

5th Grade Guided Reading Novels

| Unit | Title & Author | Reading Level | Synopsis | # of Books |
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| Realistic Fiction- <i>Overcoming Obstacles</i> | Rules by Cynthia Lord | R | Twelve-year-old Catherine just wants a normal life. Which is near impossible when you have a brother with autism and a family that revolves around his disability. She's spent years trying to teach David the rules — from "a peach is not a funny-looking apple" to "keep your pants on in public" — in order to stop his embarrassing behaviors. But the summer Catherine meets Jason, a paraplegic boy, and Kristi, the next-door friend she's always wished for, it's her own shocking behavior that turns everything upside down and forces her to ask: What is normal? | 30 |
| | Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper | T | Eleven-year-old Melody has a photographic memory. Her head is like a video camera that is always recording. Always. And there's no delete button. She's the smartest kid in her whole school—but no one knows it. Most people—her teachers and doctors included—don't think she's capable of learning, and up until recently her school days consisted of listening to the same preschool-level alphabet lessons again and again and again. If only she could speak up, if only she could tell people what she thinks and knows . . . but she can't, because Melody can't talk. She can't walk. She can't write. Being stuck inside her head is making Melody go out of her mind—that is, until she discovers something that will allow her to speak for the first time ever. At last Melody has a voice . . . but not everyone around her is ready to hear it. | 21 |
| | Because of Winn Dixie by Kate DiCamillo | T | Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni's mother walked out on her seven years ago, and she's been asking about her ever since — so that she won't forget her mom. But when she moves to Naomi, Florida, and befriends a lively stray dog, the canine helps her meet some unusual characters who teach her about love, life, and forgiveness. | |
| | So B. It by Sarah Weeks | 860L U,V | Although she lives an unconventional lifestyle with her mentally disabled mother and their doting neighbor, Bernadette, twelve-year-old Heidi has a lucky streak that has a way of pointing her in the right direction. When a mysterious word in her mother's vocabulary begins to haunt her, Heidi's thirst for the truth leads her on a cross-country journey in search of the secrets of her past. | 20 |
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| Historical Fiction- <i>Prejudice</i> | The Liberation of Gabriel King by E.L. Going | O | Gabriel King was a born chicken. He's afraid of spiders, corpses, loose cows, and just about everything related to the fifth grade. Gabe's best friend, Frita Wilson, thinks Gabe needs some liberating from his fears. Frita knows something about being brave-- she's the only black kid in school in a town with an active Ku Klux Klan. Together Gabe and Frita are going to spend the summer of 1976 facing down the fears on Gabe's list. But it turns out that Frita has her own list, and while she's helping Gabe confront his fears, she's avoiding the thing that scares her the most. | 30 |
| | One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams-Garcia | T | Eleven-year-old Delphine has it together. Even though her mother, Cecile, abandoned her and her younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern, seven years ago. Even though her father and Big Ma will send them from Brooklyn to Oakland, California, to stay with Cecile for the summer. And even though Delphine will have to take care of her sisters, as usual, and learn the truth about the missing pieces of the past. When the girls arrive in Oakland in the summer of 1968, Cecile wants nothing to do with them. She makes them eat Chinese takeout dinners, forbids them to enter her kitchen, and never explains the strange visitors with Afros and black berets who knock on her door. Rather than spend time with them, Cecile sends Delphine, Vonetta, and Fern to a summer camp sponsored by a revolutionary group, the Black Panthers, where the girls get a radical new education. | 20 |
| | The Cay by Theodore Taylor | V | Shipwrecked on a tiny Caribbean island, Philip must overcome his prejudice towards Timothy, the old black sailor who becomes the key to his survival. | |
| | Maniac Magee by Jerry Spinelli | W | He wasn't born with the name Maniac Magee. He came into this world named Jeffrey Lionel Magee, but when his parents died and his life changed, so did his name. And Maniac Magee became a legend. Even today kids talk about how fast he could run; about how he hit an inside-the-park "frog" homer; how no knot, no matter how snarled, would stay that way once he began to untie it. But the thing Mania Magee is best known for is what he did for the kids from the East Side and those from the West Side. He was special all right, and this is his story, and it's a story that is very careful not to let the facts get mixed up with the truth. | |
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| Fantasy- <i>Leadership & Responsibility</i> | The Time Warp Trio: Knights of the Kitchen Table & Marco | P | Joe's been caught up in a book before, but this is ridiculous! <i>Joe's Book</i> , a gift from his magician uncle, doesn't just tell stories, it zaps Joe and his friends Sam and Fred right into the middle of them. And when these thoroughly modern kids meet King Arthur and | 20 of each |

