



ESSEX FELLS SCHOOL

2024

**SUMMER BOOK
SUGGESTIONS**

The following lists contain a recommendation of titles, authors, and series. Using your child's reading level and interests, you may use this list to guide your selection. Because children read at varying levels, we hope these suggestions will provide you and your reader with a variety of options. We encourage you to visit a local library or bookstore together. We have begun an early partnership with *The Collective Bookstore* in Verona that we aim to build over the next year. We have shared our list with them and they can help guide your book selection and buying process.

Book experiences for all children is a hallmark of development. It allows them to make connections to characters, settings, and experiences. They begin to visualize a world beyond their own.

Throughout these pages, you will find an extensive list of books, activities, and resources. These *suggestions* may assist you in your summer maintenance goals. Familiarize yourself with the progression of skills. Books that target our social emotional learning goals and character education program can be found at the end.

We encourage daily book experiences for all elementary learners and hope their summer will be filled with travel of the imagination!

Entering Preschool and Kindergarten...

Our youngest learners benefit from exposure to a variety of books. We encourage daily shared experiences that build a special bond around books. Picture books read aloud, acted out, sung in silly voices, and involve interaction are just right for this population. We want to layer their earliest memories with books as positive ones!

This list provides some skills and concepts children should be developing by kindergarten:

- Identify all the parts of a book, including front/back cover, title page, spine, illustrations
- Hold a book correctly
- Recognize how text should be read (left to right, and top to bottom)
- Know the relationship between spoken and printed words
- Understand that printed words have meaning
- Understand the importance of caring for books
- Know the difference between letters and words, and between words and sentences
- Understand how punctuation marks means a sentence has ended
- Identify when to start and stop reading
- Know that stories have a beginning, middle, and end



PRESCHOOL and KINDERGARTEN BOOK SUGGESTIONS

Hello Readers, Scholastic

I Can Read, Scholastic

Step Into Reading, Random House Children's Books

BOB Books

National Geographic KIDS

Little Critter series, Mercer Mayer

AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT

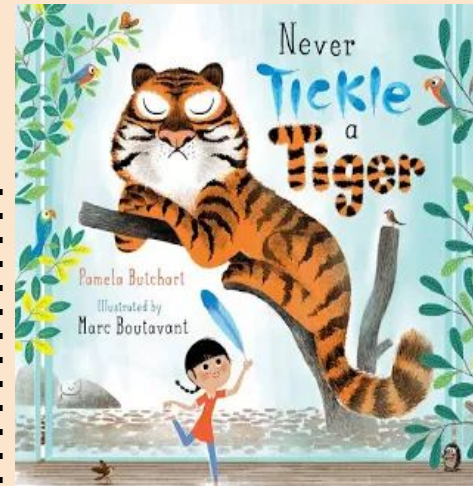
- Bill Martin Jr.
- Mo Willems
- Eric Carle
- Jon Klassen
- Donald Crews
- David Shannon
- Jan Brett
- Laura Numeroff

COUNTING BOOKS

- *Ten Black Dots*, Donald Crews
- *123 Dream*, Kim Krans
- *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Eats Breakfast*, Eric Carle
- *Ten Terrible Dinosaurs*, Paul Stickland
- *Fish Eyes*, Lois Ehlert

ALPHABET BOOKS

- *Chicka, Chicka, Boom, Boom*, Bill Martin Jr. & John Archambault
- *Alphabet Rescue*, Audrey Wood
- *Eating the Alphabet*, Lois Ehlert
- *Alphabet Legends US*
- *The Alphabet Book*, P.D. Eastman



Entering First and Second Grade...

Your child has firmly begun their reading journey. They have learned the names of authors, developed a preference for some titles and series, and may even be eager for more challenging texts. As you and your child practice reading over the course of the summer and the school year, the following tasks can be incorporated into these shared moments

- ❑ Begin to play a version of I Spy where you can integrate a review of their Foundations skills and sight words
 - ❑ I Spy two words that have the same beginning sound
 - ❑ I Spy a word that starts the same as lion
 - ❑ I Spy a word that ends the same as frog
 - ❑ I Spy a word that rhymes with cake
- ❑ Give your child a purpose before reading to support their comprehension. “We are going to talk about the beginning, middle and end when we finish.”
 - ❑ You can pause after a two or three pages and ask, “What do we know so far about (the character, the setting, the problem)?”
 - ❑ Children should practice verbalizing the sequence of the main events. You can offer them transition starters such as First, Next, Then, Last.
- ❑ Have your child write or draw a picture about their favorite part of the story.
- ❑ Your child can write or draw the story elements: Characters, Setting, Problem, Solution
- ❑ Create authentic writing experiences for your child such as sending postcards, or writing emails to friends and family. They can even write back and forth to a classmate about the books they are reading.



