

WLPCS SUMMER READING

5th and 6th Grade – Summer 2021

Requirements by Course

Students are required to read the book listed for the grade they will enter in the fall.

English 5

1. *Escape From Mr. Lemoncello's Library* by Chris Grabenstein
2. Two books from the 5th and 6th grade independent reading list (see next page)

English 6

1. *Hoodoo* by Roland L. Smith
2. Three books from the 5th and 6th grade independent reading list (see next page)

NEW! Summer reading videos

Use the QR code or [link](#) to see videos, reviews, and descriptions for summer reading!



Why summer reading?

At Washington Latin, we require that students read over the summer for several reasons. Required texts establish themes for the year and are frequently the focus of the first unit of the year in each class. They serve as touchstones and jumping-off points for year-long conversations about the essential thematic questions that drive English courses at Latin. We require summer reading to prevent any loss of reading skills over the summer; summer reading ensures that students are engaged in some of the same activities they pursue during the school year. We believe children learn to read (and think) best when they want to read; we require summer reading to promote reading for pleasure and assist parents in motivating students to read. We are trying to teach students to love reading. We think if children love books, they will do well in life.

INDEPENDENT READING LIST

5th and 6th Grade – Summer 2021



Nonfiction

Who Got Game?: Baseball: Amazing But True Stories by Derrick Barnes – A collection of the coolest and most surprising tales about a favorite sport, from unsung heroes to priceless stories, stats, and amazing comebacks.

This Is Your Time by Ruby Bridges – Written as a letter from civil rights activist and icon Ruby Bridges to the reader, *This Is Your Time* is both a recounting of Ruby's experience as a child who had to be escorted to class by federal marshals when she was chosen to be one of the first black students to integrate into New Orleans' all-white public school system and an appeal to generations to come to effect change.

Feed Your Mind: A Story of August Wilson by Jennifer Bryant – A celebration of August Wilson's journey from a child in Pittsburgh to one of America's greatest playwrights.

The Poison Eaters : Fighting Danger and Fraud in Our Food and Drugs by Gail Jarrow – Formaldehyde in milk, cocaine in toothache drops, sausage made from pulverized meat scraps swept off factory floors along with rat feces. At the dawn of the twentieth century, few Americans knew who made the food they were consuming, and there was little regulation of the food industry. Jarrow traces the story of Dr. Harvey Washington Wiley, now known as the Father of the FDA, who devoted his life to getting the federal government to take responsibility for protecting consumers from poisonous products. . . (Schneider, *Horn Book Magazine*)

(+) **The Mayflower (History Smashers) by Kate Messner** – Through illustrations, graphic panels, photographs, sidebars, and more, acclaimed author Kate Messner smashes history by exploring the little-known details behind the legends of the Mayflower and the first Thanksgiving.

The Beloved World of Sonia Sotomayor by Sonia Sotomayor – Sonia Sotomayor was just a girl when she dared to dream big. Her dream? To become a lawyer and a judge even though she'd never met one of either, and none lived in her neighborhood. Sonia did not let the hardships of her background—which included growing up in the rough housing projects of New York City's South Bronx, dealing with juvenile diabetes, coping with parents who argued and fought personal demons, and worrying about money—stand in her way. Always, she believed in herself... Eventually, all of Sonia's hard work led to her appointment as an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court in 2009.

Camp Panda: Helping Cubs Return to the Wild by Catherine Thimmesh – Many have seen videos of humans in panda suits tending to the needs of smaller, actual pandas, and they may have asked, why are they dressed that way? Thimmesh's new book answers that and more as she delves in the conservation efforts of various groups in China, including the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda, also known as Camp Panda. (Drucker, *School Library Journal*)

(+) Students may read any book from the series.

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Revised May 2021
page 2



Ancient World and Mythology

(+) ***The Iliad* by Gillian Cross** – A strikingly illustrated retelling of Homer's classic from the team who brought us *The Odyssey*--Carnegie Medalist Gillian Cross and illustrator Neil Packer.

***Lugalbanda: The Boy Who Got Caught Up in a War* by Kathy Henderson** – Before the Bible and the Koran, before even the Greek and Roman myths, there came a story from the land we now call Iraq. Speaking across five thousand years, etched on clay tablets in cuneiform, this tale tells of an extraordinary journey, of a magical bird, of a battle that wouldn't end, and of wisdom gained. It is the story of Lugalbanda, a boy in a time of war.

