



GRADE 5 REQUIRED READING

Pax Sara Pennypacker

Pax was only a kit when his family was killed, and “his boy” Peter rescued him from abandonment and certain death. Now the war front approaches, and when Peter’s father enlists, Peter has to move in with his grandpa. Far worse than being forced to leave home is the fact that Pax can’t go. Peter listens to his stern father—as he usually does—and throws Pax’s favorite toy soldier into the woods. When the fox runs to retrieve it, Peter and his dad get back in the car and leave him there—alone. But before Peter makes it through even one night under his grandfather’s roof, regret and duty spur him to action; he packs for a trek to get his best friend back and he sneaks into the night. Told from the alternating viewpoints of Peter and Pax, this is the story of Peter, Pax, and their independent struggles to return to one another against all odds.

Summer Writing Assignment: Change and character transformation are a type of journey-- which character do you think changes the most from the beginning of the novel to the end of the novel? Why? When you answer this question, think about what causes these characters to change.

Your response needs to be typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman, and 12-point font. Please keep your responses between a page and a page and a half.

ADDITIONAL READING

You will also read two (2) additional books as part of your summer reading. You should choose one of the books from the following list. For your second book, you are free to choose any other book, although you may choose another book from the list below.

FICTION

The Mysterious Benedict Society Trenton Stewart

Reynie, Kate, Sticky, and Constance are all graduates of the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened and members of the Benedict Society. They embark on a scavenger hunt that turns into a desperate search for their missing benefactor, Mr. Benedict. To accomplish the challenge they will have to go undercover at the L.I.V.E. where the only rule is that there are no rules. As our heroes face physical and mental trials beyond their wildest imaginations, they have no choice but to turn to each other for support. But with their newfound friendship at stake, will they be able to pass the most important test of all?



Ruby Holler Sharon Creech

Dallas and Florida have been dubbed the "trouble twins." They have been shuffled between foster families and orphanages all their lives, longing only for a loving place to call home, though mistrustful that one exists for the likes of them. Tiller and Sairy are an eccentric older couple whose children are grown and long gone, and they're each restless for one more big adventure while their bodies are still spry enough to paddle a river or climb a mountain. Ruby Holler is the beautiful, mysterious place that changes all their lives forever. When Tiller and Sairy invite Dallas and Florida to stay with them and keep them company on their adventures, the magic of the Holler takes over, and the two kids begin to think that maybe, just maybe, these "old folks" aren't so bad.

Maniac McGee Jerry Spinelli

Jeffrey Lionel "Maniac" Magee might have lived a normal life if a freak accident hadn't made him an orphan. After living with his unhappy and uptight aunt and uncle for eight years, he decides to run--and not just run away, but run. This is where the myth of Maniac Magee begins, as he changes the lives of a racially divided small town with his amazing and legendary feats.

Thank You Jackie Robinson Barbara Cohen

After Sam's father died, he became so wrapped up in the Brooklyn Dodgers that he could describe every game they'd played in the past four years. Nobody was very interested, until Sam met Davy. They came from different races, religions, and generations. But it didn't take long before they had a friendship that went well beyond baseball.

The War that Saved My Life Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Ten-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada's twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn't waste a minute—she sneaks out to join him. So begins a new adventure of Ada, and for Susan Smith, the woman who is forced to take the two kids in. As Ada teaches herself to ride a pony, learns to read, and watches for German spies, she begins to trust Susan—and Susan begins to love Ada and Jamie. But in the end, will their bond be enough to hold them together through wartime? Or will Ada and her brother fall back into the cruel hands of their mother? This masterful work of historical fiction is equal parts adventure and a moving tale of family and identity—a classic in the making.

A Snicker of Magic Natalie Lloyd Gulch

Tennessee used to be a magical place, but that was long ago, before a curse drove the magic away. Twelve-year-old Felicity Pickles knows all about things like that since her nomadic mother is cursed with a wandering heart. But when she arrives in Midnight Gulch, Felicity thinks her luck's about to change. A "word collector," Felicity sees words everywhere — shining above strangers, tucked into church eaves, and tangled up her dog's floppy ears — but Midnight Gulch is the first place she's ever seen the word "home." And then there's Jonah the Beetle, a mysterious,



spiky-haired do-gooder who shimmers with words Felicity's never seen before, words that make Felicity's heart beat a little faster.