FIRST and SECOND GRADE BOOK SUGGESTIONS

FICTION

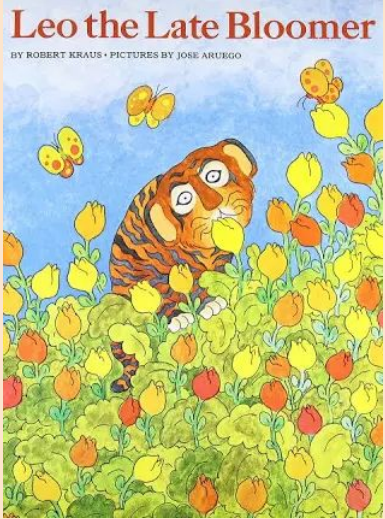
- Hello Readers, Scholastic Levels 1 & 2
- I Can Read, Scholastic Levels 1 & 2
- Step Into Reading, Levels 1-4
- Frog and Toad series
- Biscuit series
- Elephant & Piggie Friends series
- My Weird School Stories
- Pizza and Taco series
- Mercy Watson series
- The Fly Guy Collection

NONFICTION

- DK Nonfiction Readers, Levels 1-4
- Step Into Reading: Truth or Lie Series
- [Little People, BIG DREAMS](#) series
- [Ordinary People Change the World](#) series
- [Explore Nonfiction in the Who Would Win? Book Series](#)

AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT

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|---------------------|----------------|---------------|
| ▪ Peggy Parish | ▪ Arnold Lobel | ▪ Marc Arnold |
| ▪ Mo Willems | ▪ Kevin Henkes | ▪ Lois Ehlert |
| ▪ Peter H. Reynolds | ▪ Jeff Brown | |



Entering Third and Fourth Grade...

Your reader has grown by leaps and bounds. Responding to text has become a regular extension of their reading tasks. They have begun to develop a deeper sense of how their reading can be used on a wider scale. Making connections is key. You may want to integrate some of the ideas below into your summer reading experiences for a more comprehensive skill review.

- ❑ Draft a handwritten or typed summary of the most important events including the characters, setting, problem, and solution. This can apply to non-fiction, as well with minor adjustments.
 - ❑ You may provide transitional starters such as In the beginning, Then, After That, Finally.
 - ❑ Your child may need to verbalize their responses first. You can record the sequence using post-it notes with key words and phrases to support their response.
- ❑ Create a **3-2-1 response** after reading a chapter.
 - ❑ 3 things that happened, 2 words or phrases that you find interesting, 1 question or idea you are curious about
- ❑ Expose your child to a more creative thinking response such as,
 - ❑ Pretend you are one of the characters. Now write a letter to another character about the problem.
 - ❑ Create a character text message thread with another character detailing a cause and effect relationship.
 - ❑ Write an acrostic poem using a character name with adjectives, feelings, events that apply to that character.
- ❑ For Non-Fiction, students could pretend they are interviewing the author with questions and answers using the text and inferences they made.



THIRD AND FOURTH GRADE BOOK SUGGESTIONS ~ Select 2 books

FICTION

Magic Tree House series

Muggie Maggie, Judy Blume

Third Grade Angels, Jerry Spinelli

The Lemonade War, Jacqueline Davies

Fourth Grade Rats, Jerry Spinelli

Clementine, Sara Pennypacker

Heidi Heckelbeck series

Henry Heckelbeck series

My Weird School series

Pizza and Taco series

Dragon Masters series

NONFICTION

[Explore Nonfiction in the Who Would Win? Book Series](#)

[Little People, BIG DREAMS](#) series

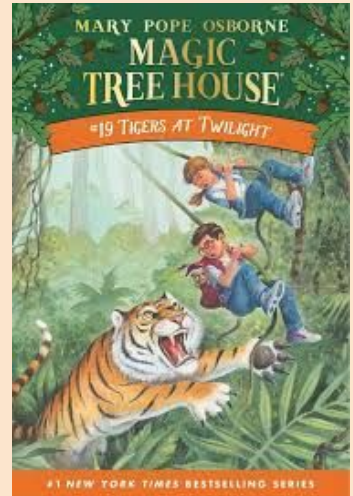
[Ordinary People Change the World](#) series

[The I SURVIVED Series | Lauren Tarshis](#)

[Who Was? Series - Who HQ](#)

AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT

- Judy Blume
- Beverly Cleary
- Dan Gutman
- Katherine Applegate
- Andrew Clements
- Roald Dahl
- Kate DiCamillo



Entering Fifth and Sixth Grade...

