Scan the photo below or go to *scholastic.com /teachermag* to download book lists by grade.

50 BRILLIANT BOOKS

Need a few more recommendations for your students' summer reading lists? We have some ideas for you!

BY TEACHER MAGAZINE STAFF

You can never have too many books. All of us here at *Teacher* magazine, and most of you reading this, would agree. With the help of our amazing outside reviewers—librarians and teachers from Michigan to Massachusetts, and author (and former librarian) Dan Gemeinhart—we sifted through stacks and stacks of books to find 50 we thought you'd love. It wasn't an easy choice, and there were times we had to pull them out of one another's hands! We hope you'll enjoy the characters you meet as much as we did: a one-winged faerie princess, a desperate-to-be-loved snail, a space-obsessed boy with a dog named Carl Sagan, and many more.

ILLUSTRATIONS: MARIKO JESSE; PHOTOS: ADAM CHINITZ

Picture Books

Escargot
By Dashka Slater, illustrated by Sydney Hanson. $16.99. Gr. K–2.
Poor Escargot. All he wants is to be someone's favorite animal—but despite his jaunty beret and cheeriness, he is unlikely to be loved best. Somewhere along his journey across a picnic blanket, though, Escargot will steal your heart.

We're All Wonders
By R. J. Palacio. $18.99. Gr. K–3.
Palacio brings the wonder of *Wonder* to the world of picture books, with her message of celebrating otherness shining through just as powerfully here. Auggie's story is rendered in bold and bright colors and simple text children will love.

The Book of Mistakes
By Corinna Luyken. $18.99. Gr. K–3.
What if every mistake was a springboard for a new idea? Beginning with a sketch of a girl's face, a single mistake of an inkblot snowballs, and the result is a series of stunning drawings of the world, showing us that sometimes what we don't want can be just what we need.

Shawn Loves Sharks
By Curtis Manley, illustrated by Tracy Subisak. $17.99. Gr. K–2.
From the costume he wears to his 127 shark books, it's clear Shawn loves sharks. So when he's assigned the seal for a class study, Shawn is crushed. To win back his favorite animal, he discovers much about other creatures (and humans).

There Might Be Lobsters
By Carolyn Crimi, illustrated by Laurel Molk. $16.99. Gr. K–2.
Some phobias are stranger than others. A dog named Sukie goes to the beach and finds she's terrified of lobsters! She avoids the water all day, but when her monkey is lost at sea, she must overcome her fears to save the one she loves.

Green Pants
By Kenneth Kraegel. $15.99. Gr. K–2.
Jameson is a basketball player, a diver, and a dancer. He can do anything—as long as he wears his green pants. And he can't wait to be in his cousin's wedding. The only catch? He has to wear a tuxedo. With *black* pants. Readers will love watching as Jameson makes a tough choice in this funny tale.

The Treasure Box
By Margaret Wild, illustrated by Freya Blackwood. $16.99. Gr. 1–3.
When war comes and they have to leave their home, Peter and his father are able to save one precious book as they begin a treacherous journey. This poignant tale, enhanced by haunting illustrations, tells the story of tragedy, hard choices, and hope for the future.

The Almost Impossible Thing
By Basak Agaoglu. $16.99. Gr. K–2.
A tenacious bunny, with the help of her friends, decides to make an impossible dream to fly come true. From research into firefly wings and astronauts to experimenting with skis and ball pits, the rabbits are unstoppable—reminding us anything is possible if you have friends and a dream.

★ LIBRARIAN REVIEW

The Rooster Who Would Not Be Quiet
By Carmen Agra Deedy, illustrated by Eugene Yelchin. $17.99. Gr. K–2.
The village of La Paz is too noisy, and Mayor Don Pepe enforces silence to a ridiculous extreme. Then, a noisy rooster enters town and starts singing his heart out. The more Don Pepe tries to stifle him, the louder that rooster sings. —*Betsy Bird, collection development manager, Evanston, IL*

Mystery + Adventure

Fergus and Zeke
By Kate Messner, illustrated by Heather Ross. $14.99. Gr. 1–3.
No one loves school more than Fergus the mouse. He can't wait for a field trip to the Museum of Natural History. Except...he's not invited. Undeterred, he hops into a backpack, and into a day of trouble, adventure, and a new friendship.

