

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Book List Synopses

## *Allergic* by Megan Wagner Lloyd

A coming-of-age middle-grade graphic novel featuring a girl with severe allergies who just wants to find the perfect pet! At home, Maggie is the odd one out. Her parents are preoccupied with getting ready for a new baby, and her younger brothers are twins and always in their own world. Maggie loves animals and thinks a new puppy to call her own is the answer, but when she goes to select one on her birthday, she breaks out in hives and rashes. She's severely allergic to anything with fur!

Can Maggie outsmart her allergies and find the perfect pet? With illustrations by Michelle Mee Nutter, Megan Wagner Lloyd uses inspiration from her own experiences with allergies to tell a heartfelt story of family, friendship, and finding a place to belong.

## *Alvin Ho: Allergic to Girls School, and Other Scary Things* by Lenore Look

Alvin Ho is an Asian American second grader who is afraid of everything—elevators, tunnels, girls, and, most of all, school. He's so afraid of school that, while he's there, he never, ever, says a word. But at home he's a very loud superhero named Firecracker Man, a brother to Calvin and Anibelly, and a gentleman-in-training, so he can be just like his dad.

From the author of the ALA Notable Ruby Lu series comes a funny and touching chapter book—perfect for both beginning and reluctant readers— that introduces a truly unforgettable character.

## *The Bubble Gum Blob* by Andres Miedoso

The candy at Kersville Elementary School is usually sweet. But when a brand-new type of bubble gum gets passed around, Desmond and Andres find themselves in a very sticky situation. Because the bubble gum blob bites back!

With easy-to-read language and illustrations on almost every page, the Desmond Cole Ghost Patrol chapter books are perfect for emerging readers.

## *Clockwork Crow* by Catherine Fisher

Orphan Seren Rhys is on her way to a new life at the remote country mansion of Plas-y Fran when she is given a package by a stranger late at night in an empty train station. The package contains a crotchety, mechanical talking crow, which Seren reluctantly brings to her new home. But when she gets there, the happy Christmas she had hoped for turns out to be an illusion—the young son of the house, Tomos, has been missing for almost a year, rumored to have been taken by the fairies. With the Crow's reluctant help and a little winter magic, Seren sets off on a perilous journey to bring Tomos home.

## *Gone Fishing* by Tamera Will Wissinger

Using a wide variety of poetic forms – quatrains, ballads, iambic meter, rhyming lists, concrete poetry, tercets and free verse – this debut author tells the story of a nine-year-old boy's day of fishing. Sibling rivalry, the bond between father and son, the excitement – and difficulty – of fishing all add up to a day of adventure any child would want to experience. Matthew Cordell illuminates this novel-in-verse throughout with his energetic black-and-white line drawings. While each poem can be read and enjoyed on its own, the poems work together to create a story arc with conflict, crisis, resolution and character growth. The back matter of this book equips the reader with a Poet's Tackle Box of tools and definitions for understanding the various poetic forms the author uses in this story.

## *The Harlem Globetrotters Present the Points Behind Basketball* by Larry Dobrow

Have you ever wondered how a Harlem Globetrotters player can spin a basketball on one finger for so long? Or what a basketball is made of? Or how the laws of physics are also the laws of basketball? You're only a few four-point shots away from becoming a Science of Fun Stuff Expert on basketball!

Amaze your friends with all you've learned in this engaging, fact-filled Level 3 Ready-to-Read! There's even a special section at the back to extend the learning and a fun quiz so readers can test themselves to see what they've learned! Learning science has never been so much fun!

## *Hockey Night in Kenya* by Danson Mutinda

Kenyan orphans, Kitoo and Nigosi, spend their days studying, playing soccer, helping their elders with chores around the orphanage and reading from the limited selection of books in their library. When the librarian gives Kitoo a copy of *Sports Around the World* he becomes fascinated by an image of the Canadian national men's ice hockey team. Then one day Kitoo finds a pair of beat up old roller blades, so he teaches himself to skate and dreams of one day playing hockey like the men in his book. But you can't play ice hockey in Kenya, can you?

## *I Am Sacagawea* by Brad Meltzer

We can all be heroes. That's the inspiring message of this New York Times bestselling picture book biography series from historian and author Brad Meltzer. Meet the series' first Native American hero: Sacagawea, the Shoshone woman who accompanied Lewis and Clark's expedition through the Louisiana Purchase.

Each picture book in this series is a biography of a significant historical figure, told in a simple, conversation, vivacious way, and always focusing on a character trait that makes the person a role model for kids. The heroes are depicted as children throughout, telling their life stories in first-person present tense, which keeps the books playful and accessible to young children. And each book ends with a line of encouragement, a quote, photos, a timeline, and a source list. Here, readers will learn the story of Sacagawea and her journey as a translator with Lewis and Clark's expedition to the Pacific Ocean.

## *I Survived the California Wildfires, 2018* by Lauren Tarshis

The people of northern California were used to living with the threat of wildfires. But nothing could have prepared them for the devastating 2018 fire season, the deadliest in 100 years and the most destructive in history.

