

HAI SLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2025
Grade 1 and Grade 2

All book summaries are provided by the publisher or written by committee members.

Any available unabridged edition of a title is acceptable.

Alladin, Erin. ***Outside, You Notice***. Pajama Press, 2021. Through nonfiction text, readers are led through a child's sensory experience of multiple outdoor spaces, including facts and information relating to animal homes, flowers, seeds, vegetables and more.

Applegate, Katherine. ***Doggo and Pupper Search for Cozy, Book 3***. Feiwel and Friends, 2022. The conclusion to the Doggo and Pupper early readers trilogy. The canines help Cat adjust to a big change: A new bed! *Series*

Arnold, Elana K. ***Starla Jean Cracks the Case***. Roaring Brook, 2023. Starla Jean and her pet chicken, Opal Egg, return in this side-splitting third-chapter book, just in time to solve a puzzling mystery that takes them on a chase through the neighborhood! *Series*

Ashman, Linda. ***Fire Chief Fran***. Astra Young Readers, 2022. Fire Chief Fran leads her fire-fighters through everything from inspections to drills to dangerous blazes while they help their community in many ways every day.

Bailey, Jenn. ***Henry, Like Always***. Chronicle Books, 2023. Henry, a first grader on the autism spectrum, attempts to navigate friendships and sudden changes in classroom routines--like a parade on Friday instead of share time. *Geisel Award 2023*.

Bailey, Linda. ***The Three Little Mittens***. Tundra, 2023. Dotty and Other Dotty are a perfect match. The pair of yellow-spotted, pink, woolly mittens flaunt their partnership in front of lonesome single-mitten named Stripes. That is until one day the little girl asks, why do mittens have to match?

Barnett, Mac. ***Jack Gets Zapped!*** Viking, 2021. Zapped into his favorite video game by a sneaky bolt of lightning, mischievous Jack finds himself racing around game puzzles while outmaneuvering a pounding boss. *Series*

Barrett, Hayley. ***Girl Versus Squirrel***. Margaret Ferguson Books, 2020. One resourceful girl. One determined squirrel. Great minds meet their match in this tale of persistence and learning that compromise can be a wonderful thing.

Bell, Cece. ***Smell My Foot!*** Candlewick, 2019. Shares the interactions of the rule- following Chick and the absent-minded Brain, whose friendship is tested by miscommunications and misunderstandings about good manners.

Brockington, Drew. ***Waffles and Pancake: Planetary-YUM***. Little, Brown, 2021. Waffles and his sister Pancake visit the science museum with Cat-Dad for a fun afternoon until Cat-Dad goes missing in this graphic novel for young readers. *Series*

Burach, Ross. ***Make Way for the Butterfly***. Scholastic, 2023. Butterfly learns from Bee that he too is a pollinator and can help in the important work of pollinating plants. Factual information is delivered humorously. *Series*

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Butler, Dori Hillestad. ***King and Kayla and the Case of the Unhappy Neighbor***. Peachtree, 2020. King the golden retriever struggles to communicate with his human, Kayla, as both try to clear Thor of having trashed Mr. Gary's yard. *Series*

Byers, Grace. ***I Am Enough***. Balzer + Bray, 2018. This gorgeous, lyrical ode to loving who you are, respecting others, and being kind to one another comes from *Empire* actor and activist Grace Byers and talented newcomer artist Keturah A. Bobo.

Calmenson, Stephanie. ***How to Cheer Up a Friend***. Beach Lane Books, 2024. A young boy and his elephant friend brainstorm many ways to cheer up a friend who's feeling down.

Castillo, Lauren. ***Our Friend Hedgehog: A Place to Call Home***. Alfred A. Knopf, 2022. Our beloved Hedgehog and friends return for another adventure that leads them to the realization that home can be found in unexpected places. *Series*

Chin, Jason. ***Gravity***. Roaring Brook, 2014. Minimal text and enthralling illustrations introduce the concept of gravity and explain what would happen without gravity. Specific and easy-to-understand information on gravity is included in the afterward.