★ LIBRARIAN REVIEW

The Harlem Charade
By Natasha Tarpley. $16.99. Gr. 4–6.
A high-stakes art mystery set in present-day Harlem finds three kids racing against time, and some pretty nasty thieves, to uncover an artwork before an evil scheme wipes their community off the map.
—Betsy Bird

The Many Reflections of Miss Jane Deming
By J. Anderson Coats. $16.99. Gr. 5–7.
With the promise of adventure, a young woman travels to Washington Territory with her sweet stepbrother and sometimes cruel stepmother. Along the way, Jane makes friends and faces unexpected disappointments. Her trip leads her to redefine the idea of family and accept that things are often not what they seem.

The Leaky Story
By Devon Sillett, illustrated by Anil Tortop. $17.99. Gr. K–2.
Forgotten on the family bookshelf sits a book that wants to be read so badly it begins to leak. At first it's just a drip, but soon the living room has filled with water, sea animals, and pirates! In winning back their home, a family rediscovers the joy of books.

The Explorers: The Door in the Alley
By Adrienne Kress. $16.99. Gr. 3–5.
Sebastian prefers order and logic to danger and absurdity. But that's exactly what he and his friend Evie face as they search for a key that will save a life. Between villains on the chase and a teeny pig in a hat, Sebastian and Evie have their work cut out for them.

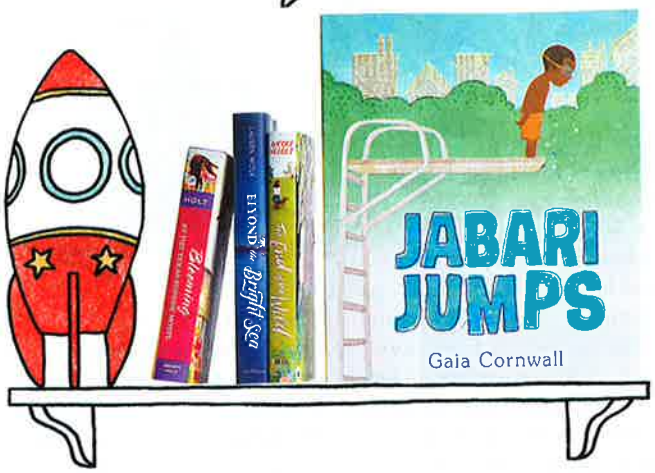
Ice Boy
By David Ezra Stein. $15.99. Gr. K–2.
Ice Boy is a regular kid—he bugs his siblings, avoids bullies, and longs for excitement. The only problem? He's an ice cube, and going into the world could be dangerous. But he decides to dive headfirst into adventure, showing us that some risks are worth taking.

The Girl With the Ghost Machine
By Lauren DeStefano. $16.99. Gr. 4–6.
Emmaline longs for her late mother, while her father spends all his time building a ghost machine. In the end, they must decide if ghosts are more important than friendships and family.

★ LIBRARIAN REVIEW

The Great Treehouse War
By Lisa Graff. $16.99. Gr. 3–6.
Winnie is caught up in her parents' divorce and is in jeopardy of failing fifth grade. She takes to her treehouse and vows to remain until her demands for peace are met. She's joined by her Tulip Street Ten gang, who have demands of their own.
—Jennifer Kelley Reed, teacher-librarian, Newton, MA

Realistic Fiction



See You in the Cosmos, Carl Sagan

By Jack Cheng. $16.99. Gr. 4–8.
The premise of this debut novel—dispatches to aliens modeled on Carl Sagan's Golden Record launched into the cosmos on the *Voyager* spacecraft—gives way to a funny, sad, profound, and wholly original story about a brilliant but naïve Filipino-American boy; his dog, Carl Sagan; his newfound "family"; and a journey that takes us to the stars.