Fish in a Tree Lynda Mullaly Hunt

The author of the beloved *One for the Murphys* gives readers an emotionally-charged, uplifting novel that will speak to anyone who's ever thought there was something wrong with them because they didn't fit in. "Everybody is smart in different ways. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its life believing it is stupid." Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her, and to everyone, than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike.

The Witch of Blackbird Pond Richard Peck

Orphaned Kit Tyler knows, as she gazes for the first time at the cold, bleak shores of Connecticut Colony, that her new home will never be like the shimmering Caribbean island she left behind. In her relatives' stern Puritan community, she feels like a tropical bird that has flown to the wrong part of the world, a bird that is now caged and lonely. The only place where Kit feels completely free is in the meadows, where she enjoys the company of the old Quaker woman known as the Witch of Blackbird Pond, and on occasion, her young sailor friend Nat. But when Kit's friendship with the "witch" is discovered, Kit is faced with suspicion, fear, and anger. She herself is accused of witchcraft!

Hatchet Gary Paulsen

Brian Robeson, the sole passenger in a single-engine plane, is on his way to visit his father in the Canadian oil fields when his pilot suffers a heart attack. Alone and desperate, Brian guides the plane to a landing on an isolated lake. He spends the next fifty-four days struggling to survive.

The BFG Roald Dahl

Captured by a giant! The BFG is no ordinary bone-crunching giant. He is far too nice and jumbly. It's lucky for Sophie that he is. Had she been carried off in the middle of the night by the Bloodbottler, the Fleshlumpeater, the Bonecruncher, or any of the other giants-rather than the BFG-she would have soon become breakfast. When Sophie hears that they are flush-bunking off in England to swollomp a few nice little chiddlers, she decides she must stop them once and for all. And the BFG is going to help her!

Bud, Not Buddy Christopher Paul Curtis

It is 1926 in Flint, Michigan. Times may be hard, and ten-year-old Bud may be a motherless boy on the run, But Bud's got a few things going for him. He has his own suitcase full of special



things. He's the other of his own book. His father never told him who his father was, but she left a clue: flyers advertising Herman E. Calloway and his famous band, the Dusky Devastators of the Depression!!! Bud's got an idea that those flyers can lead him to his father.

A Tangle of Knots Lisa Graf

Told in multiple viewpoints, *A Tangle of Knots* is a magnificent puzzle. In a slightly magical world where everyone has a Talent, eleven-year-old Cady is an orphan with a phenomenal Talent for cake baking. But little does she know that fate has set her on a journey from the moment she was born. And her destiny leads her to a mysterious address that houses a lost luggage emporium, an old recipe, a family of children searching for their own Talents, and a Talent Thief who will alter her life forever. However, these encounters hold the key to Cady's past and how she became an orphan. If she's lucky, fate may reunite her with her long-lost parent.

Wonder R.J Palacio

August Pullman is not an ordinary ten-year-old kid. Sure, he's a huge Star Wars fan, he loves his dog, and he's got a pretty good sense of humor. But August was born with a craniofacial abnormality, a genetic defect that caused his facial features to be severely deformed. His life has never been "normal." Despite his differences, August and his parents decide to transition him from homeschool to private school now that he's entering fifth grade. Will he make friends? Will he decide to stay at the school? And can the people around him learn to see past his appearance? This brilliant, sensitive story, narrated not only by August, but also by his older sister, his classmates, and other kids in his life, takes an insightful look at how one person's differences can affect the lives of so many others.

Holes Louis Sachar

Stanley tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment—and redemption. Stanley Yelnats is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnats. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the warden makes the boys "build character" by spending all day, every day, digging holes: five feet wide and five feet deep. It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake. The boys are digging holes because the warden is looking for something. Stanley tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment—and redemption.

