

## Recommended Fiction for Fifth and Sixth Grade

### **11 Birthdays** by Wendy Mass (2009)

J MAS and JAUDIOBOOK MAS

After celebrating their first nine same-day birthdays together, Amanda and Leo, having fallen out on their tenth and not speaking to each other for the last year, prepare to celebrate their eleventh birthday separately but peculiar things begin to happen as the day of their birthday begins to repeat. (Lexile 650)

### **A Corner of the Universe** by Ann M. Martin (2002)

J MAR

The summer that Hattie turns twelve, she meets the childlike uncle she never knew and becomes friends with a girl who works at the carnival that comes to Hattie's small town. (Lexile 750)

### **A Crooked Kind of Perfect** by Linda Urban (2007)

J URB and JAUDIOBOOK URB

Ten-year-old Zoe Elias, who longs to play the piano but must resign herself to learning the organ, instead, finds that her musicianship has a positive impact on her workaholic mother, her jittery father, and her school social life. (Lexile 730)

### **A Dog's Life: The Autobiography of A Stray** by Ann M. Martin (2005)

J MAR and JAUDIOBOOK MAR

Squirrel, a stray puppy, tells her life story, from her nurturing mother and brother to making her own way in the world, facing busy highways, changing seasons, and humans both gentle and brutal. (Lexile 870)

### **A Season of Gifts** by Richard Peck (2009)

J PEC and JAUDIOBOOK PEC

Relates the surprising gifts bestowed on twelve-year-old Bob Barnhart and his family, who have recently moved to a small Illinois town in 1958, by their larger-than-life neighbor, Mrs. Dowdel. (Lexile 690)

### **A Single Shard** by Linda Sue Park (2001)

J PAR and JAUDIOBOOK PAR

Tree-ear, a twelve-year-old orphan in medieval Korea, lives under a bridge in a potters' village, and longs to learn how to throw the delicate celadon ceramics himself. (Lexile 920)

### **A Tale Dark and Grimm** by Adam Gidwitz (2010)

J GID

Follows Hansel and Gretel as they walk out of their own story and into eight more tales, encountering such wicked creatures as witches, along with kindly strangers and other helpful folk. Based in part on the Grimms' fairy tales. (Lexile 690)

### **Alabama Moon** by Watt Key (2006)

J KEY and JAUDIOBOOK KEY

After the death of his father, ten-year-old Moon leaves their forest shelter home and is sent to an Alabama institution, becoming entangled in the outside world he has never known and making good friends, a relentless enemy, and finally a new life. (Lexile 720)

### **All the Lovely Bad Ones: A Ghost Story** by Mary Downing Hahn (2008)

J HAH

While spending the summer at their grandmother's Vermont inn, two prankster siblings awaken young ghosts from the inn's distant past who refuse to "rest in peace." (Lexile 670)

### **Because of Winn-Dixie** by Kate DiCamillo (2000)

J DIC and JAUDIOBOOK DIC

Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni describes her first summer in the town of Naomi, Florida, and all the good things that happen to her because of her big ugly dog Winn-Dixie. (Lexile 610)

### **Becoming Naomi Leon** by Pam Munoz Ryan (2004)

J RYA

When Naomi's absent mother resurfaces to claim her, Naomi runs away to Mexico with her great-grandmother and younger brother in search of her father. (Lexile 830)

**Brendan Buckley's Universe and Everything in It** by Sundee Tucker Frazier (2007)

J FRA

Brendan Buckley, a biracial ten-year-old, applies his scientific problem-solving ability and newfound interest in rocks and minerals to connect with his white grandfather, the president of Puyallup Rock Club, and to learn why he and Brendan's mother are estranged. (Lexile 630)

**Coraline** by Neil Gaiman (2002)

J GAI and JAUDIOBOOK GAI

Looking for excitement, Coraline ventures through a mysterious door into a world that is similar, yet disturbingly different from her own, where she must challenge a gruesome entity in order to save herself, her parents, and the souls of three others. (Lexile 740)

**Donuthead** by Sue Stauffacher (2006)

J STA

Franklin Delano Donuthead, a fifth-grader obsessed with hygiene and safety, finds an unlikely friend and protector in Sarah Kervick, the tough new student who lives in a dirty trailer, bonds with his mother, and is as "irregular" as he is. (Lexile 850)