★ LIBRARIAN REVIEW

Hello, Universe

By Erin Entrada Kelly. $16.99. Gr. 4–8.
Weaving legend with reality, this poignant tale of adolescent misfits conveys how it feels to be apart, and to come together. Through fate, family, friendship, and love, there is light at the end of the tunnel for our tender-hearted heroes, yet not for a bully. Because in reality, as in this story, most people evolve but some never do.
—Stacey Fisher, former media specialist, Holland, MI

Matylda, Bright and Tender

By Holly M. McGhee. $16.99. Gr. 4–7.
An unimaginable tragedy fuels this girl-and-gecko love story as Sussy copes without her best friend, Guy of the Big Bold Heart. The sympathetic cast includes her worried parents, a surprisingly wise teenage clerk, and, above all, Matylda, with her "starfish toes."

Blooming at the Texas Sunrise Motel

By Kimberly Willis Holt. $16.99. Gr. 4–8.
A motley crew, including her taciturn grandfather, is there to greet Stevie at the rundown Texas motel she calls home in the wake of her parents' deaths. Everyone seems to have secrets, slowly revealed, and as Stevie struggles to create a home, she blooms, as do those around her.

The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora

By Pablo Cartaya. $16.99. Gr. 4–8.
Everything comes back to family in this bright and funny story infused with the patois of Cuban Miami. Good triumphs over evil as a villain is defeated, young love wins out, and family, in all its forms, is affirmed. Spoiler alert: Arturo turns out not to be such an "epic fail" after all.

Beyond the Bright Sea

By Lauren Wolk. $16.99. Gr. 4–8.
In this hauntingly beautiful sea song of a historical novel, the setting, a fistful of tiny islands off the coast of 1920s Massachusetts, is as much a character as young outcast Crow and the idiosyncratic people who take her in. As Crow searches for clues to her origins, this soulful book turns into a riveting adventure.

★ AUTHOR REVIEW

The End of the Wild

By Nicole Helget. $16.99. Gr. 4–8.
Fern is dealing with grief over her mother's death, a struggling family under threat from poverty, and friend drama at school. When a fracking company threatens the forest she relies on for food and sanctuary, she has to fight to protect the things she most cares about. Moving and ultimately uplifting.
—Dan Gemeinhart, author and former teacher-librarian

Jabari Jumps

By Gaia Cornwall. $15.99. Gr. K–2.
Jabari has many excuses for not being ready to go off the high dive. But with his dad's gentle encouragement, along with a few perfectly illustrated stretches and deep breaths for courage, he makes the plunge. City-in-the-summer joy comes gloriously to life here.

Nonfiction

★ TEACHER REVIEW

This Is How We Do It: One Day in the Lives of Seven Kids From Around the World

By Matt Lamothe. $17.99. Gr. K–3.

Invite young readers to examine their own culture as they get to know seven children in different parts of the world. Rendered in beautiful, detailed illustrations. *—Jen Vincent, tech integration specialist, Mundelein, IL*

The Whydah

By Martin W. Sandler. $19.99. Gr. 5–8.

Two hundred years after it sank off Cape Cod, preservationists unearth *The Whydah*, captained by the fearsome Sam Bellamy. This weaves together the pirates' and modern treasure-seekers' stories, including fascinating insights into pirate culture.

Lesser Spotted Animals

By Martin Brown. $18.99. Gr. 3–6.

There are millions of animal species, so why do most books show you the same tigers, cheetahs, and elephants? From the toothy numbat to the stinky zorilla, discover amazing creatures you've never heard of.

Noah Webster's Fighting Words

By Tracy Nelson Maurer, illustrated by Mircea Catusanu. $19.99. Gr. 2–5.

Who was the man behind *Webster's Dictionary*? Some called him passionate, while others said he was bossy and stubborn. The "ghost" of Webster edits each page of this eye-catchingly illustrated biography!

Give Bees a Chance

By Bethany Barton. $16.99. Gr. K–3.

Edgar does not like bees, and our narrator aims to change his mind. The gorgeously silly illustrations and sheer earnestness of this funny and fact-filled book is sure to turn every reader into a bee fan!

Kate Warne: Pinkerton Detective

By Marissa Moss, illustrated by April Chu. $18.99. Gr. 2–5.

