

**Summer Reading**  
**North Colonie Elementary Schools**  
**Students Entering 5<sup>th</sup> grade**

**Recommended by:**  
**North Colonie Teachers**  
**New York State Reading Association**  
**American Library Association**

**Fiction**

***The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread*** Kate DiCamillo

An enchanting story of a smaller-than-usual mouse in love with music, stories, and a princess named Pea.

***United States of America*** Paula Danziger

Can Skate Tate adjust to all the changes of a bigger school, new friends, a new town? Her Great-Uncle Mort, a world traveler and free spirit, encourages her to adjust by taking charge of her life. Skate creates a travel scrapbook that helps her express herself.

**\* *Dr. Amelia's Boredom Survival Guide: First Aid for Rainy Days, Boring Errands, Waiting Rooms, Whatever!*** Marissa Moss

**\* *Class President*** JoAnn Hurwitz

Julio would like to be president but he lacks the confidence to run. This story has a humorous touch to real feelings.

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

Twelve-year-old, bossy but loving, Rosie makes zuppa with her grandmother as she struggles with her feelings about her best friend, Bailey. Something similar has happened to Granny and the stories freely move from past to present.

***Hoop Girls*** Lucy Jane Bledsoe

Sixth-grader River, who dreams of playing in the WNBA, forms a team of athletes who, like her, didn't make the A team. Fresh humor and realistic court scenes.

***High Heat*** Carl Deuker

Time and baseball ease a teenager's pain in this intense novel about a baseball champ who struggles to cope with the death of his father. Shane's conflict is mirrored in taut sports scenes that will grip readers, especially those who don't require Hollywood endings.

***Kensuke's Kingdom***

Michael Morpurgo

After 11-year-old Michael is washed over the side of his family's yacht, he awakens on what he believes is a deserted island in the Pacific. A riveting survival story where Michael learns that he is not alone.

***The Boy Who Saved Baseball***

John Ritter

In this baseball tale, an underdog team nearly loses their field to developers. Larger-than-life characters, lively subplots, and rich descriptive language make this a swift, enjoyable read.

***The Matchlock Gun***

Walter Edmonds

Gertrude VanAlstyne is a young Dutch girl living in Albany in 1757, when the French lead the Indians out of Canada against her family.

***The Call of the Wild***

Jack London

Buck, half St. Bernard, half shepherd, is kidnapped from his home in California and forced into a life-and-death struggle in the frozen Arctic wilderness as a sled dog.

***My Teacher Fried My Brains***

Bruce Coville

Will Duncan find out which of the four new teachers in his school is an alien before his brains get fried to a pulp – or before the aliens try to fry the whole planet?

**Non-fiction**

***Hana's Suitcase: A True Story***

Karen Levine

A child's suitcase in a museum display leads a teacher and her class to research and discover the life of a child caught up in the Holocaust.

***Ben Franklin's Almanac: Being a True Account of the Good Gentleman's Life***

Candace Fleming

Presented in the style of Franklin's own original almanac; chockfull of information that makes history jump right off the page.

***In Defense of Liberty***

Russell Freedman

A very clear and careful text explains why and how the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution came to be written and what they mean.

***Baseball for Everyone: Stories from the Great Game***

Janet Wyman Coleman

An anecdotal history of baseball, from eighteenth-century "town ball" to Sammy Sosa. Readers will understand the growth of the Little, National, Negro, and Women's Leagues.

***Who was Harry Houdini?***

Tui Sutherland

This is one book from a biography series that includes Albert Einstein, Annie Oakley, Ben Franklin, Maria Tallchief and Sacagawea. These books are easy-to-read, and highlight the fascinating aspects of these famous people, as well as their actual contributions.

## **America's Horrible Histories series**

Elizabeth Levy

History comes alive with these downright funny, but factual stories. Titles include: Europeans Meet the Americans: Are We There Yet?, 1000-1540s Explorers Make Startling Discovery: Americans Were Here First!, Who Are You Calling a Woolly Mammoth?, Awesome Ancient Ancestors.

## **Fantasy/Science Fiction**

### ***Knights of the Kitchen Table*** Jon Scieszka

A perfect mix of adventure and comedy as Joe, Fred, and Sam find themselves facing a knight in black armor bearing down on them with a giant shish-kebab skewer.

### **Time Warp Trio Series** Jon Scieszka

The mythological three-headed dog of Hades comes face to face with Joe, Fred, and Sam who find they are suddenly in Ancient Greece in the middle of a feud.

### ***This Place Has No Atmosphere*** Paula Danziger

A mischievous spoof of a saga about Aurora who is having difficulty adjusting to her family's move to a colony on the moon.

### ***Inkheart*** Cornelia Funke

When Meggie's father reads aloud, characters jump right out of the book into the real world. This is an action-packed adventure-fantasy that includes some chilling villains.

### ***The Fledgling*** Jean Langton

Georgie Hall is determined about everything she tries to do. A mysterious Canada goose begins visiting her window every night and Georgie feels a peculiar lightness when she jumps on the staircase, but can she actually fly!

### ***Gooseberry Park*** Cynthia Rylant

A funny tale of three friends, Kona, a Labrador, Murray, a bat with a fondness for egg rolls, and Stumpy, a red squirrel.

### ***20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*** Jules Verne

Professor Aronnax sets off in search of a giant sea monster, only to find the monster is really a steel-plated submarine. This is a journey into a mysterious world of danger.

### ***Time Machine*** H.G. Wells

No one believes that the young scientist has actually made a machine that lets him live in other times, until he returns with proof of his travels.

## **Folklore**

### ***Rip Van Winkle*** Washington Irving

What would it feel like for a young man to wake from a nap only to discover he was old and the world had gone on without him?

***Sir Gawain and the Loathly Lady*** Retold by Selina Hastings

A haunting tale of a truly hideous looking woman who holds the answer to a riddle than can allow King Arthur to save his kingdom. However, she must be given one of his knights as a husband.

***Three Perfect Peaches: A French Folktale*** Cynthia DeFelice

A king promises his ailing daughter's hand in marriage to anyone who can grant her wish for three perfect peaches. There is plenty of "gross-out" humor in this tale.

***The People Could Fly*** Virginia Hamilton

A collection of short American Black folktales from the South; Bruh Rabbit, Devil's daughter, Nehemiah the run-away slave, Wolf and little daughter, and many more.

**Poetry**

***Becoming Joe DiMaggio*** Maria Testa

This long poem tells the story of an immigrant family in the summer of 1936. A young boy listens to the Yankees baseball games on the radio with his grandfather, and dreams he'll grow up to be a hero like "Joltin' Joe".

***Teacher's Selection: Anthology of Fifth Grade Poetry***

Editors: 1998 Edition Volume VII, The Anthology of Poetry, Inc.

This collection of poems allows us to know what is on the minds of fifth grade children in New York schools, even a student from North Colonie.

***The Place My WORDS Are Looking For*** selected by Paul B. Janeczka

Successful poets share their personal reasons for writing poems and give advice on how to go about writing your own poems. They then share poems that might make you laugh aloud or feel the hairs standing up on the back of your neck.