**Dragon Rider** by Cornelia Caroline Funke (2004)

J FUN

After learning that humans are headed toward his hidden home, Firedrake, a silver dragon, is joined by a brownie and an orphan boy in a quest to find the legendary valley known as the Rim of Heaven, encountering friendly and unfriendly creatures along the way, and struggling to evade the relentless pursuit of an old enemy. (Lexile 710)

**Each Little Bird That Sings** by Deborah Wiles (2005)

J WIL and JAUDIOBOOK WIL

Comfort Snowberger is well acquainted with death since her family runs the funeral parlor in their small southern town, but even so the ten-year-old is unprepared for the series of heart-wrenching events that begins on the first day of Easter vacation with the sudden death of her beloved great-uncle Edisto. (Lexile 760)

**Edward's Eyes** by Patricia MacLachlan (2007)

J MAC and JAUDIOBOOK MAC

Edward is one of a large and close family that loves baseball, music, books, and each other, and when he unexpectedly dies and his parents donate his organs, his wonderful eyes go to a perfect recipient. (Lexile 470)

**Elijah of Buxton** by Christopher Paul Curtis (2007)

J CUR and JAUDIOBOOK CUR

In 1859, eleven-year-old Elijah Freeman, the first free-born child in Buxton, Canada, which is a haven for slaves fleeing the American south, uses his wits and skills to try to bring to justice the lying preacher who has stolen money that was to be used to buy a family's freedom. (Lexile 1070)

**Emmy and The Incredible Shrinking Rat** by Lynne Jonell (2007)

J LON

When Emmy discovers that she and her formerly loving parents are being drugged by their evil nanny with rodent potions that can change people in frightening ways, she and some new friends must try everything possible to return things to normal. (Lexile 780)

**Fairest** by Gail Carson Levine (2006)

J LEV

In a land where beauty and singing are valued above all else, Aza eventually comes to reconcile her unconventional appearance and her magical voice, and learns to accept herself for who she truly is. (Lexile 590)

**Feathers** by Jacqueline Woodson (2007)

J WOO

When a new, white student nicknamed "The Jesus Boy" joins her sixth grade class in the winter of 1971, Frannie's growing friendship with him makes her start to see some things in a new light. (Lexile 760)

**Firegirl** by Tony Abbott (2006)

J ABB

A middle school boy's life is changed when Jessica, a girl disfigured by burns, starts attending his Catholic school while receiving treatment at a local hospital. (Lexile 670)

**Flush** by Carl Hiaasen (2005)

J HIA and AUDIOBOOK HIA

With their father jailed for sinking a river boat, Noah Underwood and his younger sister, Abbey, must gather evidence that the owner of this floating casino is emptying his bilge tanks into the protected waters around their Florida Keys home. (Lexile 830)

**Found** by Margaret Peterson Haddix (2008)

J HAD

When thirteen-year-olds Jonah and Chip, who are both adopted, learn they were discovered on a plane that appeared out of nowhere, full of babies with no adults on board, they realize that they have uncovered a mystery involving time travel and two opposing forces, each trying to repair the fabric of time. (Lexile 750)

**Gossamer** by Lois Lowry (2006)

J LOW and AUDIOBOOK LOW

While learning to bestow dreams, a young dream giver tries to save an eight-year-old boy from the effects of both his abusive past and the nightmares inflicted on him by the frightening Sinisteeds. (Lexile 660)

**Granny Torrelli Makes Soup** by Sharon Creech (2003)

J CRE and AUDIOBOOK CRE

With the help of her wise old grandmother, twelve-year-old Rosie manages to work out some problems in her relationship with her best friend, Bailey, the boy next door. (Lexile 810)

**Gregor the Overlander** by Suzanne Collins (2003)

TEEN F COL

When eleven-year-old Gregor and his two-year-old sister are pulled into a strange underground world, they trigger an epic battle involving men, bats, rats, cockroaches, and spiders while on a quest foretold by ancient prophecy. (Lexile 630)