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| | Polo by Jon Sciescka | | <p>become Knights of the Round Table, the result can only be thoroughly amusing mayhem.</p> <p>Did you ever wonder what might happen if someone had a time-warping book they got from their uncle who was a magician and they took it to the local YMCA pool while they played Marco? Polo! with their two best friends? Well, wonder no more. In the sixteenth adventure of the Time Warp Trio, it happens to Joe (and Fred and Sam). And what happens is: sandstorms, desert bandits, a smelly camel, strange horoscopes, the emperor of all China, hungry hunting dogs, attack leopards, killer hawks, and one very famous (if he doesn't get lost) explorer. If the explorer is Marco Polo, this must be 13th century China. And the Time Warp Trio's horoscope says, "Beware of mean cats, mad dogs, and even madder Chinese astrologers.</p> | |
| | James & the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl | Q | <p>First published in 1961, <i>James and the Giant Peach</i> remains a favorite for young readers decades later. In it, young James Henry Trotter loses his parents and is forced to live with his evil aunts. Luckily, he is given magic crystals, which he accidentally spills on his aunts' decrepit peach tree. One of the peaches begins to grow, and grow, and grow. Finally, James climbs into the peach and it rolls away from his aunts' yard and his miserably lonely life. With the giant peach, he begins a new life, making friends along the way with hilarious characters like the Grasshopper and the Earthworm.</p> | 20 |
| | The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis | T | <p>Air-raids over London during WWII compel four siblings — Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy — to be sent away from the city to the house of a kindly, but remote Professor "who lived in the heart of the country." There is much to discover in the country: woods, mountains, owls, eagles, maybe even hawks and snakes. But the children will soon discover that the Professor's large house, staffed by three servants, holds even more mystery. It is a house filled with unexpected places, including a room which holds nothing but a large wardrobe, which Lucy opens one rainy day, never dreaming that the wardrobe is a passageway into Narnia.</p> <p>A once peaceful world inhabited by Fauns, Dwarves, Giants, and Talking Beasts, Narnia has been frozen into perpetual winter by the fiendish White Witch who rules over it. Before long, Edmund steps into the wardrobe, and, in spite of himself, into Narnia, where he has a chilling encounter with the seductive White Witch. Soon, all of the children become embroiled in an adventure that includes themes of betrayal,</p> | |

