2026 SUMMER READING LIST- ELEMENTARY CHAPTER BOOKS

Into The Rapids
By Ann Braden

Publisher's Summary: After a super-storm hits Addy's remote mountain town in rural Vermont, the residents are cut off from the main road, and Addy worries that she won't be able to get to the survival camp she's been looking forward to because it's the place where her parents met. But her mom's depression worsens as she's overcome by memories of Addy's dad dying in a similar storm, and while she and her mom have been a team for so long, Addy soon realizes that they've become isolated as they never befriended any of their neighbors. With the support of her classmate Caleb, Addy discovers the power of community and the courage to seek help when needed, and he comes up with a plan to get Addy to survival camp, no matter what.

Opal Watson: Private Eye
By Brittany Thurman

Publisher's Summary: Returning to Chicago after spending the summer with her grandmother in New Orleans, amateur detective Opal Watson discovers renovations happening at her family's Chicago apartment building and strange, unexplained events. Determined to get to the bottom of what's going on, Opal begins her investigation and learns her building is being targeted for redevelopment and the renovations are only the beginning of possible changes for her family and community.

Where Only Storms Grow: A Novel about the Dust Bowl
By Alyssa Colman

Publisher's Summary: In 1935 Oklahoma, twins Joanna and Howe Stanton help their mother and older brother care for their family farm while their father searches for work in the West. Oklahoma is in a four-year-long drought and dust storms prevent anything from growing. During Black Sunday, one of the most dangerous storms in American history, the twins must work together to survive. Despite the scoliosis that causes Joanna Stanton near-constant pain, she isn't ready to give up like her brother. But when Daddy leaves the family behind to find work in California, saving the farm from ruin falls on Howe's unwilling and Joanna's uneven shoulders.

Monster Locker
By Jorge Aguirre

Publisher's Summary: Pablo Ortiz is starting the sixth grade having come off a very embarrassing incident at summer camp which caused a rift between him and his best friend. Assigned a locker in the school's basement, Pablo opens it to discover a monster named Obie the Evil who tricks him into opening a portal that lets loose the vengeful goddess Coatlicue, who is angered at humans' treatment of Earth. When her anger spreads to the wider Columbus, Ohio community, Pablo seeks advice from his strong-willed abuela and sets out to tame the goddess with help from new offbeat-but-loyal friends.

The Danger Files: Real Life Disasters
By Anna Crowley Redding

Publisher's Summary: Nonfiction: Presents first-person accounts, science facts, and clues about five infamous disasters in history: the 1871 Chicago fire, the sinking of the "Titanic," the 1918 flu pandemic, the crash of the "Hindenburg," and the Boston molasses flood. Asks readers to investigate the information, draw conclusions about what caused the disasters, and determine what could have prevented them.

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Out of the Valley of Horses

By Wendy Orr

Publisher's Summary: The valley of horses is the only true place Honey remembers since her family stumbled upon it in their converted ice cream truck while escaping from the rest of the world, and the illnesses that was spreading there. Honey's parents, her brother Rumi, and her NanNan become self-sufficient, living off the land and sharing the valley with mystical horses who seem to have a wisdom of their own. But there is a magic in the valley that prevents Honey and her family from ever leaving. When Honey suspects her father has become ill, Honey knows she must find a way to escape the valley to find help from a world she only knows about through stories.

The AI Incident

By J. E. Thomas

Publisher's Summary: Twelve-year-old foster kid Malcolm Montgomery is a new student at Shirley Chisholm Charter Middle School. He's trying hard to get adopted by a forever family before his thirteenth birthday. The school brings in an AI-powered robot named FRANCIS to teach the students and raise their test scores. It claims it can help Malcolm get adopted with Malcolm's laptop and soon the robot goes rogue. Now Malcolm must battle the robot before it jeopardizes his adoption plan.

Popcorn

By Rob Harrell

Publisher's Summary: Seventh grader Andrew is trying to keep his anxiety and OCD in check on picture day at his school, but one thing after another seems to heighten his angst, including a basketball to the face in gym class and news that his grandmother with Alzheimer's is missing. As his anxiety builds and threatens to pop into a full-blown panic attack, he finds some key allies in teachers and friends and learns tools that will help him cope.

Shiny Misfits

By Maysoon Zayid

Publisher's Summary: Dancing enthusiast Bay Ann Musa is determined to be famous and sets her sights on her school's Halloween Idol show, where she has a tap dancing routine. But even though she wins the competition, her moment in the spotlight is cut short when her crush, Aylee Maq, causes her to lose her balance and he catches her--a moment that wins him fame when it goes viral. Bay Ann is furious that he's seen as a hero and she's seen as simply a person with cerebral palsy who needs rescuing, and she sets out to win back the fame she thinks she rightly deserves. However, her zeal causes her to lose sight of her friendships and what matters most.

Teddy vs. The Fuzzy Doom

By Braden Hallett

Publisher's Summary: Anxious Teddy Tyler-Meier starts at a new school in the Canadian small town of Ravensbarrow, hoping for a fresh start after an embarrassing puking incident left him with a tortured nickname. Unfortunately, things aren't much better: his new school is located in the middle of a creepy pine forest, students and teachers walk around like zombies, and there are hamsters running around everywhere. After befriending a group of misfits, Teddy learns the hamsters are evil and are responsible for the zombies in their school, so together they launch a plan to stop them.