

FIFTH GRADE SUGGESTED READING

ANNE FRANK, THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL

by Anne Frank

Discovered in the attic in which she spent the last years of her life, Anne Frank's remarkable diary has become a world classic – a powerful reminder of the horrors of war and an eloquent testament to the human spirit. In 1942, with the Nazis occupying Holland, 13-year-old Anne and her Jewish family went into hiding in the “secret annex” of an old office building; while living there, Anne recorded her experiences in a diary. By turns thoughtful, moving, and amusing, her account offers a fascinating commentary on human courage and a compelling self-portrait of an extraordinary young woman whose life was tragically cut short.

CHASING REDBIRD

by Sharon Creech

Zinnia Taylor lives in Bybanks, Kentucky, with too many brothers and sisters – a mess of “tadpoles” and “pumpkins” is what her uncle Nate calls them. When Zinny discovers a mysterious, overgrown trail that begins on her family's farm, she's determined to clear it, from start to finish. For she's finally found a place of her own, a place where she can go, away from her family, to hear herself think. But what Zinny didn't realize is that the mysteries of the trail are intertwined with her own unanswered questions and family secrets, and that the trail – and her passion to uncover it – is leading her on a journey home. CHASING REDBIRD is a powerful, beautifully crafted story about a young girl discovering that life is a tangle of mysteries, surprises, and everyday occurrences – a journey that often needs unraveling and that sometimes must be traveled alone.

DEAR MR. HENSHAW

by Beverly Cleary, Paul O. Zelinsky (illus.)

When fourth grader Leigh Botts asks Mr. Henshaw to write to him personally, he gets more than he bargained for. Mr. Henshaw's letters are full of questions, and Leigh is getting tired of answering them. But as he continues his correspondence with his favorite author, he not only gets plenty of tips on writing, but he also finds a wise and thoughtful friend to whom he can tell his troubles.

FRINDLE

By Andrew Clements, Brian Selznick (illus.)

When he decides to turn his fifth-grade teacher's love of the dictionary around on her, clever Nick Allen invents a new word and begins a chain of events that quickly moves beyond his control.

FROM THE MIXED-UP FILES OF MRS. BASIL E. FRANKWEILER

by E. L. Konigsburg

The enchanting story of the unappreciated Claudia Kincaid, "boring straight-A Claudia" (oldest child and only girl and almost too old for half-fare tickets), who runs away with her little brother Jamie to lie in the Metropolitan Museum, *FILES* is a sentimental favorite with a remarkable heroine. Crammed with fascinating details – strategies for hiding in a museum, techniques for bathing in a fountain, the smell of a 16th-century bed (musty), and tantalizing peeks at the Met and its treasures – it's a grand adventure. More important, *FILES* is the story of Claudia's quest to define herself. In the fulfillment of that quest, her own resourcefulness is bolstered by a statue that may or may not be by Michelangelo; a brother who proves to be a fabulous ally; and the wise, prickly Mrs. Frankweiler herself.

HOLES

by Louis Sachar

As further evidence of his family's bad fortune, which they attribute to a curse on a distant relative, Stanley Yelnats is sent to a hellish boys' juvenile detention center in the Texas desert. As punishment, the boys here must each dig a hole every day, five feet deep and five feet across. Ultimately, Stanley "digs up the truth" – and through his experience, finds his first real friend, a treasure, and a new sense of himself. *HOLES* is a wildly inventive, darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment – and redemption.

IN THE YEAR OF THE BOAR AND JACKIE ROBINSON

by Bette Boa Lord, Marc Simont (illus.)

Shirley Temple Wong sails from China to America with a heart full of dreams. Her new home is Brooklyn, New York. America is indeed a land full of wonders, but Shirley doesn't know any English, so it's hard to make friends. Then a miracle – baseball – happens. It is 1974, and Jackie Robinson, star of the Brooklyn Dodgers, is everyone's hero. Jackie Robinson is proving that a black man, the grandson of a slave, can make a difference in America. And for Shirley as well, on the ball field and off, America becomes the land of opportunity.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

by Scott O'Dell

In the Pacific there is an island that looks like a big fish sunning itself in the sea. Around it, blue dolphins swim, otters play, and sea elephants and sea birds abound. Once, Indians also lived on the island. And when they left and sailed to the east, one young girl was left behind. This is the story of Karana, the Indian girl who lived alone for years on the Island of the Blue Dolphins. Year after year, she watched one season pass into another and waited for a ship to take her away. But while she waited, she kept herself alive by building a shelter, making weapons, finding food, and fighting her enemies, the wild dogs. *Island of the Blue Dolphins* is not only an unusual adventure of survival but also a tale of natural beauty and personal discovery.

MATILDA

by Roald Dahl, Quentin Blake (illus.)