Montgomery, Alabama, 1856. The case? $40,000 stolen. Kate Warne, America's first female detective, solved the Addams Express case, and went on to oversee a division of women detectives.

Lost in Outer Space: The Incredible Journey of Apollo 13

By Tod Olson. $12.99. Gr. 5–8.

This harrowing account of the damaged spacecraft illuminates the experiences of the astronauts on board, the NASA engineers working to save them, and the teenager waiting to see if her father will make it back alive.

★ TEACHER REVIEW

Keith Haring: The Boy Who Just Kept Drawing

By Kay Haring, illustrated by Robert Neubecker. $16.99. Gr. K–2.

With echoes of Harold and his purple crayon, this picture book bio by Haring's sister brilliantly captures his story by infusing his art with illustrations. Artists of all ages will leave inspired. *—Brian Smith, kindergarten teacher, Taylorsville, NC*

Margaret and the Moon

By Dean Robbins, illustrated by Lucy Knisley. $17.99. Gr. K–2.

A girl who loves to ask questions about computers and space becomes a software engineering pioneer and helps to make the first moon landing possible.

Fantasy + Magic

★ TEACHER REVIEW

Orphan Island

By Laurel Snyder. $16.99. Gr. 4–7.

Snyder takes us to a magical island where nine children live alone and are provided with everything they need. Each year, a boat arrives with a new child and the eldest child leaves on that same boat. Nobody knows where the new children come from, or where the children leaving the island go. Things carry on like this until one child begins asking questions. —*Colby Sharp, grade 3 teacher, Parma, MI*

Carmer and Grit: The Wingsnatchers

By Sarah Jean Horwitz. $17.95. Gr. 5–8.

In the first book in this stunning steampunk mystery series, a magician's apprentice/aspiring inventor joins forces with a one-winged faerie princess to save her kingdom from metal monsters. Horwitz seamlessly melds magic and machine, while questioning what our obligations are to humans, creatures, and the natural world.

You Don't Want a Unicorn

By Ame Dyckman, illustrated by Liz Climo. $16.99. Gr. K–2.

You may think you want a unicorn...until it sheds glitter, shreds couches, and throws parties. Even the youngest fantasy lovers will get a kick out of this irreverent cautionary tale.

Rules for Thieves

By Alexandra Ott. $17.99. Gr. 3–8.

An orphan with a deadly curse must join the legendary, and dangerous, Thieves Guild to get enough money for a cure. But how much is she willing to sacrifice to survive? Packed with intrigue, action, and unforgettable characters.

The Dragon With a Chocolate Heart

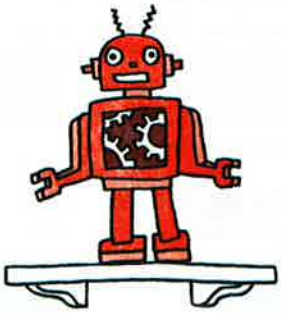
By Stephanie Burgis. $16.99. Gr. 3–6.

When brave young dragon Adventurine is turned into a human child, she pursues her true passion: making chocolate. Becoming an apprentice chocolatier isn't easy, especially when the mayor keeps trying to shut down her mentor's chocolate house! This fiercely heartwarming tale explores different types of strength, as well as what it means to turn a dream into a goal.

Star Scouts

By Mike Lawrence. $14.99. Gr. 2–5.

Avani's not happy about being the new kid. Even worse, her Flower Scouts troop would rather gossip than go hiking! When a spunky alien named Mabel accidentally kidnaps Avani, she has a chance to join a new troop: the Star Scouts. The cheeky humor and bold characters of this graphic novel make it a must-read for anyone who has yearned for space adventures!



The Metropolitans

By Carol Goodman. $16.99. Gr. 5–8.

On December 7, 1941, four children are drawn to a mysterious golden book in New York's Metropolitan Museum. Soon, they're mixed up in an Arthurian adventure and must untangle a plot threatening the city, while facing down monsters, prejudice, and possible betrayal.

★ TEACHER REVIEW

One Trick Pony

By Nathan Hale. $14.95. Gr. 3–7.

