

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2025

Grade 6

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

Any available unabridged edition of a title is acceptable.

- Acampora, Paul. ***In Honor of Broken Things***. Dial Books, 2022. In an introduction to clay class, two boys and a girl meet and become friends, sharing an appreciation for art, football, family, and faith. *Realistic fiction*
- Anderson, John David. ***The Greatest Kid in the World***. Walden Pond Press, 2023. When Zeke Stahls is chosen to participate in an online contest for the World’s Greatest Kid, even though he often gets into trouble at school, Zeke must figure out how to be his best self to win the contest’s large cash prize and help his struggling family pay their bills. *Humor*
- Anderson, John David. ***Stowaway***. Walden Pond Press, 2021. To save his scientist father after their spaceship is attacked, Leo stows away on a strange ship full of mercenary space pirates and must decide who to trust--human or alien--to stay alive. *Science fiction, Series*
- Barone, Rebecca E.F. ***Mountain of Fire: The Eruption and Survivors of Mount St. Helens***. Holt, 2024. In this engrossing narrative nonfiction account of the eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980, we meet the scientists who tried to sound the alarm about the impending eruption and those who tried to escape from the violent blast. *Nonfiction*
- Behar, Ruth. ***Letters from Cuba***. Nancy Paulsen, 2020. In 1938, eleven-year-old Esther joins her father in tropical Cuba, where they toil together to rescue the rest of their Jewish family from persecution in Poland. *Historical fiction*
- Bridges, Ruby. ***This Is Your Time***. Delacorte, 2020. Written as a letter to the “young peacemakers of America,” Civil Rights activist Ruby Bridges recalls her experience as a child in the 1960s, being the first Black student to integrate an all-white school in her hometown of New Orleans. *Nonfiction*
- Brown, Aly. ***The Last Unexplored Place on Earth: Investigating the Ocean Floor with Alvin the Submersible***. Feiwel and Friends, 2023. Dive miles down into the ocean’s depths with Alvin the Submersible, which has been used for everything from science exploration to shipwreck searching while learning more about the last great frontier on Earth. *Nonfiction*
- Bruchac, Joseph. ***Rez Dogs***. Dial Books, 2021. Malian is visiting her grandparents on the Wabanaki reservation when all travel stops, and she must quarantine during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Realistic fiction*
- Christmas, Johnnie. ***Swim Team***. HarperAlley, 2022. Middle schooler Bree is not afraid of hard work but of swimming, so when she ends up in Swim 101 for her elective, she tackles this new challenge with the help of an elderly neighbor and former swim team captain. *Realistic fiction, graphic novel*
- Clayton, Dhonielle. ***The Marvellers***. Holt, 2022. Eleven-year-old Ella Durand is the first Conjuror to attend the Arcanum Training Institute, a magic school in the clouds. Still, when she falls under suspicion for helping a criminal escape prison, she must find a way to clear her family’s name with the help of her new friends and her growing powers. *Fantasy, Series*
- Currie, Lindsay. ***The Mystery of Locked Rooms***. Sourcebooks, 2024. West, Hannah, and Sarah – known for their escape room prowess – enter an off-limits fun house to win the hidden treasure and save Sarah’s family’s house from foreclosure. *Mystery, Series*

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- Dobbs, Alda P. ***The Other Side of the River***. Sourcebooks, 2022. Twelve-year-old Petra Luna has escaped the Mexican Revolution and has arrived at a refugee camp in Texas where she tries to build a new life with her abuelita, little sister, and baby brother. *Historical fiction, Series*
- Gibbs, Stuart. ***Charlie Thorne and the Last Equation***. Simon & Schuster, 2019. The CIA forces twelve-year-old Charlotte "Charlie" Thorne, a rebellious genius, to use her code-breaking skills on an epic global chase to locate Einstein's last equation before dangerous agents discover it and unlock the solution to harnessing energy. *Action & Adventure, Series*
- Gidwitz, Adam. ***Max in the House of Spies: A Tale of World War II***. Dutton, 2024. In 1939, after eleven-year-old Max is sent to London to escape the danger faced by Jewish children in Berlin, he sets out to become a British spy to help his family. *Historical fiction, Series*
- Gratz, Alan. ***Two Degrees***. Scholastic, 2022. Fire, ice, and flood create perilous situations for four kids who become committed to helping save the planet in this action-packed adventure of survival and humanity. *Action & Adventure*
- Green, Tim. ***The Big Game***. Harper, 2018. Danny Owens is dedicating his seventh-grade football season to his recently deceased father, an NFL legend, but the pressure to succeed is magnified by his inability to read. *Sports fiction*
- Heiligman, Deborah. ***Torpedoed: The True Story of the World War II Sinking of "The Children's Ship."*** Holt, 2019. This harrowing true story explores the *SS City of Benares*, which was attacked while transporting children to safety during WWII. *Nonfiction*
- Hernandez, Carlos. ***Sal & Gabi Break the Universe***. Disney-Hyperion, 2019. To heal after his mother's death, thirteen-year-old Sal learns to reach into time and space to retrieve things--and people--from other universes. *Fantasy, Series*
- Hiaasen, Carl. ***Wrecker***. Alfred A. Knopf, 2023. When fifteen-year-old Valdez Jones VIII, a.k.a Wrecker, unwittingly becomes entangled with a group of smugglers and grave robbers, he must deep-dive into their shady dealings to escape their twisted net. *Action & Adventure*
- Higuera, Donna Barba. ***Alebrijes***. Levine Querido, 2023. In a barren, futuristic wasteland, thirteen-year-old Leandro is arrested and exiled for stealing and must work with other outcasts to save his sister and uncover dangerous lies told by the corrupt government. *Dystopian*
- Jamieson, Victoria, and Omar Mohamed. ***When Stars Are Scattered***. Dial Books, 2020. Brothers Omar and Hassan live together in a Kenyan refugee camp in this moving graphic memoir about education, family, and resilience. *Graphic memoir, Schneider Family Honor winner*
- Johnson, Janet Sumner. ***Final Word***. Pixel+Ink, 2023. Thirteen-year-old twins Hope and Gordon enter a spelling bee in a last-ditch effort to save their family from financial ruin, only to find themselves in a cut-throat competition to uncover a fortune and dark secrets about the wealthy relations they have never known. *Mystery*
- Johnson, Katherine. ***Reaching for the Moon: The Autobiography of NASA Mathematician Katherine Johnson***. Atheneum, 2019. Katherine Johnson shares her account of helping launch Apollo 11 with NASA during the height of the Civil Rights Movement. *Memoir*