HISTORICAL FICTION OR NONFICTION

City of Orphans AVI

The streets of 1893 New York are crowded and filthy. For thirteen-year-old newsboy Maks Geless, they are also dangerous. Bruno, leader of the awful Plug Ugly Gang, has set his sights on Maks and orders his boys to track him down. Suddenly Maks finds himself on the run, doing all he can to evade the gang, with only his new friend Willa by his side.



Nine, Ten: A September 11 Story Nora Raleigh Baskin

Nine, Ten is a touching look at the days leading up to the tragic events of September 11, 2001 and how that day impacted the lives of four middle schoolers. Four kids in different parts of the country are going about their lives. Sergio, who lives in Brooklyn, is struggling to come to terms with the absentee father he hates and the grandmother he loves. Will's father is gone, too, killed in a car accident that has left the family reeling. Nadira has never before felt uncomfortable about being Muslim, but at her new school she's getting funny looks because of the headscarf she wears. Amy is starting a new school in a new city and missing her mom, who has to fly to New York on business. These four don't know one another, but their lives are about to intersect in ways they never could have imagined.

Home of the Brave Katherine Applegate

Katherine Applegate, author of *The One and Only Ivan*, presents a beautifully wrought novel about an immigrant's journey from hardship to hope. Kek comes from Africa. In America he sees snow for the first time, and feels its sting. He's never walked on ice, and he falls. He wonders if the people in this new place will be like the winter – cold and unkind. In Africa, Kek lived with his mother, father, and brother. But only he and his mother have survived, and now she's missing. Kek is on his own. Slowly, he makes friends: a girl who is in foster care; an old woman who owns a rundown farm, and a cow whose name means "family" in Kek's native language. As Kek awaits word of his mother's fate, he weathers the tough Minnesota winter by finding warmth in his new friendships, strength in his memories, and belief in his new country.

Jefferson's Sons Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

The untold story of Thomas Jefferson's slave children Beverly, Harriet, Madison, and Eston are Thomas Jefferson's children by one of his slaves, Sally Hemings, and while they do get special treatment--better work, better shoes, even violin lessons--they are still slaves, and are never to mention who their father is. The lighter-skinned children have been promised a chance to escape into white society, but what does this mean for the children who look more like their mother?

Never Caught, the Story of Ona Judge: George and Martha Washington's Courageous Slave Who Dared to Run Away Erica Armstrong Dunbar, Kathleen Van Cleve (Young Readers Edition)

In this incredible narrative, Erica Armstrong Dunbar reveals a fascinating and heartbreaking behind-the-scenes look at the Washingtons' when they were the First Family—and an in-depth look at their slave, Ona Judge, who dared to escape from one of the nation's Founding Fathers. Born into a life of slavery, Ona Judge eventually grew up to be George and Martha Washington's "favored" dower slave. When she was told that she was going to be given as a wedding gift to Martha Washington's granddaughter, Ona made the bold and brave decision to flee to the north, where she would be a fugitive. From her childhood, to her time with the Washingtons and living in the slave quarters, to her escape to New Hampshire, Erica Armstrong Dunbar (along with Kathleen Van Cleve), shares an intimate glimpse into the life of a little-



known, but powerful figure in history, and her brave journey as she fled the most powerful couple in the country.

Buried Alive Elaine Scott

In August 2010, thirty-three miners were buried alive, two thousand feet below the surface of the earth. After seventeen tense days, just as hope was nearly gone, rescuers made contact with the men. Joy broke out around the world—all thirty-three men were alive! But it would be long weeks before they emerged from the mine. What did the miners feel, trapped in the steamy darkness so far underground? What did they eat? How did they get along? And most important, how did they survive in those seventeen days when death lingered so near, and after, during the long wait for rescue?

Gorilla Doctors Pamela S. Turner

Turner introduces the work of the Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project (MGVP) as a group of scientists attempt to save endangered animals in Rwanda and Uganda. The readable text records their efforts to treat the great apes in the field as they encounter poachers, meet with loss of habitat, and face their newest threat: human diseases that can cross species lines. The author follows the team as its members go about their demanding work, foster an orphaned baby gorilla, and visit local schools and villages to explain the creatures' endangered status, and to promote positive reactions to their needs. Striking, full-color photographs to reflect the author's work accompany the book.