***The Magical Monkey King: Mischief in Heaven* by Ji-Li Jiang** – Every child in China grows up listening to stories of the irrepressible Monkey King. Join Monkey as he wins his title as King of the Monkeys, studies with a great sage to learn the secrets of immortality, and even takes on the job as a royal gardener in the Kingdom of Heaven.

***Before the Sword* by Grace Lin** – An original tale, inspired by legends of Mulan Hua and popularized by Disney. When her sister is bitten by a poisonous spider, Mulan travels with a healer to find a flower from which the antidote can be made to save her sister's life.

(+) ***Treasury of Egyptian Mythology* by Donna Jo Napoli** -- Presents illustrated retellings of Egyptian myths, sharing the stories of Ra, Isis, Osiris, Anubis, and Bastet with sidebars for each god, goddess, monster and mortal that link the tales to history, geography, and culture, and includes a timeline, and other resources. (*Follett*)

***Dragonfly Song* by Wendy Orr** – Mute since the traumatic raider attack that took her foster family, Aissa struggles for survival in a mythical Bronze-Age Crete. Although she is forced into the lowliest position among the servants of her island's priestess, Aissa's mysterious bond with animals and the scars on her wrists are clues to her true identity as the priestess' firstborn daughter.

***Aesop's Fables* by Jerry Pinkney** – In this elegantly designed volume, more than sixty of Aesop's timeless fables have been carefully selected, humorously retold, and brought gloriously to life by four-time Caldecott Honor-winner Jerry Pinkney. Included are the Shepherd Boy and The Wolf, the Lion and the Mouse, the Tortoise and the Hare, plus many other characters and morals that have inspired countless readers for centuries.

(+) ***Black Ships Before Troy* by Rosemary Sutcliff** -- A masterful retelling *The Iliad* in accessible and beautiful language, this book shares the story of the Trojan War. (*WLPCS Library*)

***Prince of Fire: The Story of Diwali* by Jatinder Nath Verma** – Who can defeat the demon king of Lanka and return light to the world? Only Rama, the Prince of Fire, and his friends can save the day in this gripping illustrated chapter book. A faithful but fresh adaptation of the Ramayana, India's unforgettable epic, *Prince of Fire* is both the perfect introduction to and retelling of the story of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights.

Historical Fiction

(+) ***Finding Langston* by Lesa Cline-Ransome** – It's 1946. Langston's mother has just died, and now they're leaving the rest of his family and friends. He misses everything-- Grandma's Sunday suppers, the red dirt roads, and the magnolia trees his mother loved. In the city, they live in a small apartment surrounded by noise and chaos.... But

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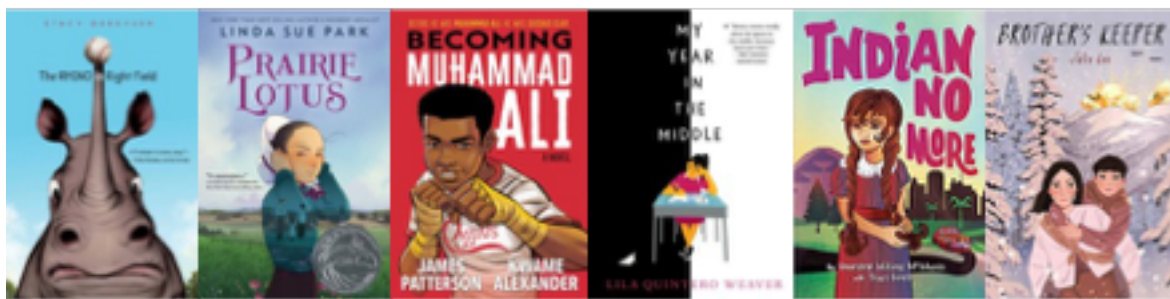
Book descriptions are from the publisher unless otherwise noted.

Revised May 2021
page 3

Langston's new home has one fantastic thing. Unlike the whites-only library in Alabama, the Chicago Public Library welcomes everyone. There, hiding out after school, Langston discovers another Langston--a poet whom he learns inspired his mother enough to name her only son after him.

