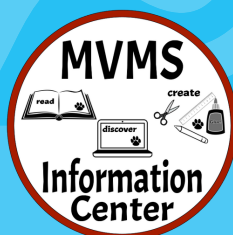
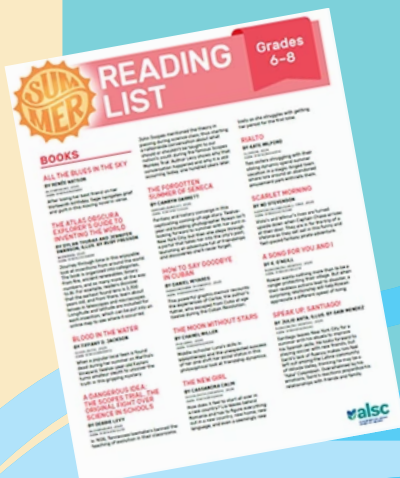


READ A BOOK RECOMMENDED BY THE ALSC

<https://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/book-lists/summer-2026>



"The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) is the world's largest organization dedicated to the support and enhancement of library service to children. From creative programming and best practices to continuing education and professional connections—ALSC members are innovators in the field of children's library service."
- ALSC Website About Us Page





READING LIST

Grades
3-5



BOOKS

3 WEEKS IN THE RAINFOREST: A RAPID INVENTORY IN THE AMAZON

BY JENNIFER SWANSON

CHARLESBRIDGE, 2025
ISBN: 9781623543167

Selected as an NSTA/CBC Outstanding Science Trade Book for Children, this photographic nonfiction book journeys to the Amazon alongside the rapid inventory team from the Field Museum in Chicago. Includes author's notes, index, and photo credits, with a free activity kit also available on the publisher's website.

AKEEM KEEPS BEES! A CLOSE-UP LOOK AT THE HONEY MAKERS AND POLLINATORS OF SANKOFA FARMS

BY KAMAL E. BELL AND AKEEM BELL,
ILLUS. BY DARNELL JOHNSON

STOREY, 2025
ISBN: 9781635866094

This graphic-novel-style nonfiction book is conversational yet educational, with speech bubbles, traditional text, illustrations, color photos, a glossary, and an index. Kids will be inspired to take a closer look at bees this summer!

BAD BADGER: A LOVE STORY

BY MARYROSE WOOD,
ILLUS. BY GIULIA GHIGINI

UNION SQUARE KIDS, 2025
ISBN: 9781454953456

Septimus the badger isn't sure he's a badger. Is that why he can't find his friend, Gully? Determined to find where his only friend went, Septimus goes on a journey where he may also find himself.

THE BLACK MAMBAS: THE WORLD'S FIRST ALL-WOMAN ANTI- POACHING UNIT

BY KELLY CRULL

MILLBROOK, 2025
ISBN: 9798765627259

This fantastically multilayered nonfiction book is about the formidable group of women in Africa who protect critically endangered rhinos and pangolins. Forty-two pages of kick-butt vibes may inspire kids to do something for their community during their summer vacation.

BUSTED

BY DAN GEMEINHART

HENRY HOLT, 2025
ISBN: 9781250378361

Oscar's normal summer day is turned upside down when he ends up on a wild road trip with a senior ex-mobster.



CASEY'S CASES: THE MYSTERIOUS NEW GIRL

BY KAY HEALY

HOLIDAY/NEALPORTER, 2025
ISBN: 9780823456505

Upbeat but clueless Casey must solve the mystery of who the new girl is at her school.



CHICKENPOX

BY REMY LAI

HOLT, 2025
ISBN: 9781250863300

In 1994 Indonesia, twelve-year-old Abby is forced to quarantine at home with her wild siblings when the whole family comes down with chickenpox.

DREAM ON

BY SHANNON HALE,
ILLUS. BY MARCELA CESPEDES

ROARING BROOK, 2025
ISBN: 9781250843067

Cassie is tired of her life. She feels constantly overlooked by her family, and her best friend has found another. A sweepstakes surprise in the mail promises that she's the winner! Will this give her what she needs to stand out?



THE EXPERIMENT

BY REBECCA STEAD

FEIWEL & FRIENDS, 2025
ISBN: 9781250374769

Nathan believes he is an alien who is part of an experiment on Earth, along with the rest of his family. When strange events start happening, like growing a tail, Nathan is thrust into an adventure that will make him question everything he thought he knew about his life.



THE FIVE WOLVES

BY PETER MCCARTY

FIRST SECOND, 2025
ISBN: 9781250170620

Five wolves wander the world looking for new vistas to draw and paint. Follow their adventures and investigate the incredibly detailed illustrations they leave behind.

