

## **Rising Fourth Grade 2020 Summer Reading List**

***Rising 4th grade students are encouraged to read at least 20 minutes everyday. Here are a few great options. Keep a list of books read for discussion purposes at the start of the year.***

### **Fiction Choices:**

#### ***Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins**

In Book One in this fantasy series, eleven-year-old Gregor is sorting laundry in the basement of his apartment when his little sister, Boots, suddenly disappears! Frantically Gregor dives down the air vent after her, falling down, down, down a long hole (like Alice in Wonderland) and landing in a dark world located beneath New York City. The Underland is filled with creepy crawlies like bats, rats and giant cockroaches - all of whom can talk. The humans who live in the fortified city of Regalia have adapted to the darkness, sporting translucent skin and purple eyes. King Vikus, Queen Solovet, and Princess Luxa believe that Gregor's arrival is no accident. According to The Prophecy of Gray, Gregor is the Overland Warrior, the "son of the sun" who is destined to save the citizens of Regalia from their terrifying enemy, the rats (the "gnawers").

#### ***The Lemonade War* by Jacqueline Davis** (or any book from the series)

With just five days left of summer vacation, Evan and Jessie launch an all-out war to see who can sell the most lemonade before school starts. As the battleground heats up, there really is no telling who will win — or if their fight will ever end.

#### ***Lawn Boy* by Gary Paulson**

Gary Paulsen's comic story about a summer job becomes a slapstick lesson in business as one boy turns a mountain of grass into a mountain of cash.

#### ***The Little House on the Prairie* by Laura Ingalls Wilder** (or any book in the series)

A family travels from the big woods of Wisconsin to a new home on the prairie, where they build a house, meet neighboring Indians, build a well, and fight a fire. Enjoy the many adventures and challenges of this loving family.

#### ***When You Reach Me* by Rebecca Stead**

Twelve-year-old Miranda encounters shifting friendships, a sudden punch, a strange homeless man and mysterious notes that hint at knowledge of the future. These and other seemingly random events converge in a brilliantly constructed plot.

***The Cricket in Times Square*** by George Selden

*The Cricket in Times Square* has been initiating bookworms since 1960 and shows no sign of stopping. These days, fantasy-series books rule the bookshelves, yet this quiet tale of friendship endures. Chester Cricket, Tucker Mouse and Harry Cat meet at a newsstand in a New York subway station when a lonely little boy, Mario Bellini, finds the cricket in a pile of trash. He decides to keep Chester as a pet, and a series of adventures follow.

***Secret School*** by Avi

The Elk Valley, Colorado schoolhouse is five miles by dirt road from the Bidson's farm. Neither Ida nor Tom Bidson is tall enough to steer, clutch and brake the family Model T, so Felix works the car's pedals with his hands while Ida kneels in the seat to adjust the throttle and steer. This amazing feat of synchronization is just a hint of the resourcefulness put into action when their school shuts down.

***The Secret History of Tom Trueheart*** by Ian Beck

The Truehearts, one of the last great adventuring families, are regularly tapped to live out the tales begun by the Story Bureau in the Land of Stories. One by one, each of the Truehearts goes missing until on the twelfth birthday, the youngest of the Truehearts is sent on the most critical mission of all –to find out what has happened to the rest of the family.

***The Landry News*** by Andrew Clements

Cara Landry pours her talent for journalism into a school newspaper that puts her teacher's job on the line, turns a school upside down, and highlights issues of fairness.

***The Penderwicks*** by Jeanne Birdsall

The six Penderwicks ( the four sisters, their abstracted Botanist father, and the family dog) are off on a summer adventure in the Berkshire Mountains where they have rented a cottage on an estate. The independent, curious children soon discover a lonely boy in need of help, and manage to set off a series of near disasters, before bringing their eventful summer to a satisfactory end. Feel free to read the delightful sequel entitled [The Penderwicks on Gardam Street](#).

***Call of the Wild*** by Jack London

The Call of the Wild (1903) depicts the tale of a peaceful domestic half breed dog (half St. Bernard and half Scotch Shepherd) named Buck. The story is told from the point of view of Buck. Because of the nature of his breeds, Buck is a very large, strong dog and resembles a wolf. This is the endearing story about Buck's journey from a peaceful domestic life to a wild existence as a lead wolf.