The Rhino in Right Field by Stacy DeKeyser – Going to Greek school and working at his dad's store are part of 12-year-old Nick Spirakis's routine, but baseball is everything to him. Nick is excited to enter a competition to become "batboy-for-a-day" for the local adult minor league baseball team, but it takes place on a weekend when Nick is supposed to help out in at the store. Complicating matters is Tank the Rhino, the 2,000-pound rhinoceros who lives in the city zoo adjacent to the field where Nick and his friends play ball. Historical details of 1948 Milwaukee skillfully melded with fast-paced action and humor, giving readers a window into life in that era. . . (Thaler-Sroussi, *School Library Journal*)

Brother's Keeper by Julie Lee – Twelve-year-old Sora and her family live under an iron set of rules in North Korea in 1950. But war is coming, and war causes chaos--so war is the perfect time to escape. The plan is simple: Sora and her family will walk for weeks from their tiny northern village to the South Korean city of Busan--if they can avoid napalm, frostbite, border guards, and enemy soldiers. But they can't. And when an incendiary bombing breaks the family apart, Sora and her little brother Youngsoo must get to South Korea on their own.



Indian No More by Charlene Willing McManis – This novel (based on McManis's childhood) is set against the background of U.S. government actions beginning in the 1940s that terminated the status of many Native Nations and forced relocation of families living on reservations. With a stroke of the pen, in 1954, eight-year-old Regina Petit and her family lose both their identities and their home. Members of the Umpqua tribe in northern Oregon, the Petits relocate to Los Angeles. There, Regina tries to adapt to life in the city, making friends outside her culture and figuring out what it means to be (in the terminology of the times) Indian. (Ellis, *Horn Book Magazine*)

Words on Fire by Jennifer A. Nielsen –In 1893 twelve-year-old Audra lives on a farm in Lithuania, and tries to avoid the Cossack soldiers who enforce the Russian decrees that ban Lithuanian books, religion, culture, and even the language; but when the soldiers invade the farm Audra is the only one who escapes and, unsure of what has happened to her parents, she embarks on a dangerous journey, carrying the smuggled Lithuanian books that fuel the growing resistance movement, unsure of who to trust, but risking her life and freedom for her country. (Follett)

Becoming Muhammad Ali by James Patterson and Kwame Alexander – Before he was a household name, Cassius Clay was a kid with struggles like any other. Kwame Alexander and James Patterson join forces to vividly depict his life up to age seventeen in both prose and verse, including his childhood friends, struggles in school, the racism he faced, and his discovery of boxing. Readers will learn about Cassius' family and neighbors in Louisville, Kentucky, and how, after a thief stole his bike, Cassius began training as an amateur boxer at age twelve. Before long, he won his first Golden Gloves bout and began his transformation into the unrivaled Muhammad Ali.

Prairie Lotus by Linda Sue Park – *Prairie Lotus* is a powerful, touching, multilayered book about a girl determined to fit in and realize her dreams: getting an education, becoming a dressmaker in her father's shop, and making at least one friend. Acclaimed, award-winning author Linda Sue Park has placed a young half-Asian girl, Hanna, in a small town in America's heartland, in 1880. Hanna's adjustment to her new surroundings, which primarily means negotiating the townspeople's almost unanimous prejudice against Asians, is at the heart of the story.

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Revised May 2021
page 4

My Year in the Middle by Lila Quintero Weaver – Readers will be immediately transported to early 1970s Alabama in this story about Lu Olivera, a sixth-grader who finds herself drawn ever more deeply into the civil rights movement and politics at her school. Argentinian Lu doesn't fall neatly into the category of white or black, so she manages to more or less stay out of politics; but the more things heat up with local elections, and with Lu's budding friendship with Belinda, who is not white, she finds she can't stand idly by. (*Booklist*)

Realistic Fiction

Once Upon an Eid edited by S.K. Ali and Aisha Saeed – *Once Upon an Eid* is a collection of short stories that showcases the most brilliant Muslim voices writing today, all about the most joyful holiday of the year: Eid!

The Boys in the Back Row by Mike Jung -- Best friends Matt and Eric are hatching a plan for one big final adventure together before Eric moves away: during the marching band competition at a giant amusement park, they will sneak away to a nearby comics convention and meet their idol-a famous comic creator. Without cell phones. Or transportation. Or permission. Hilariously flawed hijinks and geekiness galore!

The Season of Styx Malone by Kekla Magoon – Caleb Franklin and his big brother Bobby Gene are excited to have adventures in the woods behind their house.... Then Caleb and Bobby Gene meet new neighbor Styx Malone. Styx is sixteen and oozes cool. Styx promises the brothers that together, the three of them can pull off the Great Escalator Trade--exchanging one small thing for something better until they achieve their wildest dream.



