Lalani embarks on a dangerous journey across the sea to find the fabled girl with golden feet, in the hope of safeguarding her own future.

**Khan, Hena** – *More to the Story*

+Khan, Fiction; +Kha, Digital Audio Players

Jameela and her sisters are devastated when their father moves overseas for six months, making Jameela determined to write an epic article. When a sister gets seriously ill, her world turns upside down. (A modern twist on Little Women.)

**Lai, Remy** – *Pie in the Sky*

+Lai, Fiction

When Jingwen moves to a new country, he feels like he's landed on Mars. His father dies before opening his dream bakery, Pie in the Sky, and now Jingwen and his brother have to keep their elaborate cake making habits secret.

**Lord, Cynthia** – *Because of the Rabbit*

+Lord, Fiction; +Lor, Digital Audio Players\*

Emma and her father rescue a rabbit. The next day Emma starts fifth grade after being homeschooled. She is paired with Jack, a hyperactive boy, who does not seem to fit in, except that they share a love of animals.

**Mahoney, Kristin Mary** – *The 47 People You'll Meet in Middle School*

+Mahoney, Fiction

Augusta writes letters to her younger sister, Louie, about life in middle school, from tackling a new school building to meeting new people like the assistant principal, the class pet, and the renegade.

**Marciano, Johnny** – *Klawde: Evil Alien Warlord Cat*

+Marciano, Fiction\*

Klawde, the exiled ruler of planet Lyttyrboks, and Raj become unlikely friends navigating a strange new world.

**Mbalia, Kwame** – *Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky*

+Mbalia, Fiction; +Mba, Digital Audio Players\*

Tristan struggles with guilt since failing to save his best friend in a bus accident. Then he accidentally rips open a chasm that drops him in the middle of a battle featuring black American folk heroes, and they need his help to save their world.

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**Miller, Kayla – *Click***

**+Miller, Graphic Novels\***

When a school variety show leaves Olive stranded without an act to join, she wonders why all of her friends have already formed their own groups without her.

**Moriarty, Jaclyn – *The Whispering Wars***

**+Moriarty, Fiction**

Told in multiple voices, after students from elite Brathelthwaite Boarding School and the Orphanage School compete in the Spindthrift Tournament, they team up to face the Whisperers.

**Murphy, Julie – *Dear Sweet Pea***

**+Murphy, Fiction; +Mur, Digital Audio Players\***

Thirteen-year-old Patricia, widely known as Sweet Pea, navigates her parents' unconventional divorce and finds herself in the unlikely role of her town's advice columnist.

**O'Donnell, Tom – *Homerooms & Hall Passes***

**+O'Donnell, Fiction**

When the five young adventurers are magically transported into their H&H game by an ancient curse, they must band together to survive their toughest challenge yet: middle school.

**O'Neill, Katie – *The Tea Dragon Festival***

**+O'Neill, Graphic Novels**

Rinn has grown up with Tea Dragons, but stumbling across a real dragon turns out to be a different matter entirely! Rinn sets out to discover why this dragon, sent to protect their village 80 years ago, fell into enchanted sleep.

**Panteleakos, Nicole – *Planet Earth is Blue***

**+Panteleakos, Fiction**

Autistic and nearly nonverbal, twelve-year-old Nova is happy in her new foster home and school, but eagerly anticipates the 1986 Challenger launch, for which her sister, Bridget, promised to return.

**Philbrick, W. R. – *Wildfire***

**+Philbrick, Fiction; +Phi, Digital Audio Players**

Sam misses the evacuation busses as flames race toward his summer camp. A flash of heat blasts him as pine trees explode, and now a wall of fire separates Sam from his bus, and there's only one thing to do: Run for his life. Run or die.

**Ramée, Lisa Moore – *A Good Kind of Trouble***

**+Ramée, Fiction\***

After attending a powerful protest, Shayla starts wearing an armband to support the Black Lives Matter movement, but when the school gives her an ultimatum, she is forced to choose between her education and her identity.