***Frindle*** by Andrew Clements

Nicholas Allen has plenty of ideas. Who can forget the time he turned his third-grade classroom into a tropical island, or the times he fooled his teacher by chirping like a blackbird? But now Nick's in fifth grade, and it looks like his days as a troublemaker are over. This quirky, imaginative tale about creative thought and the power of words will have readers inventing their own words.

***A Nest for Celeste*** by Henry Cole

This beautifully illustrated book combines talking animal fantasy with historical fiction. Celeste, a winsome mouse, and her friend James, the teenage painter apprenticed to Jon James Audubon, tell the story of Audubon's efforts to document North American birds while visiting Oakley Plantation in 1821. The story also chronicles Celeste's many adventures as she befriends captured birds and fends off the family cat and two bullying rats.

***Summer of the Wolves*** by Lisa Williams Kline

Stephanie and Diana are having a hard time adjusting to life as new stepsisters. The girls "pretend" to like each other, but it's pretty hard considering they are complete opposites. When their new family takes their first-ever vacation to a horse ranch in North Carolina, not even long horseback rides in the forest can tame their tempers. Diana's anger issues and Stephanie's fear of everything prove disastrous, until Diana discovers the caged wolves in the deep woods. She vows to free them, and surprisingly, Stephanie agrees to help. But their actions have unforeseen consequences, and if there's any chance to make things right, Stephanie and Diana must put their differences aside.

***Never Blame the Umpire*** by Gene Fehler

Kate is having the best summer a sports-loving eleven-year-old could possibly have. Baseball. Tennis, and to top it off, Kate has just started a three-week class where she's discovering a new love: poetry. Then comes the news that tears Kate's world apart. In her close-knit family, Kate has always felt God's love and protection. But how can she trust God now? Do sports or poetry matter when tragedy strikes? In Kate's darkest hour, her mother's faith shines its brightest, helping Kate to see that life is still beautiful and God is still good.

***Tiger Rising*** by Kate Dicamillo

Walking through the misty Florida woods one morning, twelve-year-old Rob Horton is stunned to encounter a tiger - a real-life, very large tiger - pacing back and forth in a cage. What's more, on the same extraordinary day, he meets Sistine Bailey, a girl who shows her feelings as readily as Rob hides his. As they learn to trust each other, and ultimately, to be friends, Rob and Sistine prove that some things - like memories, and heartaches, and tigers - can't be locked up forever.

***Chicken Feathers*** by Joy Cowley

Josh is dismayed and worried. His no nonsense grandma has arrived at the arm to help out while his mother awaits the birth of his baby sister in the hospital. Grandma's first act is to evict Semolina, Josh's pet chicken, from his bedroom. Semolina has three secrets: she has an insatiable taste for Grandma's vile homemade brew, she talks, and she holds the key to a barnyard mystery. Most importantly, she is Josh's confidante and now she is missing!

***Granny Torrelli Makes Soup*** by Sharon Creech

When Rosie is about to lose her best friend, she heads for Granny Torrelli's kitchen. There is no better place to solve life's problems. Rosie soaks up her grandmother's wisdom as easily as she breathes in the scent of the savory soups and sauces simmering on the stove.

***Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nimh*** by Robert C. O'Brien

Mrs. Frisby, a widowed mouse with four small children, is faced with a terrible problem. She must move her family to their summer quarters immediately, or face almost certain death. But her youngest son, Timothy, lies ill with pneumonia and must not be moved. Fortunately, she encounters the rats of NIMH, an extraordinary breed of highly intelligent creatures, who come up with a brilliant solution to her dilemma.

***Shiloh*** by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

When Marty Preston comes across a young beagle in the hills behind his home, it's love at first sight -- and also big trouble. It turns out the dog, which Marty names Shiloh, belongs to Judd Travers, who drinks too much and has a gun -- and abuses his dogs. So when Shiloh runs away from Judd to Marty, Marty just has to hide him and protect him from Judd. But Marty's secret becomes too big for him to keep to himself, and it exposes his entire family to Judd's anger. How far will Marty have to go to make Shiloh his?