From the Desk of Zoe Washington by Janae Marks – What does a girl say to the father she's never met, hadn't heard from until his letter arrived on her twelfth birthday, and who's been in prison for a terrible crime? Could he really be innocent? Zoe is determined to uncover the truth. Even if it means hiding his letters and her investigation from the rest of her family. Everyone else thinks Zoe's worrying about doing a good job at her bakery internship and proving to her parents that she's worthy of auditioning for Food Network's *Kids Bake Challenge*.

Merci Suárez Changes Gears by Meg Medina – Merci Suarez knew that sixth grade would be different, but she had no idea just *how* different. For starters, Merci has never been like the other kids at her private school in Florida, because she and her older brother, Roli, are scholarship students.... Things aren't going well at home, either: Merci's grandfather and most trusted ally, Lolo, has been acting strangely lately... No one in her family will tell Merci what's going on, so she's left to her own worries, while also feeling all on her own at school.

(+) **Accidental Trouble Magnet by Zanis Mian** – Omar and his family have just moved, and he is NOT excited about starting at a new school. What if the work is too hard or the kids are mean or the teacher is a zombie alien?! But when Omar makes a new best friend, things start looking up. That is, until a Big Mean Bully named Daniel makes every day a nightmare! Daniel even tells Omar that all Muslims are going to be kicked out of the country . . . Could that possibly be true? Luckily, Omar's enormous imagination and goofy family help him get through life's ups and downs.

A Good Kind of Trouble by Lisa Moore Ramee – Twelve-year-old Shayla is allergic to trouble. All she wants to do is to follow the rules. Shay's sister, Hana, is involved in Black Lives Matter, but Shay doesn't think that's for her. After experiencing a powerful protest, though, Shay starts wearing an armband to school. Soon everyone is taking sides. And she is given an ultimatum. Shay is scared to do the wrong thing (and even more scared to do the right thing), but if she doesn't face her fear, she'll be forever tripping over the next hurdle. Now that's trouble, for real.

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Revised May 2021
page 5

Look Both Ways by Jason Reynolds -- Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.

Pay Attention, Carter Jones by Gary D. Schmidt – Mr. Bowles-Fitzpatrick arrives in a purple Bentley at the Jones' New York state home during a downpour on the morning of Carter's first day of sixth grade. He helps with Mary Poppins-like efficiency and perceptiveness to organize the chaos of a household with little money, four children, a father deployed overseas, and a gaping hole. 6-year-old Currier died three years ago, and Carter carries his brother's green marble like a talisman. Meanwhile, Mr. Bowles-Fitzpatrick (amusingly snobby about pizza, television, and American slang) encourages Carter to step up, to play a bigger role in his sisters' lives—and to learn to play cricket. (*Kirkus Reviews*)

Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson – It all starts when six kids have to meet for a weekly chat--by themselves, with no adults to listen in. There, in the room they soon dub the ARTT Room (short for "A Room to Talk"), they discover it's safe to talk about what's bothering them--everything from Esteban's father's deportation and Haley's father's incarceration to Amari's fears of racial profiling and Ashton's adjustment to his changing family fortunes. When the six are together, they can express the feelings and fears they have to hide from the rest of the world. And together, they can grow braver and more ready for the rest of their lives.

(+) **Front Desk by Kelly Yang** – Mia works at the front desk of the California motel her parents manage and writes letters to aid others, including an African-American victimized by racial profiling and a Chinese immigrant abused by his boss. Mia's story is one of hope, and her voice is genuine and inspiring.

Adventure, Survival and Sports

(+) **Booked by Kwame Alexander** -- Soccer player Nick learns how to stand up for himself, use his words wisely, and impress the girl he likes with the help of his friends, family, and rapping librarian The Mac. (*WLPCS Library*)

A High Five for Glenn Burke by Phil Bildner -- When sixth grader Silas Wade does a school presentation on former Major Leaguer Glenn Burke, it's more than just a report about the irrepressible inventor of the high five. Burke was a gay baseball player in the 1970s--and for Silas, the presentation is his own first baby step toward revealing a truth about himself he's tired of hiding. Soon he tells his best friend, Zoey, but the longer he keeps his secret from his baseball teammates, the more he suspects they know something's up--especially when he stages one big cover-up with terrible consequences.