Clanton, Ben. ***Narwhal's School of Awesomeness***. Tundra Books, 2021. Narwhal and Jelly become the coolest teachers in the worldwide waters in the hilarious sixth book of this blockbuster series! *Graphic novel, Series*

Cordell, Matthew. ***Cornbread & Poppy at the Museum***. Little, Brown, 2023. Celebrating priceless friendship and the value of what makes us individuals, children will find this classic odd couple irresistible as they encounter relatable issues with humor and heart. *Series*

Cordell, Matthew. ***Evergreen***. Feiwel and Friends, 2023. Evergreen the squirrel is afraid of many things: thunder, hawks, and the dark paths of Buckthorn Forest. But when her mother tasks Evergreen with delivering soup to her sick Granny Oak, the little squirrel must face her fears and make the journey.

Cornwall, Gaia. ***Jabari Jumps***. Candlewick, 2017. With his father's support and encouragement, Jabari overcomes his fear, musters up his courage, and jumps off the swimming pool diving board.

Cronin, Doreen. ***Lawrence and Sophia***. Rocky Pond Books, 2023. Lawrence prefers to stay in his small backyard, and his friend Sophia, a bird who avoids the ground, helps each other overcome their fears during a rainstorm.

DiPucchio, Kelly. ***Becoming Charley***. Alfred A. Knopf, 2023. Unlike all the other caterpillars Charley sometimes wonders what it would be like to be a fawn or a waterfall, so when the day comes to form her chrysalis, Charley must decide who she will become.

Doerrfeld, Cori. ***Beneath***. Little, Brown, 2023. A child and their grandfather take a walk in the woods and discover more about themselves. Finn begins to realize that people, just like the elements of nature, are more than they appear.

de la Peña, Matt. ***Carmela Full of Wishes***. Putnam's, 2018. Carmela, finally old enough to run errands with her brother, tries to think of the perfect wish, while his wish seems to be that she stays home.

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- DiCamillo, Kate. *Franklin Endicott and the Third Key*. Candlewick, 2021. A constant worrier, Franklin Endicott earns a fresh cause for alarm when he accompanies Eugenia Lincoln to her favorite thrift shop and leaves with a mystery to solve. *Series*
- DiCamillo, Kate. *Mercy Watson is Missing!: Tales from Deckawoo Drive*. Candlewick, 2023. When Mercy Watson the pig goes missing, all of Deckawoo Drive is in an uproar. *Series*
- Ellis, Elina. *Have You Seen an Elephant?* Kids Can Press, 2024. Meet Alex, an explorer who loves elephants and has decided to see one for herself but there's one problem, where are all the elephants? *Series*
- Elya, Susan Middleton. *Little Roja Riding Hood*. Putnam's, 2014. A rhyming twist on the classic fairy tale in which a little girl saves her grandmother from a wolf. Includes a glossary of Spanish words.
- Fang, X. *Dim Sum Palace*. Tundra Books, 2023. A little girl's love of dim sum spills over into her dreams, taking her on a fantastical food-filled adventure
- Faruqi, Saadia. *Yasmin the Detective*. Picture Window, 2022. Nani likes to sit outside and sew, but little things like her thimble keep disappearing, so she turns detective and applies a science lesson to solve the mystery. *Series*
- Feuti, Norm. *Beak and Ally #4: Snow Birds*. HarperCollins, 2023. When noisy neighbors move in for the winter, will Beak & Ally ever find peace and quiet? Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor Award. *Graphic novel, Series*
- Fisher, Lalena. *Friends Beyond Measure*. Harper, 2023. Ana and Harwin's friendship has been off the charts since day one! But when Harwin learns her family will move far away, they aren't sure how their friendship can survive the move.
- Fitzgerald, Laura Marx. *Wild for Winnie*. Rocky Pond Books, 2022. A young girl with sensory processing issues starts at a new school with new classmates and a teacher who knows just how to make her feel welcome.
- Flintham, Thomas. *Game Over, Super Rabbit Boy!* Scholastic, 2017. Uh-oh, Animal Town is in trouble! Meanie King Viking has created a dreaded robot army to spread No Fun across the land. On top of that, he has stolen the happiest and most fun animal ever, Singing Dog. There is only one person who can save the day: Super Rabbit Boy! *Series*
- Funk, Josh. *Dear Dragon: A Pen Pal Tale*. Viking, 2016. George and Blaise are pen pals, and they write letters to each other about everything: their pets, birthdays, favorite sports, and science fair projects. There's just one thing that the two friends don't know: George is a human, while Blaise is a dragon! What will happen when these pen pals finally meet face-to-face?
- Greenawalt, Kelly. *I Can Build It!* Scholastic, 2020. Princess Truly is a great inventor! With her magic and sparkling curls, she can build anything from a Brushy- Brush machine to a super-cool, turbo-boosted racing bike for her little brother. But when Truly and her sidekick pug Sir Noodles discover that the animal shelter is all out of treats, it's time for their biggest invention yet... the Super Snack Machine! *Series*