GABBY TORRES GETS A BILLION FOLLOWERS

BY ANGELA DOMINGUEZ

ROARING BROOK, 2025
ISBN: 9781250901361

When fourth-grader Gabby wants to start a social media profile for her club, her parents try to warn her about the difficulties of life online. When a mean comment is left on a post, Gabby spirals out of control trying to find out who "anonymous" could be.



A HERO'S GUIDE TO SUMMER VACATION

BY PABLO CARTAYA

PENGUIN/KOKILA, 2025
ISBN: 9780451479754

Gonzalo, who recently lost his father, feels shunted away with a grandfather he hardly knows. It doesn't help that his grandfather is a world-famous fantasy author who seems to connect with everyone but his own grandson. Will it take a cross-country road trip on the way to promote his grandfather's final book to help them find out who each other is?



I'M A DUMBO OCTOPUS! A GRAPHIC GUIDE TO CEPHALOPODS

BY ANNE LAMBELET

LEARNER/GRAPHICUNIVERSE, 2025
ISBN: 9798765661376

Don't let your brain turn to mush this summer! Can you guess how many brains an octopus has? Nine! Learn more about octopuses in this conversational graphic novel with light humor and lots of facts.

JOURNEY OF THE HUMBACKS

BY JULIANA MUÑOZ TORO,
ILLUS. BY DIPACHO

EERDMANS, 2025
ISBN: 9780802856432

Did you know that humpback whales are the most acrobatic of all whales? Readers will learn fascinating facts about the humpback in this beautifully illustrated nonfiction book. Includes infographics, back matter, and a special note from the creators.

JUST IN CASE: SAVING SEEDS IN THE SVALBARD GLOBAL SEED VAULT

BY MEGAN CLENDENAN,
ILLUS. BY BRITTANY CICHESSE

CHARLESBRIDGE, 2025
ISBN: 9781623544805

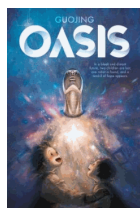
Keep cool this summer by learning about the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway, where more than 580 million seeds are kept safe deep underground. With a new conservation perspective—it is not just animals that need our help—this seed vault makes sure unused seeds from all over the world do not become extinct.

OASIS

BY GUOJING

HOLT/GODWIN, 2025
ISBN: 9781250818379

In this powerful graphic novel for middle-grade readers, two siblings befriend an intelligent robot in a dystopian desert world.



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OCTOPUS MOON

BY BOBBIE PYRON

PENGUIN/NANCYPOLSEN, 2025
ISBN: 9780593616291

Fifth-grader Pearl loves watching the sea life at the local aquarium. If only life was as calm and easy as swimming around and around. Pearl feels that life is changing too much, making it too hard to do things she used to enjoy. This novel in verse explores depression in children and the healing that is possible.

A SEA OF LEMON TREES: THE CORRIDO OF ROBERTO ALVAREZ

BY MARÍA DOLORES ÁGUILA

ROARING BROOK, 2025
ISBN: 9781250342614

Young Roberto loves school, even though he knows he's sometimes treated differently because he is the son of Mexican immigrants. When the school board decides to send the Mexican children to a separate school and provide them with fewer resources, Roberto and his family stand up for what's right. This novel is based on the true story of the first successful desegregation suit, Roberto Alvarez v. the Board of Trustees of the Lemon Grove School District.

SECRETS OF THE SNAKESTONE

BY PIU DASGUPTA

NOSY CROW, 2025
ISBN: 9798887771939

Zélie is stuck as a maid for an odious woman in 1890's Paris, torn away from her beloved Baba, who was left behind in India. Trouble is afoot when she discovers that an exotic locket belonging to her father has been found in the Paris sewers. Can she save her father and, thus, the world?



XOLO

BY DONNA BARBA HIGUERA,
ILLUS. BY MARIANA RUIZ JOHNSON

LEVINE QUERIDO, 2025
ISBN: 9781646147021

In this creation tale from Aztec mythology, Xolo, a dog-headed god of lightning, death, and misfortune is an unlikely hero. Illustrations in the style of the Codex Borgia, an ancient Mexican manuscript, are rich in color and capture the reader's curiosity.

DIGITAL

GREEKING OUT

[nationalgeographic.com/
podcasts/greeking-out](https://nationalgeographic.com/podcasts/greeking-out)

National Geographic's podcast Greeking Out introduces children to stories of ancient Greece.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS

kids.nationalgeographic.com
un trivia, puzzles, quizzes, and
video games for STEM-loving kids
on this interactive website.