**Heart of a Samurai: Based on the True Story of Nakahama Manjiro (2010)** by Margi Preus

J PRE

In 1841, rescued by an American whaler after a terrible shipwreck leaves him and his four companions castaways on a remote island, fourteen-year-old Manjiro, who dreams of becoming a samurai, learns new laws and customs as he becomes the first Japanese person to set foot in the United States. (Lexile 760)

**Henry's Freedom Box** by Ellen Levine (2007)

E LEV

A fictionalized account of how in 1849 a Virginia slave, Henry "Box" Brown, escapes to freedom by shipping himself in a wooden crate from Richmond to Philadelphia. (Lexile 380)

**How to Steal a Dog** by Barbara O'Connor (2007)

J OCO

Living in the family car in their small North Carolina town after their father leaves them virtually penniless, Georgina, desperate to improve their situation and unwilling to accept her overworked mother's calls for patience, persuades her younger brother to help her in an elaborate scheme to get money by stealing a dog and then claiming the reward that the owners are bound to offer. (Lexile 700)

**Inkheart** by Cornelia Caroline Funke (2003)

J FUN and AUDIOBOOK FUN

Twelve-year-old Meggie learns that her father, who repairs and binds books for a living, can "read" fictional characters to life when one of those characters abducts them and tries to force him into service. (Lexile 780)

**Island of the Aunts** by Eva Ibbotson (2000)

J IBB

As they get older, several sisters decide that they must kidnap children and bring them to their secluded island home to help with the work of caring for an assortment of unusual sea creatures. (Lexile 890)

**James and the Giant Peach** by Roald Dahl (2002)

J DAH and AUDIOBOOK DAH

A young boy escapes from two wicked aunts and embarks on a series of adventures with six giant insects he meets inside a giant peach. (Lexile 870)

**Jeremy Fink and the Meaning of Life** by Wendy Mass (2006)

J MAS and AUDIOBOOK MAS

Just before his thirteenth birthday, Jeremy Fink receives a keyless locked box--set aside by his father before his death five years earlier--that purportedly contains the meaning of life. (Lexile 770)

**Lawn Boy** by Gary Paulsen (2007)

J PAU and AUDIOBOOK PAU

Things get out of hand for a twelve-year-old boy when a neighbor convinces him to expand his summer lawn mowing business. (Lexile 780)

**Loser** by Jerry Spinelli (2002)

J SPI

Even though his classmates from first grade on have considered him strange and a loser, Daniel Zinkoff's optimism and exuberance and the support of his loving family do not allow him to feel that way about himself. (Lexile 650)

**Lunch Money** by Andrew Clements (2005)

J CLE and AUDIOBOOK CLE

Twelve-year-old Greg, who has always been good at moneymaking projects, is surprised to find himself teaming up with his lifelong rival, Maura, to create a series of comic books to sell at school. (Lexile 840)

**Masterpiece** by Elise Broach (2008)

J BRO and AUDIOBOOK BRO

After Marvin, a beetle, makes a miniature drawing as an eleventh birthday gift for James, a human with whom he shares a house, the two new friends work together to help recover a Durer drawing stolen from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (Lexile 700)

**Moon Over Manifest** by Clare Vanderpool (2010)

J VAN and AUDIOBOOK VAN

Twelve-year-old Abilene Tucker is the daughter of a drifter who, in the summer of 1936, sends her to stay with an old friend in Manifest, Kansas, where he grew up, and where she hopes to find out some things about his past. (Lexile 800)

**Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom** by Carole Boston Weatherford (2006)

E TUB

Describes Tubman's spiritual journey as she hears the voice of God guiding her north to freedom on that very first trip to escape the brutal practice of forced servitude. Tubman would make nineteen subsequent trips back south, never being caught, but none as profound as this first one. (Lexile 660)

**Night of the Howling Dogs** by Graham Salisbury (2007)

J SAL

In 1975, eleven Boy Scouts, their leaders, and some new friends camping at Halape, Hawaii, find their survival skills put to the test when a massive earthquake strikes, followed by a tsunami. (Lexile 530)

**Ninth Ward** by Jewell Parker Rhodes (2010)

J RHO

In New Orleans' Ninth Ward, twelve-year-old Lanessa, who can see spirits, and her adopted grandmother have no choice but to stay and weather the storm as Hurricane Katrina bears down upon them. (Lexile 470)

