



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/NEAL PORTER, 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

LERNER/GRAPHIC UNIVERSE, 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 CICHESI

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.



ALSC reading lists are created by children's librarians as a resource to share with patrons. These titles may also be available in ebook, audio book, braille, and large print formats. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to explore this list to find resources that may match or spark their child's interest. Connect with your local library to find out what's happening this summer.

OCTOPUS MOON

BY BOBBIE PYRON

PENGUIN/NANCY PAULSEN, 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

Fun 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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