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| | | | forgiveness, death, and rebirth. | |
| | The Tale of Desperaux by Kate DiCammilo | U | <p>Welcome to the story of Despereaux Tilling, a mouse who is in love with music, stories, and a princess named Pea. It is also the story of a rat called Roscuro, who lives in the darkness and covets a world filled with light. And it is the story of Miggery Sow, a slow-witted serving girl who harbors a simple, impossible wish.</p> <p>These three characters are about to embark on a journey that will lead them down into a horrible dungeon, up into a glittering castle, and, ultimately, into each other's lives.</p> | 20 |
| | Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone by J.K. Rowling | V | <p>Harry Potter has never been the star of a Quidditch team, scoring points while riding a broom far above the ground. He knows no spells, has never helped to hatch a dragon, and has never worn a cloak of invisibility. All he knows is a miserable life with the Dursleys, his horrible aunt and uncle, and their abominable son, Dudley — a great big swollen spoiled bully. Harry's room is a closet at the foot of the stairs, and he hasn't had a birthday party in eleven years. But all that is about to change when a mysterious letter arrives by owl messenger: a letter with an invitation to an incredible place that Harry — and anyone who reads about him — will find unforgettable. For it's there that he finds not only friends, aerial sports, and magic in everything from classes to meals, but a great destiny that's been waiting for him...if Harry can survive the encounter.</p> | 26 |
| | The Mysterious Benedict Society by Trenton Lee Stewart | W | <p><i>"ARE YOU A GIFTED CHILD looking for special opportunities?"</i></p> <p>When this peculiar ad appears in the newspaper, dozens of children enroll to take a series of mysterious, mind-bending tests. (And you, dear reader, can test your wits right alongside them.) But in the end just four very special children — two boys and two girls — will succeed. Their challenge: to go on a secret mission that only the most intelligent and resourceful children could complete. To accomplish it they will have to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules.</p> <p>But what they'll find in the hidden underground tunnels of the school is more than your average school supplies. As our heroes face physical and mental trials beyond their wildest imaginations, they have no choice but to turn to each other for support. But with their newfound friendship at stake, will they be able to pass the most important test of all?</p> <p>Welcome to the Mysterious Benedict Society. If you're gifted, creative, or happen to know Morse Code, they</p> | 20 |

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| | | | could probably use your help. | |
| Poetry- <i>Author Study of Sharon Creech</i> | Hate That Cat by Sharon Creech | S | With plenty of poetry from Tennyson, Eliot, and Poe, along with a hilarious hero and one amazing surprise, Newbery Medalist Creech makes magic once again, in this narrative poem sequel to her acclaimed <i>Love That Dog</i> . | 30 |
| | Love That Dog by Sharon Creech | T | Jack hates poetry. Only girls write it and every time he tries to, his brain feels empty. But his teacher, Ms. Stretchberry, won't stop giving her class poetry assignments — and Jack can't avoid them. But then something amazing happens. The more he writes, the more he learns he does have something to say. | 30 |
| | Heartbeat by Sharon Creech | W | In this novel told through a series of poems, Annie begins to experience changes: the birth of her baby brother, her friend Max's decision to join the track team, and her grandfather's memory loss. How will she come to understand these changes, and how will she react? | 40 |
| Read Alouds | Wonder by R.J. Palacio | U | <u>Unit: Overcoming Obstacles</u> August Pullman is not an ordinary ten-year-old kid. Sure, he's a huge Star Wars fan, he loves his dog, and he's got a pretty good sense of humor. But August was born with a craniofacial abnormality — a genetic defect that caused his facial features to be severely deformed. His life has never been "normal." Despite his differences, August and his parents decide to transition him from home school to private school now that he's entering fifth grade. It's the start of middle school, they reason, so everyone will be new. But August has to deal with so much more than just being new. Will he make friends? Will he decide to stay at the school? And can the people around him learn to see past his appearance? This brilliant, sensitive story — narrated not only by August, but also by his older sister, his classmates, and other kids in his life — takes an insightful look at how one person's differences can affect the lives of so many others. | 20 |
| | Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor | W | <u>Unit: Prejudice</u> Winner of the 1977 Newbery Medal and nominated for the National Book Award, the story of Cassie Logan, an independent girl growing up relatively protected in a loving family, is culled from author Mildred Taylor's own family's life. It not only stands as an important addition to the cumulative record of the African-American experience, but crafted with astonishing verisimilitude, it stands as well as an important contribution to young adult literature, as | 6 |

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| | The Great Unexpected by Sharon Creech | U | <u>Unit: Sharon Creech Author Study</u> Humorous and heartfelt, this is a story of pairs: Sybil and Nula (sisters who grew up together in Rook's Orchard, Ireland) and Naomi and Lizzie (both orphans in present day Blackbird Tree, USA), and unraveling mysteries about family and identity. Naomi and Lizzie's tragedies turn into a life filled with hope, as old misunderstandings and sorrows between Sybil and Nula give way to forgiveness and love. It is about unexpected gifts, the kindness of neighbors, of young people helping old and old helping young. | 6 |
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| Social Studies | Ben and Me | | | |
| | Lincoln: A Photobiography | | | |