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- Gutman, Dan. *My Weird School: Teamwork Trouble*. Harper, 2018. Ryan wants to form a curling team at school with A.J. and Andrea, but soon trouble amongst his teammates threatens to end their season early. *Series*
- Hanlon, Abby. *Dory Fantasmagory: Tiny Tough*. Dial Books, 2019. Dory tries to help her big sister when she has trouble with her friends at school, but somehow, as only Dory manages to do, she mixes in pirates and treasure along the way. *Series*
- Harvey, Jeanne Walker. *Ablaze with Color: A Story of Painter Alma Thomas*. HarperCollins, 2022. The incredible true story of Alma Thomas, the first Black woman to have a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum in New York City and to have her work chosen for the White House.
- Hernandez, Laurie. *She's Got This*. HarperCollins, 2018. This is a beautiful story of a young girl who learns that hard work and perseverance are worth it, especially when accompanied by the encouragement and support of her family.
- Ho, Joanna. *Eyes That Speak to the Stars*. HarperCollins, 2022. A young Chinese American boy discovers himself, his roots, and his potential.
- Iwai, Melissa. *Gigi and Ojji: What's in a Name?* Harper, 2022. Gigi wants to go by something besides her baby name--but Geraldine is too long to write and Hanako, her middle name, doesn't feel quite right. Will Gigi find the perfect name? *Series*
- Jenkins, Emily. *Toys Go Out: Being the Adventures of a Knowledgeable Stingray, a toughy little Buffalo and someone called Plastic*. Schwartz & Wade, 2006. Three best friends go on adventures and solve problems in six stories. *Series*
- Jenkins, Steve. *Stinkiest!: 20 Smelly Animals*. Clarion, 2018. Through illustrations, infographics, facts and figures, readers will see how big each animal is compared to humans, its habitat located on the globe, and just how putrid it can be. *Series*
- John, Jory. *The Good Egg*. HarperCollins, 2019. When the other eggs in his carton behave badly, the good egg feels like he needs to be perfect.
- Johnson, Kevin. *Cape*. Roaring Brook, 2023. A child wears a cape as protection from grief after the loss of a loved one, using it at first to avoid memories that keep bubbling up, and then later for comfort and strength.
- Keating, Jess. *Eat Your Rocks, Croc!: Dr. Glider's Advice for Troubled Animals*. Orchard Books, 2020. Dr. Sugar Glider travels around the world to help animals with all sorts of problems.
- Kelly, Scott. *My Journey to the Stars*. Crown, 2017. A picture book memoir about NASA astronaut Scott Kelly that takes readers on a journey through his ordinary childhood to his record-breaking year commanding the International Space Station.
- Kügler, Tina. *Snail and Worm, of Course*. Clarion, 2023. Follows best friends Snail and Worm through three adventures. *Series*