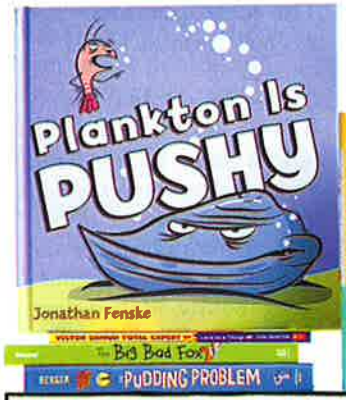
In this dystopian graphic novel, drawn in black and white with slashes of yellow, three teens find a secret stash of robots in a future where their alien overlords don't allow technology. The character who sticks with us the most is Kleidi, the faithful robotic horse. —*Brian Smith*

Humor

★ LIBRARIAN REVIEW

The Legend of Rock, Paper, Scissors

By Drew Daywalt, illustrated by Adam Rex. $17.99. Gr. K–3.
As epic warriors Rock, Paper, and Scissors battle it out in the Kingdom of Backyard, each struggles to meet his match—until they come face to face with one another. With its fiercely funny illustrations, this book is certain to grab the attention of the most reticent reader. And although the game's true origins may date back to the 18th century, every child will believe it all started in the junk drawer!
—Stacey Fisher, former media specialist, Holland, MI



Jake the Fake Keeps It Real

By Craig Robinson and Adam Mansbach, illustrated by Keith Knight. $13.99. Gr. 3–7.
The dream team of Robinson, Mansbach, and Knight raise the bar on the usual middle school subjects of talent shows, fart jokes, and outcasts with wildly witty text and out-of-the-box drawings. Artsy schools have never been more brilliantly lampooned in pen and ink.

Plankton Is Pushy

By Jonathan Fenske. $14.99. Gr. K–2.
The most annoying plankton in the sea can't stand that Mister Mussel won't greet him. He tries everything—false cheerfulness, rage, sarcasm, pleading—to get a response out of the marmoreal mollusk. When he does...well, let's just say he gets more than he bargained for.

Lyttle Lies: The Pudding Problem

By Joe Berger. $13.99. Gr. 3–7.
Sam has a *complicated* relationship with the truth: Envision the Times Square of lies and an imagined Shovel of Lying, as Sam lays it on. While battling a bully with his "Guatemalan Internet rescue" kitty at his side, Sam finally figures out how to come clean.

The Big Bad Fox

By Benjamin Renner. $15.99. Gr. 2–7.
Hilariously expressive illustrations and ultra-clever dialogue carry this timeworn tale of a not-very-fierce fox who becomes "Mommy" to a flock of bratty chicks. Backed by a cast that includes a pass-the-buck guard dog, a truly bad big bad wolf, and an Elite Commando Unit of pissed-off hens, this is a classic in the making.

This Book Will Not Be Fun

By Cirocco Dunlap, illustrated by Olivier Tallec. $17.99. Gr. K–2.
A buttoned-up little mouse who is sure he prefers "boring" has to put up with all manner of distractions—a Glow-in-the-Dark Kung Fu Worm, a Word-Eating Flying Whale—in this rollicking picture book. He grimly endures it all until (*gasp!*) he actually starts having fun.

Victor Shmud, Total Expert: Let's Do a Thing!

By Jim Benton. $5.99. Gr. 2–4.
Dear Dumb Diary creator Benton is out with what looks to be another addictively funny series. This one stars Victor Shmud—Expert Bird Veterinarian, Octopus Wrestler, etc.—and his long-suffering sidekick, a duck dubbed Dumpylumps. All is okay, if chaotic, until they "do a thing" and end up tangling with aliens.

★ TEACHER REVIEW

The Unlucky Lottery Winners of Classroom 13

By Honest Lee and Matthew J. Gilbert, illustrated by Joelle Dreidery. $14.99. Gr. 3–6.
Zaniness ensues when a teacher wins the lottery and shares the cash with her students. Each chapter focuses on what one student decides to do with the money. Fans of Wayside School will laugh their way through these pages. *—Colby Sharp, grade 3 teacher, Parma, MI*