Matilda Wormwood started reading books at the age of four, but her crooked father and bingo-playing mother regard book reading as a waste of time – and much prefer watching TV. In fact, they take no notice of their genius daughter at all! Only Miss Honey, Matilda's lovely and gentle teacher, recognizes her special gifts. Yet Miss Honey has problems of her own: Her aunt is the tyrannical Miss Trunchbull, an evil headmistress who bullies children and parents alike – and has taken Miss Honey's house and money. Can Matilda use her extraordinary talents to seek revenge – and make all of the wrongdoing grown-ups pay? Also recommended: *James and the Giant Peach*.

MICK HART WAS HERE

By Barbara Park

How could someone like Mick die? He was the kid who freaked out his mom by putting a ceramic eye in a defrosted chicken, the kid who did a wild dance in front of the whole school – and the kid who, if only he had worn his bicycle helmet, would still be alive today. But now Phoebe Harte's 12-year-old brother is gone, and Phoebe's world has turned upside down. With her trademark candor and compassion, beloved middle-grade writer Barbara Park tells how Phoebe copes with her painful loss in this story filled with sadness, humor – and hope.

MY DANIEL

by Pam Conrad

Wandering through the Natural History Museum with her grandchildren, Julia Creath feels the presence of her dead brother, Daniel. She remembers a time when follies fever hit everyone, old and young – a time when people would even kill for those old bones under the ground. Julia becomes the Nebraska farm girl she once was, as she weaves together the story of the great dinosaur rush – an adventurous tale of love and treachery, but most of all the story of her own childhood, and of the older brother she loved more

than anything. Daniel had a dream: to save their family farm by finding a dinosaur. It was a dream that Julia shared – and that she alone would see come true.

NUMBER THE STARS

By Lois Lowry

Ten-year-old Annemarie Johansen and her best friend Ellen Rosen often think about life before the war. But it's now 1943, and their life in Copenhagen is filled with school, food shortages, and the Nazi soldiers marching in their town. When the Nazis begin "relocating" the Jews of Denmark, Ellen moves in with the Johansens and pretends to be part of the family. And as Annemarie helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis and embarks on a dangerous mission, she learns how to be brave and courageous – to save her best friend's life.

SHILOH

by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

Eleven-year-old Marty Preston loves to spend time up in the hills behind his home near Friendly, West Virginia. Sometimes he takes his .22 rifle to see what he can shoot, like some cans lined up on a rail fence. Other times he goes up early in the morning just to sit and watch the fox and deer. But one summer Sunday, Marty comes across something different on the road just past the old Shiloh schoolhouses – a young beagle – and the trouble begins. What do you do when a dog you suspect is being mistreated runs away and comes to you? When it is someone else's dog? When the man who owns him has a gun? This is Marty's problem, and he finds it is one he has to face alone. When his solution gets too big for him to handle, things become more frightening still. Finally, Marty puts his courage on the line and discovers in the process that it is not always easy to separate right from wrong. Sometimes, however, you'll do almost anything to save a dog you love.

THE VIEW FROM SATURDAY

by E. L. Konigsburg

It was a surprise to a lot of people when Mrs. Olinski's team won the sixth grade Academic Bowl contest at Epiphany Middle School. It was an even bigger surprise when they beat the seventh grade and the eighth grade, too. And when they went on to even greater victories, everyone began to ask: How did it happen? Mr. Olinski, returning to teaching after having been injured in an automobile accident, found that her Academic Bowl team became her answer to finding confidence and success. What she did not know, at least at first, was that her team knew better than she did the answer to why they had been chosen. This is a tale about a team, a class, a school, a series of contests and, set in the midst of this, four jewel-like short stories – one for each of the team members – that ask questions and demonstrate surprising answers.

WAIT TILL HELEN COMES, A GHOST STORY

by Mary Downing Hahn

Molly and Michael dislike their spooky new stepsister Heather but realize that they must try to save her when she seems ready to follow a ghost child to her doom.

WALK TWO MOONS

By Sharon Creech

Thirteen-year-old Salamanca Tree Hiddle, proud of her country roots and the “Indian-ness in her blood,” travels from Ohio to Idaho with her eccentric grandparents. Along the way, she tells of the story of Phoebe Winterbottom, who received mysterious messages, who met a “potential lunatic,” and whose mother disappeared. Beneath Phoebe's story is Salamanca's own story and that of her mother, who left one April morning for Idaho, promising to return before the tulips bloomed. Sal's mother has not, however, returned, and the trip to Idaho takes on a growing urgency as Salamanca hopes to get to Idaho in time for her mother's birthday and bring her back, despite her father's warning that she is fishing in the air. This richly layered Newbery Medal-winning novel is in turn funny, mysterious, and touching.

THE WARM PLACE

by Nancy Farmer

When Ruva, a young giraffe, is captured and sent to a zoo in San Francisco, she calls upon two rats, a street-smart chameleon, a runaway boy, and all the magical powers of the animal world to return to “the warm place” that is home.