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- Lanan, Jessica. *Jumper: A Day in the Life of a Backyard Jumping Spider*. Roaring Brook, 2023. A beautifully illustrated nonfiction story following a day in the life of a backyard jumping spider meticulously researched and utterly charming. *Sibert Honor 2024*.
- Lang, Heather. *The Leaf Detective: How Margaret Lowman Uncovered Secrets in the Rainforest*. Calkins Creek, 2021. A picture book biography on Meg Lowman, a groundbreaking scientist who was determined to investigate the undiscovered rainforest treetops.
- Lerner, Jarrett. *Nat the Cat Takes a Nap*. Simon Spotlight, 2023. A witty narrator and a secondary character, Pat the Rat, prevent Nat the Cat from taking a much-needed nap.
- Lerner, Jarrett. *Geeger the Robot Goes to School*. Aladdin, 2020. When Geeger the robot goes to human school, his looney antics, mega misunderstandings and literal explanations get in the way of making friends and making it through the day. *Series*
- Leung, Julie. *The Fearless Flights of Hazel Ying Lee*. Little, Brown, 2021. Fearless from birth, Chinese American Hazel Ying Lee fulfilled her dreams of flying and became an aviation pioneer when she joined the Women Airforce Service Pilots during World War I.
- Lloyd-Jones, Sally. *Tiny Cedric*. Anne Schwartz Books, 2021. A witty and touching story about a tiny king who transforms into a kind-hearted monarch after he removes almost his entire court from the palace.
- Lobel, Arnold. *Frog and Toad Are Friends*. HarperCollins, 2003. First published 1970. Be entertained by the classic, short, delightful tales about best friends Frog and Toad. *Series*
- Lukoff, Kyle. *I'm Sorry You Got Mad*. Dial Books, 2024. Jack attempts to write his classmate Zoe an apology note after knocking over her block tower and soon realizes it takes more than just two words to make amends.
- Madan, Vikram. *Owl and Penguin: Best Day Ever*. Holiday House, 2023. Sometimes, best friends disagree. Though Owl and Penguin are opposites, they like to solve their conflicts with creative play. From conquering fears to flying a runaway kite, there's nothing these pals can't get through together. *Graphic novel*
- Mallery, Sydra. *A Most Unusual Day*. Greenwillow, 2018. Something is unusual about today, from the time Caroline wakes up, throughout her day at school, until her parents greet her with an unusually perfect surprise.
- May, Kyla. *Beach Pug*. Scholastic, 2024. It is Bub the pug's first trip to the beach, and Bella wants to enter him in a pet-surfing contest, but Bub is scared of the ocean and refuses, so he hopes to make it up to Bella by presenting her with the treasure at the end of the map he found. *Series*
- McKibben, Bill. *We Are Better Together*. Holt, 2022. A hopeful book written by an environmentalist honoring the power of human cooperation in protecting our beautiful world.
- Medina, Juana. *Elena Rides*. Candlewick Press, 2023. A determined elephant and her loyal sidekick will inspire students to persist when facing a challenge.
- Messner, Kate. *Over and Under the Rainforest*. Chronicle Books, 2020. Explore the extraordinary life and the activity that lie hidden among the roots, above the winding rivers, and under the brilliant green trees of the rainforest. *Series*