Deep Water by Watt Key – It's the most important rule of scuba diving: If you don't feel right, don't go down. So after her father falls ill, 12-year-old Julie Sims must take over and lead two of his clients on a dive miles off the coast of Alabama while her father stays behind in the boat. When the clients, a reckless boy Julie's age and his equally foolhardy father, disregard Julie's instructions during the dive, she quickly realizes she's in over her head. It's only a matter of time before they die of hypothermia, unless they become shark bait first.

(+) **Power Forward by Hena Khan** – Fourth grader Zayd Saleem has some serious hoop dreams. He's not just going to be a professional basketball player. He's going to be a star. A legend. The first Pakistani-American kid to make it to the NBA. He knows this deep in his soul. It's his destiny. There are only a few small things in his way.

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A Wolf Called Wander by Roseanne Parry – Swift, a young wolf cub, lives with his pack in the mountains learning to hunt, competing with his brothers and sisters for hierarchy, and watching over a new litter of cubs. Then a rival pack attacks, and Swift and his family scatter. Alone and scared, Swift must flee and find a new home. His journey takes him a remarkable one thousand miles across the Pacific Northwest. Includes black-and-white illustrations throughout and a map as well as information about the real wolf who inspired the novel.

Mananaland by Pam Munoz Ryan – Maximiliano Cordoba loves stories, especially the legend Buelo tells him about a mythical gatekeeper who can guide brave travelers on a journey into tomorrow. If Max could see tomorrow, he would know if he'd make Santa Maria's celebrated futbol team and whether he'd ever meet his mother, who disappeared when he was a baby. He longs to know more about her, but Papa won't talk. So when Max uncovers a buried family secret--involving an underground network of guardians who lead people fleeing a neighboring country to safety--he decides to seek answers on his own.

Ana on the Edge by A.J. Sass – Twelve-year-old Ana-Marie Jin, the reigning US Juvenile figure skating champion, is not a frilly dress kind of kid. So, when Ana learns that next season's program will be princess themed, doubt forms fast. Then Ana meets Hayden, a transgender boy new to the rink, and thoughts about the princess program and gender identity begin to take center stage. When Hayden mistakes Ana for a boy, Ana doesn't correct him and finds comfort in this boyish identity when he's around. As their friendship develops, Ana realizes that it's tricky juggling two different identities on one slippery sheet of ice.

Takedown by Laura Shovan – Mikayla is a wrestler; when you grow up in a house full of brothers who wrestle, it's inevitable. It's also a way to stay connected to her brothers and her dad. Some people object to having a girl on the team. But that's not stopping Mikayla. She's going to work hard, and win. Lev is determined to make it to the state championships this year. He's used to training with his two buddies as the Fearsome Threesome; but at the beginning of sixth grade, he's paired with a new partner--a girl. This better not get in the way of his goal.



Horror, Mystery and Suspense

(+) **Small Spaces by Katherine Arden** – A series of eerie mishaps on a school field trip strands sixth grader Ollie and her classmates near a Vermont farm exactly like the one in Ollie's book about a sinister "smiling man" and his army of terrifying, once-human scarecrows. Only two other students believe her insistence that they're in danger. This supernatural thriller is a page-turner; Ollie's journey through grief over her mother's death and into friendship makes it memorable. (*Horn Book Guide*)

(+) **A Small Zombie Problem by K.G. Campbell** -- August DuPont has spent his whole life inside a dilapidated house with his aunt Hydrangea. His lonely existence ends abruptly with the arrival of an invitation to meet an aunt--and cousins--he didn't even know existed. When Aunt Orchid suggests that August attend school with his cousins, it's a dream come true. But August has scarcely begun to celebrate his reversal of fortune when he is confronted by a small zombie problem on his way home. So begins an adventure filled with a wild child, a zombie, a fabled white alligator, and an unimaginable family secret.

Trace by Pat Cummings – Trace Carter doesn't know how to feel at ease in his new life in New York. Even though his artsy Auntie Lea is cool, her brownstone still isn't his home. Haunted by flashbacks of the accident that killed his

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Revised May 2021
page 7

parents, the best he can do is try to distract himself from memories of the past. But the past isn't done with him. When Trace takes a wrong turn in the New York Public Library, he finds someone else lost in the stacks with him: a crying little boy, wearing old, tattered clothes. And though at first he can't quite believe he's seen a ghost, Trace soon discovers that the boy he saw has ties to Trace's own history--and that he himself may be the key to setting the dead to rest.