**No Talking** by Andrew Clements (2007)

J CLE

The noisy fifth grade boys of Laketon Elementary School challenge the equally loud fifth grade girls to a "no talking" contest. (Lexile 820)

**Once Upon a Marigold** by Jean Ferris (2002)

J CLE

A young man with a mysterious past and a penchant for inventing things leaves the troll who raised him, meets an unhappy princess he has loved from afar, and discovers a plot against her and her father. (Lexile 840)

**One Crazy Summer** by Rita Williams-Garcia (2010)

J WIL

In the summer of 1968, after travelling from Brooklyn to Oakland, California, to spend a month with the mother they barely know, eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sisters arrive to a cold welcome as they discover that their mother, a dedicated poet and printer, is resentful of the intrusion of their visit and wants them to attend a nearby Black Panther summer camp. (Lexile 750)

**Out of My Mind** by Sharon M. Draper (2010)

J DRA

Considered by many to be mentally retarded, a brilliant, impatient fifth-grader with cerebral palsy discovers a technological device that will allow her to speak for the first time.

**Penny from Heaven** by Jennifer L. Holm (2006)

J HOL and JAUDIOBOOK HOL

As she turns twelve during the summer of 1953, Penny gains new insights into herself and her family while also learning a secret about her father's death. (Lexile 730)

**Princess Academy** by Shannon Hale (2005)

J HAL

While attending a strict academy for potential princesses with the other girls from her mountain village, fourteen-year-old Miri discovers unexpected talents and connections to her homeland. (Lexile 890)

**Project Mulberry** by Linda Sue Park (2005)

J PAR and JAUDIOBOOK PAR

While working on a project for an after-school club, Julia, a Korean American girl, and her friend Patrick learn not just about silkworms, but also about tolerance, prejudice, friendship, patience, and more. Between the chapters are short dialogues between the author and main character about the writing of the book. (Lexile 690)

**Reckless** by Cornelia Caroline Funke (2010)

J FUN

Jacob and Will Reckless have looked out for each other ever since their father disappeared, but when Jacob discovers a magical mirror that transports him to a warring world populated by witches, giants, and ogres, he keeps it to himself until Will follows him one day, with dire consequences. (Lexile 840)

**Ruby Holler** by Sharon Creech (2002)

J CRE and JAUDIOBOOK CRE

Thirteen-year-old fraternal twins Dallas and Florida have grown up in a terrible orphanage but their lives change forever when an eccentric but sweet older couple invites them each on an adventure, beginning in an almost magical place called Ruby Holler. (Lexile 660)

**Rules** by Cynthia Lord (2006)

J LOR

Frustrated at life with an autistic brother, twelve-year-old Catherine longs for a normal existence but her world is further complicated by a friendship with a young paraplegic. (Lexile 780)

**Scat** by Carl Hiaasen (2009)

J HIA

Nick and his friend Marta decide to investigate when a mysterious fire starts near a Florida wildlife preserve and an unpopular teacher goes missing. (Lexile 810)

**The Breadwinner** by Deborah Ellis (2001)

J ELL and AUDIOBOOK ELL

Because the Taliban rulers of Kabul, Afghanistan, impose strict limitations on women's freedom and behavior, eleven-year-old Parvana must disguise herself as a boy so that her family can survive after her father's arrest. (Lexile 630)

**The Candy Shop War** by Brandon Mull (2007)

J MUL and AUDIOBOOK MUL

When fifth-graders Nate, Summer, Trevor, and Pigeon meet the owner of the new candy store in town and are given a magical candy that endows them with super powers, they find that along with its benefits there are also dangerous consequences. (Lexile 750)

**The Gollywopper Games** by Jody Feldman (2008)

J FEL

Twelve-year-old Gil Goodson competes against thousands of other children at extraordinary puzzles, stunts, and more in hopes of a fresh start for his family, which has been ostracized since his father was falsely accused of embezzling from Golly Toy and Game Company. (Lexile 590)

