

May 29, 2008

Dear Fifth Grade Parents,

We are very excited to be able to spend the 2008-09 school year with your children!

We have compiled a summer reading list to help your children develop and maintain their love for reading. The book list includes the titles, authors and brief descriptions of the plots. The list has some books that are classics, while others are more recent. There are many reasons why we encourage a student-reading list.

Reading increases vocabulary, improves spelling, strengthens writing skills and develops comprehension skills, to name a few. Please encourage your child to read daily during the summer. As parents, you can lead by example. Take time daily to read to your child or immerse yourself in a good book. Read as a family! The benefits are amazing. Have a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

The Fifth Grade Teachers

Pete Connallon

Claudia Hilligoss

Recommended Reading List 2008-2009

Grade 5

Any available unabridged edition of a title is acceptable.

Adler, C. S. *One Unhappy Horse*. Clarion, 2001. Things are difficult for twelve-year-old Jan and her mother after her father's death, and when it turns out that her beloved horse needs an operation, Jan reluctantly gets money from an elderly woman whom she has befriended.

Alexander, Lloyd. *The Gawgon and the Boy*. Dutton, 2001. In Depression-era Philadelphia, when eleven-year-old David is too ill to attend school, he is tutored by the unique and adventurous Aunt Annie whose teaching combines with his imagination to greatly enrich his life.

Allen, Thomas B. *George Washington, Spymaster: How the Americans Outspied the British and Won the Revolutionary War*. National Geographic, 2004. An illustrated biography of the Revolutionary War general and first President of the United States, George Washington, focusing on his use of spies to gather intelligence that helped the colonies win the war.

Avi. *Never Mind!: A Twin Novel*. HarperCollins, 2004. Twelve-year-old New York City twins Meg and Edward have nothing in common, so they are just as shocked as everyone else when Meg's hopes for popularity and Edward's mischievous schemes coincidentally collide in a hilarious showdown.

Babbitt, Natalie. Tuck Everlasting. First published 1975. A family discovers the “fountain of youth” and others try to uncover their secret.

Balliett, Blue. Chasing Vermeer. Scholastic Press, 2004. When seemingly unrelated and strange events begin occurring and a precious Vermeer painting disappears, eleven-year-olds Petra and Calder combine their talents to solve an international art scandal.

Barron, T. A. The Lost Years of Merlin. Philomel, 1996. A young boy with no memory of his past washes ashore on the coast of Wales and finds his true name after a series of adventures. Lost Years of Merlin Series
Bishop, Nic. Digging for Bird-dinosaurs: An Expedition to Madagascar. Houghton Mifflin, 2000. Traces the experiences of Cathy Forster, one of the few female paleontologists working today, who explored the island of Madagascar in 1998 in search of fossil birds.

Bridges, Ruby. Through My Eyes. Scholastic, 1999. The author recounts the story of the integration of her school in New Orleans in 1960, when she was six year old.

Choldenko, Gennifer. Al Capone Does My Shirts. G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 2004. A twelve-year-old boy named Moose moves to Alcatraz Island in 1935, when guards’ families were housed there, and has to contend with his extraordinary new environment in addition to life with his autistic sister. Newbery Honor

Codell, Esme Raji. Sahara Special. Hyperion, 2003. Struggling with school and her feelings since her father left, Sahara gets a fresh start with a new and unique teacher who supports her writing talents and the individuality of each of her classmates.

Coville, Bruce. William Shakespeare’s Hamlet. Dial Books, 2004. A simplified prose retelling of Shakespeare’s play about the prince of Denmark who seeks revenge for his father’s murder.

Creech, Sharon. Heartbeat. Joanna Cotler Books, 2004. Twelve-year-old Annie ponders the many rhythms of life the year that her mother becomes pregnant, her grandfather begins faltering, and her best friend (and running partner) becomes distant.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. Bud, Not Buddy. Delacorte, 1999. Ten-year-old Bud, a motherless boy living in Flint, Michigan, during the Great Depression, escapes a bad foster home and sets out in search of the man he believes to be his father: the renowned bandleader, H. E. Calloway of Grand Rapids. Newbery Medal.

D'Adamo, Francesco. *Iqbal: A Novel*. Atheneum, 2003. First published in Italian, 2001. *Iqbal* is sold to work in a Pakistani carpet factory, where many children are overworked and abused.

DiCamillo, Kate. *The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread*. Candlewick, 2003. The adventures of Despereaux Tilling, a small mouse of unusual talents, the princess that he loves, the servant girl who longs to be a princess, and a devious rat determined to bring them all to ruin. Newbery Medal.