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- Kelly, Erin Entrada. ***The First State of Being***. Greenwillow, 2024. When Ridge, a time-traveling teenager from the future, gets trapped in 1999, he befriends Michael, a lonely twelve-year-old boy, changing the course of their lives forever. *Science fiction, Newbery Medal*
- Kelly, Lynne. ***Song for a Whale***. Delacorte, 2019. Twelve-year-old Iris and her grandmother, both deaf, drive from Texas to Alaska armed with Iris's plan to help Blue-55, a whale unable to communicate with \ other whales. *Realistic fiction*
- Khan, Hena. ***We Are Big Time***. Alfred A. Knopf, 2024. When ninth-grader Aliya moves from Florida to Wisconsin, she joins an all-girls basketball team at her Islamic school and learns about teamwork and her Muslim identity. *Sports fiction, graphic novel*
- Korman, Gordan. ***Linked***. Scholastic, 2021. When swastikas start appearing at their middle school in a small Colorado town, three students work together to figure out their origin – and create a project to unify their community. *Realistic fiction*
- Kuyatt, Meg Eden. ***Good Different***. Scholastic, 2023. A neurodivergent girl named Selah learns to embrace her differences and seeks acceptance from her school after a challenging incident disrupts her life. *Realistic fiction, novel in verse, Schneider Family Book Award Honor Book*
- LeZotte, Ann Clare. ***Show Me a Sign***. Scholastic, 2020. When Mary Lambert is kidnapped by a mad scientist who wants to study her deafness, she is pulled away from her home on Martha's Vineyard and is thrust into a world she does not understand. *Historical fiction, Series*
- Lupica, Mike. ***Strike Zone***. Philomel, 2019. Twelve-year-old Nick García dreams of winning MVP of his summer baseball league, finding a cure for his sister, meeting his hero, Yankee pitcher Michael Arroyo, and no longer fearing the government and ICE agents. *Sports fiction*
- Martin, Pedro. ***Mexikid***. Dial Books, 2023. Pedro Martin grew up in the U.S. hearing stories about his legendary abuelito. Still, during a family road trip to Mexico, he connects with his grandfather and learns more about his Mexican identity. *Graphic memoir, Newbery Honor Book, Pura Belpre Youth Illustration and Children's Author Award*
- McNicoll, Elle. ***Like a Charm***. Random House, 2023. When Ramya's estranged but beloved grandpa dies, family secrets spill out, including that her grandpa believed in magic and that Ramya can see through the charms of friendly and nefarious creatures. *Fantasy, Series*
- Nabi, Zohra. ***The Kingdom Over the Sea***. McElderry Books, 2023. After losing her mother, Yara carries out her mother's last request and travels to another world to find an unknown woman her mama says will help her, but she ends up in Zehaira where sorcery and alchemy are at brutal odds. *Fantasy*
- Nannestad, Katrina, ***We Are Wolves***. Atheneum, 2022. At the end of World War II, when three siblings flee Russian soldiers, they become separated from their mother and face new dangers as they fight to survive. *Historical fiction*
- Nielsen, Jennifer A. ***Iceberg***. Scholastic, 2023. Twelve-year-old Hazel stows away aboard the Titanic and, with the help of a porter and a first-class passenger, she sets out to explore the great ship, uncovering a haunting mystery--until the ship hits an iceberg and she must fight to save herself and her friends. *Historical fiction*