***Encyclopedia Brown Series*** by Donald Sobol

Leroy Brown, aka Encyclopedia Brown, is Idaville neighborhood's ten-year-old star detective. With an uncanny knack for trivia, he solves mysteries for the neighborhood kids through his own detective agency. But his dad also happens to be the chief of the Idaville police department, and every night around the dinner table, Encyclopedia helps him solve his most baffling crimes.

***The Star of Kazan*** by Eva Ibbotson

Annika is a foundling discovered in a chapel high up in the Swiss Alps by the cook and housekeeper to a family of professors in nineteenth century Vienna. Annika's life becomes a fairy tale when an aging actress she has befriended leaves her a trunk with all her belongings. Almost simultaneously, a woman named Edeltraut Von Tannenburg shows up claiming to be Annika's mother and demanding the return of her child. Vienna comes alive in the old-fashioned historical drama filled with action and suspense.

***Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*** by E.L. Konigsburg

When suburban Claudia Kincaid decides to run away, she knows she doesn't just want to run *from* somewhere she wants to run *to* somewhere--to a place that is comfortable, beautiful, and preferably elegant. She chooses the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Knowing that her younger brother, Jamie, has money and thus can help her with the serious cash flow problem she invites him along. Once settled into the museum, Claudia and Jamie, find themselves caught up in the mystery of an angel statue that the museum purchased at an auction for a bargain price of \$250. The statue is possibly an early work of the Renaissance master Michelangelo, and therefore worth millions. Is it? Or isn't it? Claudia is determined to find out. This quest leads Claudia to Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, the remarkable old woman who sold the statue and to some equally remarkable discoveries about herself.

***A Crooked Kind of Perfect*** by Linda Urban

Zoe Elias, daughter of a workaholic mother and agoraphobic father, envisions herself as a famous concert pianist. How she keeps her dreams on track and mends her family, after so many false starts and near disasters, is a winning tale.

***Out of the Dust*** by Karen Hesse

This gripping story, written in sparse first-person, free-verse poems, is the compelling tale of Billie Jo's struggle to survive during the dust bowl years of the Depression. With stoic courage, she learns to cope with the loss of her mother and her grieving father's slow deterioration. There is hope at the end when Billie Jo's badly burned hands are healed, and she is able to play her beloved piano again. This is a 1998 Newbery Medal winner.

***Peter and the Star Catchers*** by Dave Barry

Don't even *think* of starting this book unless you're sitting in a comfortable chair and have lots of time. A fast-paced, impossible-to-put-down adventure awaits as the young orphan Peter and his mates are dispatched to an island ruled by the evil King Zarboff. They set sail aboard the *Never Land*, a ship carrying a precious and mysterious trunk in its cargo hold, and the journey quickly becomes fraught with excitement and danger.

***The Mouse and the Motorcycle*** by Beverly Cleary

In this imaginative adventure from Newbery Medal-winning author Beverly Cleary, a young mouse named Ralph is thrown into a world of excitement when a boy and his shiny toy motorcycle check into the Mountain View Inn. When the ever-curious Ralph spots Keith's red toy motorcycle, he vows to ride it. So when Keith leaves the bike unattended in his room one day, Ralph makes his move. But with all this freedom (and speed!) comes a lot of obstacles. Whether dodging a rowdy terrier or keeping his nosy cousins away from his new wheels, Ralph has a lot going on! With a pal like Keith always looking out for him, there's nothing this little mouse can't handle.

***Stuart Little*** by E.B. White

Stuart Little is no ordinary mouse. Born to a family of humans, he lives in New York City with his parents, his older brother George, and Snowbell the cat. Though he's shy and thoughtful, he's also a true lover of adventure. Stuart's greatest adventure comes when his best friend, a beautiful little bird named Margalo, disappears from her nest. Determined to track her down, Stuart ventures away from home for the very first time in his life. He finds adventure aplenty.

***Igraine the Brave*** by Cornelia Funke

In this delightful madcap adventure, Igraine endeavors to become a knight like her grandfather despite being born into a family of talented and eccentric magicians. He talents are not fully appreciated until the family's famous singing books become endangered.