Dixon, Dougal. *The Future Is Wild*. Firefly Books, 2002. This companion book to the *Animal Planet* series uses a variety of scientific principles to imagine how life on planet Earth may evolve over the next 200 million years.

George, Jean Craighead. *Charlie's Raven*. Dutton Children's Books, 2004. Having heard from his Teton Sioux Indian friend that ravens can cure people, Charlie brings home a baby raven in hopes of helping his ailing grandfather, setting the stage for a learning experience that brings new life to everyone in his family.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. *Maggie's Door*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2003. In the mid-1800s, Nory and her neighbor and friend, Sean, set out separately on a dangerous journey from famine-plagued Ireland, hoping to reach a better life in America. Sequel to: *Nory Ryan's Song*.

Gutman, Dan. *Mickey and Me: A Baseball Card Adventure*. HarperCollins, 2003. When Joe travels back to 1944, he meets the Milwaukee Chicks, one of the only all-female professional baseball teams in the history of the game.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Just Ella*. Simon & Schuster, 1999. Fifteen-year-old Ella finds that accepting Prince Charming's proposal ensnares her in such a suffocating tangle of palace rules and royal etiquette that she plots her escape.

Hahn, Mary Dowling. *The Old Willis Place: A Ghost Story*. Clarion Books, 2004. Tired of the strict set of rules imposed on them since "the bad thing happened," twelve-year-old Diana is tempted to break the mysterious rules in hopes of making friends with the new caretaker's daughter at the old Willis place.

Hale, Shannon. *The Goose Girl*. Bloomsbury, 2003. Princess Anidori, on her way to marry a prince she has never met, is betrayed by her guards and

her lady-in-waiting and must become a goose girl to survive until she can reveal her true identity and reclaim the crown that is rightfully hers. Hamilton, Virginia. *Second Cousins*. Blue Sky, 1998. The friendship of twelve-year-old cousins, Cammy and Elodie, is threatened when a family reunion includes two other cousins near their age.

Hannigan, Katherine. *Ida B: ...And Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World*. Greenwillow Books, 2004. In Wisconsin, Ida B spends happy hours being home-schooled and playing in her family's apple orchard, until her mother begins treatment for breast cancer and her parents must sell part of the orchard and send her to public school.

Horvath, Polly. *The Pepins and Their Problems*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. The reader is invited to help solve the Pepin family's unusual problems, which include having a cow that creates lemonade rather than milk and having to cope with a competitive neighbor.

Ibbotson, Eva. *Island of the Aunts*. Dutton, 2000. Three aging aunts who need help caring for their magical animals resort to kidnapping suitable young people and taking them to their secluded island home.

Jackson, Donna. M. *Hero Dogs: Courageous Canines in Action*. Little, Brown, 2003. Presents a variety of stories about working and rescue dogs, such as those involved in the work at the World Trade Center site after the disaster of September 11, 2001.

Janeczko, Paul B. *World Afire*. Candlewick Press, 2004. In this novel written as a collection of eyewitness poems, the excitement and anticipation of attending the circus on July 6, 1944 in Hartford, Connecticut, turns to horror when a fire engulfs the circus tent, killing nearly 180 people, mostly women and children.

Kerley, Barbara. *Walt Whitman: Words for America*. Scholastic Press, 2004. A biography of the American poet whose compassion led him to nurse soldiers during the Civil War, to give voice to the nation's grief at Lincoln's assassination, and to capture the true American spirit in verse. Konigsberg, E.L. *The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place*. Atheneum, 2004. Upon leaving an oppressive summer camp, twelve-year-old Margaret Rose Kane spearheads a campaign to preserve three unique towers her grand uncles have been building in their back yard for over forty years.

Koppes, Steven N. *Killer Rocks from Outer Space: Asteroids, Comets, and Meteorites*. Lerner, 2004. Describes the role that collisions with meteors, comets, and asteroids have played in the history of Earth and other planets in the solar system and examines what is being done to

protect Earth from future collisions.

Lasky, Kathryn. *The Man Who Made Time Travel*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. Describes the need for sailors to be able to determine their position at sea and the efforts of John Harrison, an eighteenth-century man who spent his life refining instruments to enable them to do this.

Lauber, Patricia. *Painters of the Caves*. National Geographic Society, 1998. The author describes the 1994 discovery made in Chauvet, France, of a cave with Stone Age rock paintings, and the significance of cave art in prehistoric as well as modern times.