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- Nobel, Julia. *Mystery of Black Hollow Lane*. Sourcebooks, 2019. Twelve-year-old Emmy investigates the connection between her father's disappearance and a secret society at her prestigious English boarding school. *Mystery, Series*
- Palacio, R.J. *Pony*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2021. It's Ohio in the 1860s and twelve-year-old Silas sees his father taken by three outlaws in the middle of the night. With a ghostly friend and a mysterious pony by his side, Silas sets out on the long journey to find his father. *Action & Adventure*
- Paulsen, Gary. *Northwind*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2022. After sickness destroys his fishing village, orphan Leif flees in a cedar canoe on a journey along the coastline. *Action & Adventure*
- Preto, Nicki Pau. *The Last Hope School for Magical Delinquents*. Viking, 2024. When Vin, a magical delinquent, can't control her magic, she is given one final chance at The Last Hope School, where she and her classmates work to save their school from an evil force beyond their doors. *Fantasy, Series*
- Ramée, Lisa Moore. *A Good Kind of Trouble*. Balzer + Bray, 2019. After attending a powerful protest, Shayla starts wearing an armband to school to support the Black Lives Matter movement. Still, when the school gives her an ultimatum, she is forced to choose between her education and her identity. *Realistic fiction*
- Riordan, Rick. *Daughter of the Deep*. Disney-Hyperion, 2021. This story is inspired by Jules Verne's "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea." Ana Dakkar, a freshman at Harding-Pencraft Academy, a five-year high school that graduates the best marine scientists, naval warriors, navigators, and underwater explorers in the world, makes astounding discoveries about her heritage and puts her leadership skills to the test against deadly enemies from a rival school. *Fantasy*
- Safina, Carl. *Beyond Words: What Elephants and Whales Think and Feel*. Roaring Brook, 2019. Based on decades of field observations, ecologist Safina explores how elephants and whales communicate and behave in their natural habitats. *Nonfiction*
- Schmidt, Gary D. *Pay Attention, Carter Jones*. Clarion, 2019. In true Gary D. Schmidt fashion, this story is filled with humor, heart, endearing characters, and indelible life lessons as the reader is exposed to loss and what it means to be family, all through the eyes of a sixth-grade boy whose family recently inherited a British butler. *Humor*
- Shayne, Ralph. *Hour of Need: The Daring Escape of the Danish Jews During World War II*. Yellow Jacket, 2023. During World War II, the Danish Resistance worked bravely to save the Danish Jewish population by helping them evacuate to Sweden. *Graphic nonfiction*
- Sheinkin, Steve. *Fallout: Spies, Superbombs, and the Ultimate Cold War Showdown*. Roaring Book, 2021. From espionage to weapons, this exciting and well-researched account of the Cold War digs deep into the battle for supremacy between the United States and the Soviet Union during the 1960s. *Nonfiction*
- Smith, Matthew Ross. *The Million Dollar Race*. Aladdin, 2021. The Babblemoney Sneaker Company is hosting an international competition to discover the fastest kid in the world. Grant Falloon, a track runner, badly wants to enter the competition, even though his parents never got him a legal birth certificate. *Sports fiction*

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- Smith, Roland. *Descent*. Houghton Mifflin, 2020. In a fast-paced adventure, Peak Marcello and his infamous mountain-climbing father must navigate through the mountains of Tibet to escape from the Chinese government. *Action & Adventure, Series*
- Sullivan, Tom. *Jailbreak at Alcatraz: Frank Morris & the Anglin Brothers' Great Escape*. Balzer + Bray, 2021. This thrilling true-crime nonfiction account highlights the unsolved case of how three inmates escaped Alcatraz in 1962. *Graphic nonfiction*
- Sumner, Jamie. *One Kid's Trash*. Atheneum, 2021. When his father moves them halfway across Colorado, eleven-year-old Hugo "Shorts" O'Donnell is surprised that his remarkable talent for garbology makes him popular for the first time. *Realistic fiction*
- Supplee, Suzanne. *Sweetness All Around*. Holiday House, 2023. After Josephine's mother loses her business and they are forced to move, Josephine and her new friend, Lisa Marie, try to solve the mystery of Molly, another girl who lived in their trailer park. *Mystery, historical fiction*
- Williams, Alicia D. *Genesis Begins Again*. Atheneum, 2019. Thirteen-year-old Genesis tries again and again to lighten her black skin, thinking it is the root of her family's troubles, before discovering reasons to love herself as she is. *Realistic fiction, Newbery Honor Book, Coretta Scott King - John Steptoe for New Talent Author Award Winner, Morris Award Finalist*
- Wolk, Lauren. *Echo Mountain*. Dutton, 2020. When twelve-year-old Ellie and her family lose their livelihood and move to a mountain cabin in 1934, she quickly learns to be an outdoors woman and, when needed, a healer. *Historical fiction*

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