***Thunder from the Sea*** by Joan Hiatt Harlow

It seemed like a dream come true when Tom finds a home with the Murray's. He is a long way from the mission orphanage that has been his home for so long, but he quickly takes to a fisherman's life. After pulling a puppy from the sea, his life seems complete until a struggle begins to make the dog truly his to keep.

***The Year of Miss Agnes*** by Kirkpatrick Hill

Teachers never seem to last more than a year at Frederika's one room school in rural Alaskan Athabascan village, until an Englishwoman, a teacher unlike any they have had before, shows up in front of the class one day.

***The Boxcar Children Beginning*** by Patricia MacLachlan

Before they were the Boxcar Children, Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny Alden lived with their parents at Fair Meadow Farm. Newbery-Award winning author Patricia MacLachlan pays loving tribute to the classic novel by Gertrude Chandler Warner in this story of the Alden children's origins and the challenges they faced before their boxcar adventures.

***Elijah of Buxton*** by Christopher Paul Curtis

Eleven-year-old Elijah lives in Buxton, Canada, a settlement of runaway slaves near the American border. He's the first child in town to be born free, and he ought to be famous just for that. Unfortunately, all that most people see is a "fra-gile" boy who's scared of snakes and talks too much. But everything changes when a former slave steals money from Elijah's friend, who has been saving to buy his family out of captivity in the South. Now it's up to Elijah to track down the thief--and his dangerous journey just might make a hero out of him, if only he can find the courage to get back home.

*Book Summaries provided by Amazon.*

## **Nonfiction Choices:**

***Let It Begin Here!*** by Dennis Fradin

In this rousing account of Paul Revere's ride, and the Battles of Lexington and Concord, the details of the opening events of the Revolutionary War become clear and immediate. The excitement captured in the text is also expressed by the action packed illustrations.

***Give Me Liberty! The Story of the Declaration of Independence*** by Russell Freedman

In a dramatic account, the author of the Newberry award-winning Lincoln: A Photobiography, describes the overheated times that lead to a revolutionary document.

***Promises to Keep*** by Sharon Robinson

In a warm, intimate biography filled with family photographs, the author shares the story of her father's life. Her insights and her ability to tell his story against the backdrop of the Civil Rights Movement make this look at a legendary baseball player especially appealing and important.

***Scholastic I Am Biography Series***

This series offers various biographies on famous people.

***Penguin Young Readers Group Who Is / Was Biography Series***

This series offers various biographies on famous people.

***Random House Landmark Books Series***

This series offers various nonfiction selections on the History of the United States.

***Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Wartime Sarajevo*** by Zlata Filipovic

When Zlata's Diary was first published at the height of the Bosnian conflict, it became an international bestseller and was compared to *The Diary of Anne Frank*, both for the freshness of its voice and the grimness of the world it describes. It begins as the day-today record of the life of a typical eleven-year-old girl, preoccupied by piano lessons and birthday parties. But as war engulfs Sarajevo, Zlata Filipovic becomes a witness to food shortages and the deaths of friends and learns to wait out bombardments in a neighbor's cellar. Yet throughout she remains courageous and observant. The result is a book that has the power to move and instruct readers a world away.

***Girls Who Rocked the World*** by Amelie Welden

The only book to profile girl heroines who made their mark on the world before turning twenty. Why is it that girls who want to be basketball stars or presidents of their country grow into teenagers who doubt they will ever do anything important? What are we telling girls about what they can and can't achieve? There have been many influential girls throughout history, but their stories are seldom told.

***The Giant and How He Humbugged America*** by Jim Murphy

Two-time Newbery Honor Book author has written an amazing account of one of America's most famous hoaxes! When a 10-foot tall purported "petrified man" is unearthed from a backyard in upstate New York in 1869, the discovery immediately turns into a spectacle of epic proportions. News of the giant spreads like wildfire, and well over a thousand people come to view him in the first five days alone! Everyone has their own idea of his true origin: Is he an ancient member of the local Onandaga Indian tribe? Is he a biblical giant like Goliath? Soon the interests of world-renowned scientists and people from around the globe are piqued as arguments flare over who he is, where he came from, and if he is real.

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