**Resau, Laura – *Tree of Dreams***

**+Resau, Fiction; +Res, Digital Audio Players**

Coco has grown up in her mother's chocolate shop. When Coco wins a culinary contest, she finds herself on a trip to the Amazon, where she looks for the rare ceiba tree and the plight of the natives and their jungle gives her a new purpose.

**Reynolds, Jason – *Look Both Ways***

**+Reynolds, Fiction; +Rey, CD-Audio Books; +Rey, Digital Audio Players\***

Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.

**Ritter, William – *Changeling***

**+Ritter, Fiction\***

Twelve-year-olds Tinn and Cole, raised as human twins in sleepy Endsborough, risk their lives in the Wild Wood, Oddmire Swamp, and the Deep Dark to learn which of them is a goblin changeling with an important mission.

**Rundell, Katherine – *The Good Thieves***

**+Rundell, Fiction\***

In 1920s New York City, a girl with a deformed foot recruits her new friends, a female pickpocket and two circus performers, to help recover an emerald from her grandfather's mansion after he loses it to an unscrupulous tycoon.

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**Seidler, Tor – *Oh, Rats!***

**+Seidler, Fiction**

A New Jersey squirrel named Phoenix teams up with a pack of rats in New York City to save their riverside home from being demolished and turned into a high-rise.

**Sloan, Holly Goldberg – *To Night Owl from Dogfish***

**+Sloan, Fiction; +Slo, CD-Audio Books\***

Unhappy about being sent to the same summer camp after their fathers start dating, Bett and Avery, eleven, eventually begin scheming to get the couple back together after a break-up. Told entirely through letters, emails, and texts.

**Snyder, Laurel – *My Jasper June***

**+Snyder, Fiction\***

Since her brother drowned, Leah's parents are distant, and Leah has wandered away from her friends. When Leah befriends an interesting and adventurous girl named Jasper in the countryside, she helps Leah confront her grief.

**Sparrow, Katherine – *Little Apocalypse***

**+Sparrow, Fiction**

An earthquake strands Celia in a shaken city. Adults claim the earthquake was caused by monsters only kids can see, and they think Celia is destined to save the city. For the first time, she feels like she's seeing things as they really are.

**Steinkellner, Emma – *The Okay Witch***

**+Steinkellner, Graphic Novels\***

A hilarious, one-of-a-kind graphic novel about a half-witch who has just discovered the truth about herself, her family, and her town and is doing her best to survive middle school now that she knows everything!

**Vaught, Susan – *Me and Sam-Sam Handle the Apocalypse***

**+Vaught, Fiction**

When Jesse's dad is arrested, she figures out that he's the #1 suspect in a missing money case. Jesse has a neuro-processing disorder, and when a tornado strikes, she's given the opportunity to show what she's really made of.

**Venkatraman, Padma – *The Bridge Home***

**+Venkatraman, Fiction\***

Life is harsh in Chennai, India's, teeming streets, so when runaway sisters Viji and Rukku arrive, their prospects look grim. When illness strikes, Viji must decide to risk seeking help from strangers or hold on to their hard-fought freedom.

**Wang, Jen – *Stargazing***

**+Wang, Graphic Novels\***

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.

**Warga, Jasmine – *Other Words for Home***

**+Warga, Fiction; +War, Digital Audio Players\***

Sent with her mother to the safety of a relative's home in Cincinnati when her Syrian hometown is overshadowed by violence, Jude worries for the family members left behind as she adjusts to a new life with unexpected surprises.

**Watson, Renée – *Some Places More than Others***

**+Watson, Fiction\***

Amara visits her father's family in Harlem for her twelfth birthday, hoping to better understand her family and herself, but New York City is not what she expected.

**Williams, Alicia – *Genesis Begins Again***

**+Williams, Fiction\***

Thirteen-year-old Genesis tries again and again to lighten her black skin, thinking it is the root of her family's troubles, before discovering reasons to love herself as is.

**Woods, Matilda – *The Girl Who Sailed the Stars***

**+Woods, Fiction**

Oona, nearly eleven, has longed to sail with her sea captain father but when she stows away on his ship headed to the far North, she faces great adventure and danger.

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