(+) **Kazu Jones and the Denver Dognappers by Shauna M. Holyoak** – When a string of dognappings grips her Denver neighborhood, Kazu Jones vows to track down the culprits. With the help of her gang - including her best friend and expert hacker, March; and her ginormous, socially anxious pup, Genki - Kazu uncovers evidence that suggests the dognapping ring is bigger than she ever imagined. But the more she digs, the more dangerous her investigation becomes. The dognappers are getting bolder, and Genki could be next...

The Parker Inheritance by Varian Johnson – When Candice finds a letter in an old attic in Lambert, South Carolina, she isn't sure she should read it. It's addressed to her grandmother, who left the town in shame. But the letter describes a young woman. An injustice that happened decades ago. A mystery enfolding its writer. And the fortune that awaits the person who solves the puzzle.

The Owls Have Come to Take Us Away by Ronald L. Smith – 12-year-old Simon is obsessed with aliens. The ones who take people and do experiments. When he's too worried about them to sleep, he listens to the owls hoot outside. Owls that have the same eyes as aliens--dark and foreboding. Then something strange happens on a camping trip, and Simon begins to suspect he's been abducted. But is it real, or just the overactive imagination of a kid who loves fantasy and role-playing games and is the target of bullies and his father's scorn? Even readers who don't believe in UFOs will relate to the universal kid feeling of not being taken seriously by adults that deepens this deliciously scary tale.

Fantasy

Amari and the Night Brothers by B.B. Alston -- Amari Peters has never stopped believing her missing brother, Quinton, is alive. So when she finds a ticking briefcase in his closet, containing a nomination for a summer tryout at the Bureau of Supernatural Affairs, she's certain the secretive organization holds the key to locating Quinton. Now she must compete for a spot against kids who've known about magic their whole lives. With an evil magician threatening the supernatural world, and her own classmates thinking she's an enemy, Amari has never felt more alone. But if she doesn't stick it out and pass the tryouts, she may never find out what happened to Quinton.

The Magic in Changing Your Stars by Leah Henderson -- After bungling his audition to play the Scarecrow in The Wiz, fifth-grader Ailey is magically transported to 1930s Harlem where he meets his own grandfather and legendary tap dancer Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. (Follett)



Girl Giant and the Monkey King by Van Hoang – Eleven-year-old Thom Ngho is keeping a secret: she's strong. Like suuuuper strong. Freakishly strong. And it's making it impossible for her to fit in at her new middle school. In a desperate bid to get rid of her super strength, Thom makes a deal with the Monkey King, a powerful deity and legendary trickster she accidentally released from his 500-year prison sentence. Thom agrees to help the Monkey King get back his magical staff if he'll take away her strength. Soon Thom is swept up in an ancient and fantastical world where demons, dragons, and Jade princesses actually exist. But she quickly discovers that magic can't cure everything, and dealing with the trickster god might be more trouble than it's worth

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(+) **Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky by Kwame Mbalia** – Seventh-grader Tristan Strong tumbles into the MidPass and, with allies John Henry and Brer Rabbit, must entice the god Anansi to come out of hiding and seal the hole Tristan accidentally ripped in the sky. (Follett)

Ikenga by Nnedi Okorafor – In southeastern Nigeria, twelve-year-old Mnamdi is determined to avenge his police chief father, who was murdered while trying to rid the town of criminals, but Mnamdi feels powerless until he receives a magical object which gives him superpowers. (Follett).

(+) **The Dactyl Hill Squad by Daniel Jose Older** – It is the summer of 1863, and as the Civil War rages between dinosaur-mounted armies down south, and a tense New York City seems on the brink of exploding into riots, Magdalys Roca and the other children at the Colored Orphan Asylum are trying to survive; but when she receives a letter telling her that her brother Montez was wounded, Magdalys knows that somehow she must reach him--and just possibly her ability to communicate telepathically with dinosaurs may come in handy. (Follett)

(+) **The Gauntlet by Karuna Riazi** – It didn't look dangerous, exactly. When twelve-year-old Farah first laid eyes on the old-fashioned board game, she thought it looked...elegant. It is made of wood, etched with exquisite images--a palace with domes and turrets, lattice-work windows that cast eerie shadows, a large spider--and at the very center of its cover, in broad letters, is written: The Gauntlet of Blood and Sand. The Gauntlet is more than a game, though. It is the most ancient, the most dangerous kind of magic. It holds worlds inside worlds. And it takes players as prisoners.