L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Ring of Endless Light*. First published 1980. Vicky's telepathic communication with dolphins comforts her during the time her grandfather is dying from leukemia. Newbery Honor
Montgomery, Sy. *The Tarantula Scientist*. Houghton Mifflin 2004. Describes the research that Samuel Marshall and his students are doing on tarantulas, including the largest spider on earth, the Goliath bird-eating tarantula.

Napoli, Donna Jo. North. Greenwillow Books, 2004. Tired of his mother's overprotectiveness and intrigued by the life of African American explorer Matthew Henson, twelve-year-old Alvin spends a season with a trapper near the Arctic Circle.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Saving Shiloh*. Atheneum, 1997. Marty and his family try to help Judd Travers change his mean ways, even though his neighbors continue to expect the worst of him. Mark Twain Award.

Previous books in the Shiloh trilogy are: *Shiloh* and *Shiloh Season*.

Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia*. First published 1977. During a storm, Jess' new friend Leslie meets an unexpected tragedy while trying to reach their secret kingdom of Terabithia. Newbery Medal.

Paulsen, Gary. *Hatchet*. Bradbury, 1987. After his plane crashes in the Canadian wilderness, thirteen-year-old Brian must survive with only the aid of a hatchet. Newbery Honor Companion titles are *The River*, *Brian's Winter*, and *Brian's Return*.

Peck, Richard. *Fair Weather*. Dial, 2001. In 1893 thirteen-year-old Rosie and members of her family travel from their Illinois farm to Chicago to visit Aunt Euterpe and attend the World's Columbian Exposition which, along with an encounter with Buffalo Bill and Lillian Russell, turns out to be a life-changing experience for everyone.

Ritter, John. *The Boy Who Saved Baseball*. Philomel, 2003. The fate of a small California town rests on the outcome of one baseball game, and Tom Gallagher hopes to lead his team to victory with the secrets of the now disgraced player, Dante Del Gato.

Roberts, Willo Davis. *The Kidnappers: A Mystery*. Atheneum, 1998. Because Joey likes to tell tall tales, no one will believe him when he witnesses the kidnapping of his classmate.

Springer, Nancy. *Rowan Hood, Outlaw Girl of Sherwood*. Philomel, 2001. In her quest to connect with Robin Hood, the father she has never met, thirteen-year-old Rosemary disguises herself as a boy, befriends a wolf dog, a runaway princess, and an overgrown boy whose singing is hypnotic, and makes peace with her elfin heritage.

Staples, Suzanne Fisher. *The Green Dog: A Mostly True Story*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. During the summer before fifth grade, Suzanne, a daydreaming loner who likes to fish and walk through the woods, acquires a canine companion. Based on the author's childhood in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Townley, Roderick. *The Great Good Thing*. Atheneum, 2001. Nothing ever changes inside the storybook kingdom inhabited by twelve-year-old Princess Sylvie, her parents, and many other characters until Sylvie discovers that by allying herself with the Reader she can experience new adventures beyond the confines of the book. Sequel is *Into the Labyrinth: A Novel*.

Walker, Alice. *Langston Hughes, American Poet*. HarperCollins, 2002. An illustrated biography of the Harlem poet whose works gave voice to the joy and pain of the black experience in America.

White, Ruth. *Buttermilk Hill*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. When Piper's parents divorce and gradually begin to make new lives for themselves, she faces the difficult changes, finding solace and a means of self-expression through her interest in poetry.

The Wright 3, by Balliett, Blue, 2006.

In the midst of a series of unexplained accidents and mysterious coincidences, sixthgraders Calder, Petra, and Tommy lead their classmates in an attempt to keep Frank Lloyd Wright's famous Robie House from being demolished.

Escape! : the story of the great Houdini, by Fleischman, Sid, 2006.

A biography of the magician, ghost chaser, aviator, and king of escape artists whose amazing feats are remembered long after his death in 1926.

Freedom walkers: the story of the Montgomery bus boycott, by Freedman, Russell, 2006.

Presents the story of the Montgomery bus boycott and the key persons and events that contributed to the year-long struggle for equal rights on Montgomery's city buses.

The kid who named Pluto: and the stories of other extraordinary young people in science, by McCutcheon, Marc, 2004.

The boy who dreamed of Mars -- The girl who named Pluto -- The bookworm who became a science fiction writer -- The teenager who invented television -- The curious girl who discovered sea-monster skeletons -- The high schooler who created an incredible secret code -- The math whiz who calculated the movement of the Moon -- The fourth-grader who outsmarted medical experts -- The blind boy who developed a new way to see. A collection of profiles of children and young adults whose scientific inventions made an impact on the world, including Louis Braille who discovered a way for the blind to read and write.