WOW IN THE WORLD

tinkercast.com/wow-in-the-world

This weekly Tinkercast podcast gets kids excited about science and technology.

www.ala.org/alsc

The 2026 Summer Reading List was created by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA). Titles on this list were selected by members of ALSC's Quicklists Consulting Committee.

For more booklists, please visit www.ala.org/alsc/booklists.

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READING LIST

Grades
6–8

BOOKS

ALL THE BLUES IN THE SKY

BY RENÉE WATSON

BLOOMSBURY, 2025

ISBN: 9781547605897

After losing her best friend on her thirteenth birthday, Sage navigates grief and guilt in this moving novel in verse.



THE ATLAS OBSCURA EXPLORER'S GUIDE TO INVENTING THE WORLD

BY DYLAN THURASAND JENNIFER SWANSON, ILLUS. BY RUBY FRESSON

WORKMAN, 2025
ISBN: 9781523516889

Journey through time in this enjoyable look at inventions from around the world. The book is organized into categories, from fire, ancient renewables, binary numbers, and so many more, all the way to AI. For example, readers discover that the earliest found lens is 2,700 years old, and from there, learn about lenses in telescopes and microscopes. Longitude and latitude are included for each invention, which can be put into an online map to see where it occurred.

A DANGEROUS IDEA: THE SCOPES TRIAL, THE ORIGINAL FIGHT OVER SCIENCE IN SCHOOLS

BY DEBBIE LEVY

BLOOMSBURY, 2025
ISBN: 9781547612215

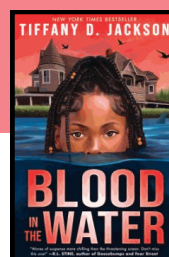
In 1925, Tennessee lawmakers banned the teaching of evolution in their classrooms. John Scopes mentioned the theory in passing during science class, thus starting a nationwide conversation about what should or shouldn't be taught to our nation's youth during the famous Scopes Monkey Trial. Author Levy shows why that conversation happened and why it is still occurring today, one hundred years later.

BLOOD IN THE WATER

BY TIFFANY D. JACKSON

SCHOLASTIC, 2025
ISBN: 9781338849912

When a popular local teen is found dead during her summer on Martha's Vineyard, twelve-year-old Kaylani turns amateur sleuth to uncover the truth in this gripping mystery.



THE FORGOTTEN SUMMER OF SENECA

BY CAMRYN GARRETT

ABRAMS/AMULET, 2025
ISBN: 9781419773334

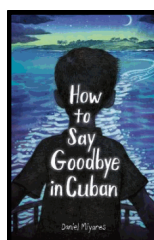
Fantasy and history converge in this captivating coming-of-age story. Twelve-year-old budding photographer Rowan isn't looking forward to summer with her aunt in New York City, but then she steps through a portal that takes her into the city's past, launching an adventure full of friendships and discoveries she'll never forget.

HOW TO SAY GOODBYE IN CUBAN

BY DANIEL MIYARES

RANDOM/ANNE SCHWARTZ, 2025
ISBN: 9780593568293

This powerful graphic memoir recounts the experiences of Carlos, the author's father, who escaped from Cuba at age twelve during the Cuban Revolution.



THE MOON WITHOUT STARS

BY CHANEL MILLER

PHILOMEL, 2026
ISBN: 9780593624555

Middle-schooler Luna's skills in bibliotherapy and the unexpected success of her zine shift her social status in this philosophical look at friendship dynamics.

THE NEW GIRL

BY CASSANDRA CALIN

SCHOLASTIC/GRAPHIX, 2024
ISBN: 9781338762464

How does it feel to start all over in a new country? Lia leaves behind Romania and has to figure everything out in a new country, new home, new language, and even a seemingly new body as she struggles with getting her period for the first time.



RIALTO

BY KATE MILFORD

CLARION, 2026
ISBN: 9781328466914

Two sisters struggling with their sibling dynamic spend summer vacation in a magic-tinged town where lore around an abandoned amusement park enthralls them.



SCARLET MORNING

BY ND STEVENSON

HARPERCOLLINS/QUILLTREE, 2025
ISBN: 9780063210349

Viola's and Wilmur's lives are turned upside down when Captain Chase arrives at their door. They are in for the trip of a lifetime as they set sail in this funny and fast-paced fantasy pirate adventure.



A SONG FOR YOU AND I

BY K. O'NEILL

RANDOM/RHGRAPHIC, 2025
ISBN: 9780593182314

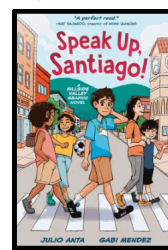
Rowan wants nothing more than to be a ranger protecting their village. But when their reckless actions lead to disaster, a surprising relationship will help Rowan appreciate a different speed of living.