(+) **Forest of Wonders by Linda Sue Park** – From Newbery Medal-winning author Linda Sue Park, this is a captivating fantasy-adventure about a boy, a bat, and an amazing transformation. The first book in an enchanting trilogy, *Forest of Wonders* richly explores the links between magic and botany, family and duty, environment and home.

(+) **Anya and the Dragon by Sofiya Pasternack** – Anya's the only Jewish child in Zmeyreka. In the mostly Christian 10th-century village, Anya's family stands out: Her father's father remains pagan, while her mother's people are refugee Khazars and Mountain Jews. But unbeknownst to Anya, her village is not like the rest of Kievan Rus'. Magical creatures are nearly extinct everywhere else but common in Zmeyreka. The tsar's sent a "fool family"--users of fool magic, authorized to use magic despite the ban--to capture the last dragon in the land. The youngest fool is Anya's age (he's named Ivan, just like his seven older brothers), and the two become fast friends. But can Anya really bring herself to help Ivan kill a dragon that hasn't harmed anyone? (Kirkus Reviews)



Science Fiction

The Last Human by Lee Bacon -- In the future, robots have eliminated humans, and 12-year-old robot XR_935 is just fine with that. Without humans around, there is no war, no pollution, no crime. Everything runs smoothly and efficiently. Until the day XR discovers something impossible: a human girl named Emma. Now, Emma must embark on a dangerous voyage with XR and two other robots in search of a mysterious point on a map. But how will they survive in a place where rules are never broken and humans aren't supposed to exist?

The Extraordinary Colors of Auden Dare by Zillah Bethell-- While his father fights in the war for water, eleven-year-old Auden and his mother move to Cambridge, where Auden and his new friend Vivi discover his dead uncle's last, unfinished scientific achievement--a poetry-spouting robot seeking his purpose. (Follett)

(+) **The Last Last-Day-of-Summer by Lamar Giles** – Otto and Sheed are the local sleuths in their zany Virginia town, masters of unraveling mischief using their unmatched powers of deduction. And as the summer winds down and the

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Revised May 2021
page 9

first day of school looms, the boys are craving just a little bit more time for fun. [Then] a mysterious man appears with a camera that literally freezes time. Now, with the help of some very strange people and even stranger creatures, Otto and Sheed will have to put aside their differences to save their town--and each other--before time stops for good.

(+) **Sal and Gabi Break the Universe by Carlos Hernandez** – Sal Vidón is attending a new school, with new bullies and new teachers who don't understand the needs of a student with diabetes. He also causes rips in time and space by transporting objects from other universes. Sometimes he transports harmless prank items, but sometimes he goes home to find his long-dead mother cooking yucca in the kitchen. When Sal meets Gabi Reál, student body president and all-around firebrand, they begin a friendship that may break the universe-or save it. (Murphy, *School Library Journal*)

(+) **A Wrinkle in Time by Madeline L'Engle** -- When their father disappears during a government experiment, Meg Murray, her brother Charles Wallace, and her friend Calvin must save him from a looming cosmic evil, with the help of Mrs. Who, Mrs. Which, and Mrs. Whatsit. (WLPCS Library)

We're Not From Here by Geoff Rodkey – The first time I heard about Planet Choom, we'd been on Mars for almost a year. But life on the Mars station was grim, and since Earth was no longer an option (we may have blown it up), it was time to find a new home. That's how we ended up on Choom with the Zhuri. They're very smart and look like giant mosquitos. But that's not why it's so hard to live here. There's a lot that the Zhuri don't like: singing (just ask my sister, Ila), comedy (one joke got me sent to the principal's office), or any kind of emotion. The biggest problem, though? The Zhuri don't like us. And if humankind is going to survive, it's up to my family to change their minds. No pressure.

(+) **Horizon by Scott Westerfeld** – When a plane crash-lands in the arctic, eight young survivors step from the wreckage expecting to see nothing but ice and snow. Instead they find themselves lost in a strange jungle with no way to get home and little hope of rescue. Food is running out. Water is scarce. And the jungle is full of threats unlike anything the survivors have ever seen before -- from razor-beaked shredder birds to carnivorous vines and much, much worse.