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- Michalak, Jamie. *Niki Nakayama: A Chef's Tale in 13 Bites*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021. A picture book biography that tells the story of a female Japanese-American chef and her rise to fame.
- Miller, Rhett. *No More Poems!: A Book in Verse That Just Gets Worse*. Little, Brown, 2019. Full of clever wordplay and bright visual gags—and toilet humor to spare— these twenty-three rhyming poems make for an ideal read-aloud experience.
- Morris, J.E. *Flubby Does Not Like Snow*. Penguin Workshop, 2023. Kami tries to convince her finicky cat, Flubby, to come outside and enjoy the winter wonderland. *Series*
- Morris, Keisha. *Between Two Windows*. HarperCollins, 2024. Mateo and Kayla live in different buildings but by passing their drawings on a laundry line strung between their windows, they can interact as if they were in the same room.
- Mosca, Julia Finley. *The Doctor with an Eye for Eyes: The Story of Dr. Patricia Bath*. Innovation, 2017. As a girl coming of age during the Civil Rights Movement, Patricia Bath dreamed of becoming a doctor, and not only did she fulfill that dream, but she also invented a procedure to remove cataracts and became the first African American female doctor to hold a medical patent.
- Murray, Carol. *Cricket in the Thicket*. Holt, 2017. Over 30 common insects are described in a variety of amusing poems combined with interesting facts and collage illustrations. Palatini, Margie. *Kitty cam*. Simon Spotlight, 2023. Kitty has a pet cam attached to its head, and readers see everything the kitten sees including a day of pouncing, eating, washing, and playing. *Series*
- Parsons, Karyn. *Saving the Day: Garrett Morgan's Life-Changing Invention of the Traffic Signal*. Little, Brown, 2021. Rhyming text presents the story of African American inventor, Garrett Morgan, who created the first three-way traffic signal. *Series*
- Perkins, Mitali. *Home is in Between*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021. Immigrating to America, a young girl navigates between her family's Bengali traditions and her new country's culture.
- Raczka, Bob. *Niko Draws a Feeling*. Carolrhoda Books, 2017. A young boy draws his feelings, but no one seems to understand what he is drawing until he meets Iris, the new girl who moves in next door.
- Reid, C. L. *Friendship Goals*. Capstone, 2022. Emma, who is deaf and wears a cochlear implant, enjoys playing soccer with her friends Izzie and Chen. But when Izzie is frustrated and wants to quit the team, Emma and Chen show her that improvement and success comes with practice. *Series*
- Rex, Adam. *XO, OX: A Love Story*. Roaring Brook, 2017. Told in a series of letters, this is the hilarious tale of an ox who is in love with a gazelle.
- Rivadeneira, Caryn. *Monster Match*. Red Chair Press, 2023. Fred, now “Frank” in school after an author signing mix up, partners with his desk-mate Luisa to save the school from a mysterious potion all while completing his What If Poem writing assignment. *Series*
- Robbins, Dean. *Margaret and the Moon: How Margaret Hamilton Saved the First Lunar Landing*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2017. Pursuing her childhood passion for mathematics and astronomy, Margaret Hamilton became a pioneer in computer programming and a hero in the Apollo 11 mission.

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- Rosen, Sybil. *Carpenter's Helper*. Schwartz & Wade, 2021. Renata and her father halt work on their new bathroom when a pair of wrens build a nest over the bathtub.
- Ruzzier, Sergio. *Up and Down: and Other Stories*. Chronicle Books, 2022. In the tradition of Frog + Toad, this critically acclaimed early reader series features Fox and Chick—two unlikely friends. *Series*
- Rylant, Cynthia. *The Old Woman Who Named Things*. Harcourt, 1996. An old woman who has outlived all her friends is reluctant to become too attached to the stray dog that visits her each day.
- Saltzberg, Barney. *A Delicious Story*. Hippo Park, 2023. When Big Mouse eats the story in their book, Little Mouse, who is not ok with this, wants to hear a tale--and will settle for nothing less.
- Santat, Dan. *After the Fall: How Humpty Dumpty Got Back Up Again*. Roaring Brook, 2017. After his famous fall, Humpty Dumpty summons his courage to get back up and is rewarded with something amazing.
- Santat, Dan. *Harold & Hog Pretend for Real!* Hyperion, 2019. Can the friendship of best friends Harold and Hog, a carefree elephant and a careful hog, survive a game of pretending to be Mo Willems's Elephant and Piggie? *Series*
- Schlitz, Laura Amy. *Princess Cora and the Crocodile*. Candlewick, 2017. Princess Cora is sick of boring lessons, exercising in the dungeon gym, and especially taking three baths a day. But when she writes to her fairy godmother for help, she doesn't expect that help to come in the form of a crocodile--a crocodile who does not behave properly.
- Smith, Emma Bland. *Mr. McCloskey's Marvelous Mallards: The Making of Make Way for Ducklings*. Calkins Creek, 2022. Robert McCloskey finds himself navigating the delightful chaos of raising a flock of ducklings in his cramped New York City apartment, facing challenges as he tries to capture their essence through his illustrations before they outgrow their adorable stage.
- Stewart, Melissa. *Summertime Sleepers: Animals that Estivate*. Charlesbridge, 2021. Everyone knows about hibernation, but this book offers young readers a lyrical look at its fascinating warm weather counterpart—estivation.
- Sundin, David. *The Book That Did Not Want to Be Read*. Simon & Schuster, 2022. Beware! This picture book will do anything in its power to stay unread in this fun, interactive, and irresistibly silly read aloud.
- Tabor, Corey R. *Fox the Tiger*. Balzer + Bray, 2018. Fox decides to become a tiger because they are fast and sneaky, and soon, his other animal friends are joining in the fun. *Series*
- Tabor, Corey R. *Snail Crossing*. Balzer + Bray, 2020. Determined to make his way to a plump, crisp cabbage across the road, Snail risks speeding cars and hungry crows during a long and slow journey before getting lost while helping a crew of ants escape a rainstorm.
- Temple, Kate. *The Underdogs Catch a Cat Burglar*. Razorbill, 2022. A group of dog detectives team up with a new feline recruit to catch a mysterious art forger. *Series*
- Todd, Traci N. *Nina: A Story of Nina Simone*. Putnam's, 2021. An award-winning picture book biography celebrating the life and voice of acclaimed singer, Nina Simone.