**The Homework Machine** by Dan Gutman (2006)

J GUT

Four fifth-grade students--a geek, a class clown, a teacher's pet, and a slacker--as well as their teacher and mothers, each relate events surrounding a computer programmed to complete homework assignments. (Lexile 680)

**The Invention of Hugo Cabret** by Brian Selznick (2007)

J SEL

When twelve-year-old Hugo, an orphan living and repairing clocks within the walls of a Paris train station in 1931, meets a mysterious toyseller and his goddaughter, his undercover life and his biggest secret are jeopardized. (Lexile 820)

**The London Eye Mystery** by Siobhan Dowd (2008)

J DOW and AUDIOBOOK DOW

When Ted and Kat's cousin Salim disappears from the London Eye ferris wheel, the two siblings must work together--Ted with his brain that is "wired differently" and impatient Kat--to try to solve the mystery of what happened to Salim. (Lexile 640)

**The Magician's Elephant** by Kate DiCamillo (2009)

J DIC

When ten-year-old orphan Peter Augustus Duchene encounters a fortune teller in the marketplace one day and she tells him that his sister, who is presumed dead, is in fact alive, he embarks on a remarkable series of adventures as he desperately tries to find her. (Lexile 730)

**The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane** by Kate DiCamillo (2006)

J DIC and AUDIOBOOK DIC

Edward Tulane, a cold-hearted and proud toy rabbit, loves only himself until he is separated from the little girl who adores him and travels across the country, acquiring new owners and listening to their hopes, dreams, and histories. (Lexile 700)

**The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg** by W.R. Philbrick (2009)

J PHI and AUDIOBOOK PHI

Twelve-year-old Homer, a poor but clever orphan, has extraordinary adventures after running away from his evil uncle to rescue his brother, who has been sold into service in the Civil War. (Lexile 700)

**The Mysterious Benedict Society** by Trenton Lee Stewart (2007)

J STE

After passing a series of mind-bending tests, four children are selected for a secret mission that requires them to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules. (Lexile 840)

**The Night Fairy** by Laura Amy Schlitz (2010)

J SCH

When Flory the night fairy's wings are accidentally broken and she cannot fly, she has to learn to do everything differently. (Lexile 630)

**The Penderwicks** by Jeanne Birdsall (2005)

J BIR and AUDIOBOOK BIR

While vacationing with their widowed father in the Berkshire Mountains, four lovable sisters, ages four through twelve, share adventures with a local boy, much to the dismay of his snobbish mother. (Lexile 800)

**The Strange Case of Origami Yoda** by Tom Angleberger (2010)

J ANG

Sixth-grader Tommy and his friends describe their interactions with a paper finger puppet of Yoda, worn by their weird classmate Dwight, as they try to figure out whether or not the puppet can really predict the future. Includes instructions for making Origami Yoda. (Lexile 760)

**The True Meaning of Smekday** by Adam Rex (2007)

J REX and AUDIOBOOK REX

In the chaotic turmoil that follows the Boov invasion of Earth, eleven-year-old Gratuity Tucci finds herself driving her mother's car to Florida, where all of the humans are being relocated, with her cat and a renegade extraterrestrial named J. Lo as her copilots. (Lexile 740)

**The Underneath** by Kathi Appelt (2008)

J APP and AUDIOBOOK APP

An old hound that has been chained up at his hateful owner's run-down shack and two kittens born underneath the house endure separation, danger, and many other tribulations in their quest to be reunited and free. (Lexile 830)

**The Wolves in the Walls** by Neil Gaiman (2003)

J GAI

Lucy is sure there are wolves living in the walls of her house, although others in her family disagree, and when the wolves come out, the adventure begins. (Lexile 500)

**The Year of the Dog** by Grace Lin (2005)

J LIN

Frustrated at her seeming lack of talent for anything, a young Taiwanese American girl sets out to apply the lessons of the Chinese Year of the Dog, those of making best friends and finding oneself, to her own life. (Lexile 690)

**When You Reach Me** by Rebecca Stead (2009)

J STE and AUDIOBOOK STE

As her mother prepares to be a contestant on the 1980s television game show, "The 20,000 Pyramid," a twelve-year-old New York City girl tries to make sense of a series of mysterious notes received from an anonymous source that seems to defy the laws of time and space. (Lexile 750)