SPEAK UP, SANTIAGO!

BY JULIO ANTA, ILLUS. BY GABI MENDEZ

RANDOM/RH GRAPHIC, 2025
ISBN: 9780593651643

Santiago leaves New York City for a summer with his abuela to improve his Spanish skills. He looks forward to playing soccer with new friends, but Santi's lack of fluency makes him feel left out among the Latine community of Hillside Valley, thinking he may be a "fake" Colombian. Overwhelmed by his emotions, Santi's reactions jeopardize his relationships with friends and family.

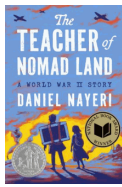


THE TEACHER OF NOMAD LAND: A WORLD WAR II STORY

BY DANIEL NAYERI

LEVINEQUERIDO/ARTHUR A. LEVINE, 2025
ISBN: 9781646145669

Orphaned siblings navigate the perilous landscape of neutral Iran as Axis and Allied forces converge there in 1941 in this poetic and gentle World War II story.



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THE TROUBLE WITH HEROES

BY KATE MESSNER

BLOOMSBURY, 2025
ISBN: 9781547616398

After damaging a tombstone, Finn must hike the forty-six Adirondack peaks, where he learns about himself and deals with the trauma of his father's death.

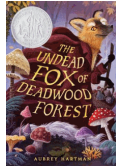


THE UNDEAD FOX OF DEADWOOD FOREST

BY AUBREY HARTMAN

LITTLE, BROWN, 2025
ISBN: 9780316575720

Clare ushers animal souls to their afterlives, but the arrival of stubborn badger Gingersnipes sends Clare off on a treacherous mission to find answers to questions Clare fears asking; a tender and quirky masterpiece.



THE VANISHING OF LAKE PEIGNEUR: A GRAPHIC NOVEL BASED ON A TRUE STORY

BY ALLAN WOLF,
ILLUS. BY JOSE PIMIENTA

CANDLEWICK, 2025
ISBN: 9781536217438

For fans of the I Survived series by Lauren Tarshis, this tells the little-known true story of a mining disaster that caused a whole lake in Louisiana to disappear. Great for fans of both historical and environmental reads. Pair it with *Junius Leak and the Spiraling Vortex of Doom*, also by Wolf.

WHALE EYES: A MEMOIR ABOUT SEEING AND BEING SEEN

BY JAMES ROBINSON,
ILLUS. BY BRIAN REA

PENGUIN WORKSHOP, 2025
ISBN: 9780593523957

James Robinson has a visible disability, exotropia, which means his eyes are not aligned. Through unconventional formatting and multimedia, readers are able to view the world as James does and to explore the power of human connection.

WINNIE NASH IS NOT YOUR SUNSHINE

BY NICOLE MELLEBY

ALGONQUIN, 2024
ISBN: 9781643753133

There's a lot on Winnie's plate this summer, from her dad's new job to her mom's post-miscarriage pregnancy. To top it all off, Winnie's parents ask her to go back into the closet while she's staying with her grandma in New Jersey. Winnie spends the summer figuring out how to be herself while doing her best to live up to expectations that don't quite fit. Winnie's challenges and hopes are handled with honesty and humor in this heartfelt tween novel about pride, community, friendship, and family.

A WORLD WITHOUT SUMMER: A VOLCANO ERUPTS, A CREATURE AWAKENS, AND THE SUN GOES OUT

BY NICHOLAS DAY,
ILLUS. BY YAS IMAMURA

RANDOM HOUSE STUDIO, 2025
ISBN: 9780593643877

This engaging nonfiction book tells the story of Mount Tambora's 1815 eruption and the "Year Without a Summer," connecting the dots by exploring the global impact of this event on weather, society, art, and literature.



A WORLD WORTH SAVING

BY KYLE LUKOFF

DIAL, 2025
ISBN: 9780593618981

When A came out as trans, his parents were less than thrilled. Now he's stuck in an anti-trans group while his parents try to "fix" him. The problem is, not only is A in danger, but the whole world is also in peril from pain-eating demons. If A can't even get his parents to accept him as he is, how is he going to save the world?

DIGITAL

KIDSTHINKDESIGN: A KIDS DESIGN COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

kidsthinkdesign.org

This site is dedicated to the inspiration and education of future designers. Activities and resources include access to books on design, a design lab that connects kids with professionals, and a website that showcases kids' original designs and thinking.

TEDED VIDEOS

ed.ted.com

On this website, both TED talks and original animations spark middle-schoolers' curiosity in a wide range of fields.



www.ala.org/alsc

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