

Incoming Fifth Grade Book Recommendations

Midnight at the Barclay Hotel

by Fleur Bradley; Xavier Bonet (Illustrator)

When JJ Jacobson convinced his mom to accept a surprise invitation to an all-expenses-paid weekend getaway at the illustrious Barclay Hotel, he never imagined that he'd find himself in the midst of a murder mystery. He thought he was in for a run-of-the-mill weekend ghost hunting at the most haunted spot in town, but when he arrives at the Barclay Hotel and his mother is blamed for the hotel owner's death, he realizes his weekend is going to be anything but ordinary. Now, with the help of his new friends, Penny and Emma, JJ has to track down a killer, clear his mother's name, and maybe even meet a ghost or two along the way.

Chomp

by Carl Hiaasen

When Wahoo Cray's dad—a professional animal wrangler—takes a job with a reality TV show called Expedition Survival!, Wahoo figures he'll have to do a bit of wrangling himself to keep his father from killing Derek Badger, the show's inept and egotistical star. But the job keeps getting more complicated: Derek Badger insists on using wild animals for his stunts; and Wahoo's acquired a shadow named Tuna—a girl who's sporting a shiner courtesy of her father and needs a place to hide out. They've only been on location in the Everglades for a day before Derek gets bitten by a bat and goes missing in a storm. Search parties head out and promptly get lost themselves.

Hello, Universe

by Erin Entrada Kelly

In one day, four lives weave together in unexpected ways. Virgil Salinas is shy and kindhearted and feels out of place in his crazy-about-sports family. Valencia Somerset, who is deaf, is smart, brave, and secretly lonely, and she loves everything about nature. Kaori Tanaka is a self-proclaimed psychic, whose little sister, Gen, is always following her around. And Chet Bullens wishes the weird kids would just stop being so different so he can concentrate on basketball. They aren't friends, at least not until Chet pulls a prank that traps Virgil and his pet guinea pig at the bottom of a well. This disaster leads Kaori, Gen, and Valencia on an epic quest to find missing Virgil.

Where the Mountain Meets the Moon

by Grace Lin

In the valley of Fruitless mountain, a young girl named Minli lives in a ramshackle hut with her parents. In the evenings, her father regales her with old folktales of the Jade Dragon and the Old Man on the Moon, who knows the answers to all of life's questions. Inspired by these stories, Minli sets off on an extraordinary journey to find the Old Man on the Moon to ask him how she can change her family's fortune. She encounters an assorted cast of characters and magical creatures along the way, including a dragon who accompanies her on her quest for the ultimate answer.

Freewater

by Amina Luqman-Dawson

Under the cover of night, twelve-year-old Homer flees Southerland Plantation with his little sister Ada, unwillingly leaving their beloved mother behind. Much as he adores her and fears for her life, Homer knows there's no turning back, not with the overseer on their trail. Through tangled vines, secret doorways, and over a sky bridge, the two find a secret community called Freewater, deep in the swamp. In this society created by formerly enslaved people and some freeborn children, Homer finds new friends, almost forgetting where he came from. But when he learns of a threat that could destroy Freewater, he crafts a plan to find his mother and help his new home.

The List of Things That Will Not Change

by Rebecca Stead

After her parents' divorce, Bea's life became different in many ways. But she can always look back at the list she keeps in her green notebook to remember the things that will stay the same. The first and most important: Mom and Dad will always love Bea, and each other. When Dad tells Bea that he and his boyfriend, Jesse, are getting married, Bea is thrilled. Bea loves Jesse, and when he and Dad get married, she'll finally (finally!) have what she's always wanted--a sister. Even though she's never met Jesse's daughter, Sonia, Bea is sure that they'll be "just like sisters anywhere." As the wedding day approaches, Bea will learn that making a new family brings questions, surprises, and joy.

When You Reach Me

by Rebecca Stead

Shortly after a fall-out with her best friend, sixth grader Miranda starts receiving mysterious notes, and she doesn't know what to do. The notes tell her that she must write a letter—a true story, and that she can't share her mission with anyone. It would be easy to ignore the strange messages, except that whoever is leaving them has an uncanny ability to predict the future. If that is the case, then Miranda has a big problem—because the notes tell her that someone is going to die, and she might be too late to stop it.

Roll with It

by Jamie Sumner

Ellie's a girl who tells it like it is. That surprises some people, who see a kid in a wheelchair and think she's going to be all sunshine and cuddles. The thing is, Ellie has big dreams: She might be eating Stouffer's for dinner, but one day she's going to be a professional baker. But when Ellie and her mom move so they can help take care of her ailing grandpa, Ellie has to start all over again in a new town at a new school. Except she's not just the new kid—she's the new kid in the wheelchair who lives in the trailer park on the wrong side of town. It all feels like one challenge too many, until Ellie starts to make her first-ever friends. Now she just has to convince her mom that this town might just be the best thing that ever happened to them!

Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library series

by Chris Grabenstein

When Kyle Keeley learns that the world's world's most famous game maker, Luigi Lemoncello, has designed the town's new library and is having an invitation-only lock-in on opening night, Kyle is determined to be there! But the tricky part isn't getting into the library—it's getting out. Because when morning comes, the doors stay locked. Kyle and the other kids must catch every clue and solve every puzzle to find the hidden escape route!

Code 7 series

by Bryan R Johnson

Life at Flint Hill Elementary School may seem normal, but seven friends find themselves on a path to crack the code for an epic life. Whether they're chasing their dreams on stage, searching for an elusive monster fish, or running a makeshift business out of a treehouse, can these heroes find a way to work together to change their community?

Other Authors We Recommend:

Katherine Applegate

Raina Telgemeier