The goal for our oldest readers is to secure a habit of monitoring their understanding as they read. Their stamina for independent reading should also be increasing. Students are regularly identifying the elements of narrative structure, including setting, character, plot, conflict, and theme. They are drawing conclusions and making inferences throughout the text that will eventually be sourced as support in reading analysis. They analyze different types of text and learn to interpret figurative language, better understand narrative voices, character developments, and the use of language. Students will compare and contrast themes in articles and stories. Pairing similar texts, even fiction and nonfiction, to determine similarities and differences and text evidence is included, as well.

- ❑ Children can type a summary of their novel. This can apply to non-fiction, as well with minor adjustments.
- ❑ Children can draft a response about character development with textual evidence.
 - ❑ A slideshow or other multimedia presentation can be used in lieu of paragraphs.
- ❑ Create a 3-2-1 response after reading each chapter.
 - ❑ 3 things that happened, 2 words or phrases that you find interesting, 1 question or idea you are curious about
- ❑ Expose your child to a more creative thinking response such as,
 - ❑ For each chapter, your child could record post-its with varying targets: life lessons found, new words, figurative language, character similarities with me
 - ❑ Create a character text message thread with another character detailing a cause and effect relationship.
 - ❑ Using emojis, find passages or quotes that can be symbolized by that icon.
- ❑ For Non-Fiction, students could pretend they are interviewing the author with questions and answers using the text and inferences they made.



FIFTH and SIXTH GRADE BOOK SUGGESTIONS~ Select 2-3 novels

FICTION | series

City of Ember, Jeanne DuPrau
The Penderwicks, Jeanne Birdsall
The Wild Robot, Peter Brown
Front Desk, Kelly Yang
Explorer Academy, Trudi Trueit
A Wrinkle in Time, Madeline L'Engle

FICTION

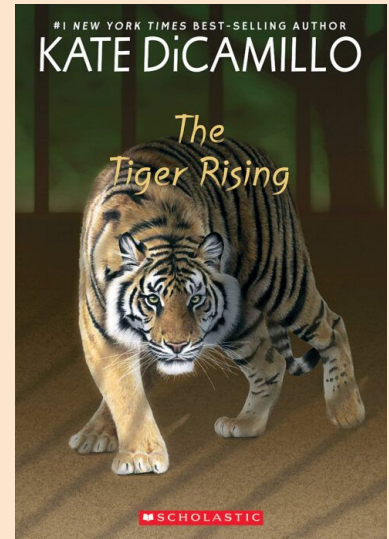
The Sign of the Beaver, Elizabeth George Speare
The Million Dollar Shot, Dan Gutman
City Spies, James Ponti
A Place to Hang the Moon, Kate Albus
Refugee, Alan Gratz
Garvey's Choice, Nikki Grimes
And Then There Were None, Agatha Christie
One Crazy Summer, Rita Williams Garcia
First State of Being, Erin Entrada Kelly

NONFICTION

[Who Was? Series - Who HQ](#)
[The I SURVIVED Series | Lauren Tarshis](#)
Unstoppable Us, Yuval Noah Harari
How We Got to The Moon, John Rocco
Amelia Lost, Candace Fleming
Shoe Dog, Phil Knight

GRAPHIC NOVELS

- *Four Eyes*, Rex Ogle
- *New Kid*, Jerry Craft
- *Awkward*, Svetlana Chmakova
- *The Crossover*, Kwame Alexander
- *Allergic*, Megan Wagner Lloyd and Michelle Mee Nutter



Social Emotional Learning and Character Education Themed Books

Pre-K through 1st

The Color Monster: A Story About Emotions, Anna Llenas (emotions)
Some Nights I Flip My Lid: Learning to Be a Calm, Cool Kid, Kellie and Hannah Bailey (mindfulness, coping skills)

2nd -3rd Grade

Kindness Starts with You- At School, Jacquelyn Stagg (kindness, empathy)
Be Kind, Pat Zietlow Miller (empathy, kindness, friendship)
Be you!, Peter H. Reynolds (identity, empowerment, self-awareness)
Zero, Kathryn Otoski (self-worth, value)

4th-6th Grade

Two, Kathryn Otoski (friendships, boundaries, conflict)
Making Friends is an Art, Julia Cook with K.D. Smith (friendships, diversity, acceptance)
Lions and Liars, Kate Beasley (friendships, bullying)
Practice Makes Perfect, Antonio Sacre (friendships, teamwork)
Fish in a Tree, Lynda Mullaly Hunt (resilience, perseverance, self-confidence)

Online Resources:

- [13 SEL books with extensions](#)
- [Character Education Categorized Selections](#)
- [50 Children's Books for Teaching Social Skills](#)