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- Tysoe, Alina. ***The Great Puptective***. Simon & Schuster, 2025. A playful puppy is adopted by a new family and while settling in, solves mysteries in the house and torments the family cat in this graphic novel. *Series*
- Vail, Rachel. ***A is for Elizabeth***. Feiwel and Friends, 2019. Elizabeth, the second-grade sister of Justin Case, is excited about her first homework assignment, but it leads her to start a protest of alphabetical order. *Series*
- Van Dusen, Chris. ***If I Built a School***. Dial Books, 2019. If Jack built a school, there would be hover desks and pop-up textbooks, skydiving wind tunnels and a trampoline basketball court in the gym, a robo-chef to serve lunch in the cafeteria, field trips to Mars, and a whole lot more! *Series*
- Vere, Ed. ***Max and Bird***. Sourcebooks, 2017. Max, a kitten, and Bird, a very young bird, want to be friends, but Max also wants to eat Bird, so they strike a deal. *Series*
- West, Kara. ***Mia Mayhem Rides the Waves***. Little Simon, 2021. Mia Mayhem learns some important things about herself and her abilities during a family vacation to the beach. *Series*
- West, Tracey. ***Howl of the Wind Dragon***. Scholastic, 2021. Drake and Rori rush off to find a Wind Dragon--the final dragon needed to undo the False Life spell. *Series*
- Willems, Mo. ***We Are in a Book!*** Hyperion, 2010. Gerald is careful. Piggie is not. Piggie cannot help smiling. Gerald can. Gerald and Piggie are best friends. Gerald and Piggie discover the joy of being read. But what will happen when the book ends? *Series*
- Winkler, Henry and Lin Oliver. ***Detective Duck: The Case of the Strange Splash***. Abrams, 2023. Willow Feathers McBeaver, aka Detective Duck, and her pond animal pals investigate puzzling mysteries caused by human disruptions to their habitat. *Series*
- Windness, Kaz. ***Worm and Caterpillar are Friends***. Simon Spotlight, 2023. A worm and a caterpillar are best friends and when one of them is about to go through a big change, they both learn what is inside is what counts.
- Woodson, Jacqueline. ***The Day You Begin***. Nancy Paulsen, 2018. There are many reasons to feel different. Maybe it's how you look or talk, or where you're from; maybe it's what you eat, or something just as random. It's not easy to take those first steps into a place where nobody knows you yet, but somehow you do it.
- Wynter, Anne. ***Nell Plants a Tree***. Balzer + Bray, 2023. A wonderful depiction of three generations of a family who grow up and come together around one pecan tree.
- Yuksel, M.O. ***One Wish: Fatima al-Fihri and the World's Oldest University***. HarperCollins, 2022. Picture book biography of Fatima al-Fihri, a trailblazing woman who founded the oldest existing and continually operating university in the world.

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