In the 20th I Survived book, readers join eleven-year-old Josh as he leaves his affluent New Jersey home for the rural northern California town where his mother was born and raised. Still reeling from the life-changing challenges that propelled him and his mother across the country, Josh struggles to adapt to a more rustic, down-to-earth lifestyle that couldn't be more different from the one he is used to.

Josh and his cousin Eleanor bond during an overnight camping trip. But they suddenly find themselves in the path of a fast-moving firestorm, a super-heated monster that will soon lay waste to millions of acres of wilderness and -- possibly -- their town. Josh needs to confront the family issues burning him up inside, but first he'll have to survive the flames blazing all around him.

## *Sarai Saves the Music* by Sarai Gonzalez

The third book in the Sarai Gonzalez illustrated chapter book series inspired by the life of viral video sensation and social activist Sarai Gonzalez.

They're cutting funding at Sarai's school and her band program is the first to go. That is totally not okay with Sarai. She decides to organize a benefit concert to raise money! When she and her bandmates promote the concert on their video channel, it catches the attention of Sarai's favorite singer, Sparkles Sanchez! Can Sarai save the music?

## *Stargazing* by Jen Wang

Moon is everything Christine isn't. She's confident, impulsive, artistic . . . and though they both grew up in the same Chinese-American suburb, Moon is somehow unlike anyone Christine has ever known.

When Moon's family moves in next door to Christine's, Moon goes from unlikely friend to best friend—maybe even the perfect friend. The girls share their favorite music videos, paint their toenails when Christine's strict parents aren't around, and make plans to enter the school talent show together. Moon even tells Christine her deepest secret: that she sometimes has visions of celestial beings who speak to her from the stars. Who reassure her that earth isn't where she really belongs.

But when they're least expecting it, catastrophe strikes. After relying on Moon for everything, can Christine find it in herself to be the friend Moon needs?

New York Times–bestselling author–illustrator Jen Wang draws on her childhood to paint a deeply personal yet wholly relatable friendship story that's at turns joyful, heart-wrenching, and full of hope

## *Stink and the Hairy Scary Spider* by Megan McDonald

Creepy! Crawly! Criminy! Everyone knows that Stink is bonkers about most scientific things. But there's one exception: dangle a spider in front of him and he goes berserk! Stink is so freaked out by spiders that he can't read about them. He can't look at them. He can't think about them. And he for-sure can't touch them! Stink has arachnophobia (a fear of spiders), and he has it bad. But when a hairy backyard emergency arises, Stink is forced to face his fear--and eight beady eyes--head-on. Will he manage to tame the heebie-jeebies, or will he remain stuck in his web of terror? Arachno-fans will love the comics sprinkled throughout with facts about spiders as well as a hands-on origami challenge.

## **4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Book List Synopses**

### *Brightstorm* by Vashti Hardy

Arthur and Maudie Brightstorm are devastated to learn that their famous explorer father has died in a failed attempt to reach South Polaris, the southernmost point in the world. To make matters worse, the Lontown Geographical Society finds Ernest Brightstorm guilty of sabotaging the expedition of his competitor, Eudora Vane, a respected and powerful member of the Society. But then a mysterious clue leads the twins to question the story they've been told. Joining the ragtag crew of the *Aurora*, a homemade sky-ship captained by the intrepid Harriet Culpepper, Arthur and Maudie race to South Polaris to salvage their family's reputation. As the sky-ship sets sail, the twins must keep their wits about them if they are to uncover the truth about what happened on their father's doomed expedition, and to prove themselves worthy explorers. *Brightstorm* is a propulsive, vividly imagined fantasy adventure set among vibrant landscapes and peopled with dynamic and unforgettable characters.

### *Handful of Stars* by Cynthia Lord

This powerful middle-grade novel from the Newbery Honor author of *Rules* explores a friendship between a small-town girl and the daughter of migrant workers. When Lily's blind dog, Lucky, slips his collar and runs away across the wide-open blueberry barrens of eastern Maine, it's Salma Santiago who manages to catch him. Salma, the daughter of migrant workers, is in the small town with her family for the blueberry-picking season. After their initial chance meeting, Salma and Lily bond over painting bee boxes for Lily's grandfather, and Salma's friendship transforms Lily's summer. But when Salma decides to run in the upcoming Blueberry Queen pageant, they'll have to face some tough truths about friendship and belonging. Should an outsider like Salma really participate in the pageant--and possibly win? Set amongst the blueberry barrens and by the sea, this is a gorgeous new novel by Newbery Honor author Cynthia Lord that tackles themes of prejudice and friendship, loss and love.

## *History Smashers: American Revolution* by Kate Messner

Myths! Lies! Secrets! Uncover the hidden truth behind the Revolutionary War with beloved educator/author Kate Messner. The fun mix of sidebars, illustrations, photos, and graphic panels make this perfect for fans of *I Survived!* and Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales.

On April 18, 1775, Paul Revere rode through Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, shouting, "The British are coming! to start the American Revolution. RIGHT?"

WRONG! Paul Revere made it to Lexington, but before he could complete his mission, he was captured!

The truth is, dozens of Patriots rode around warning people about the Redcoats' plans that night. It was actually a man named Samuel Prescott who succeeded, alerting townspeople in Lexington and then moving on to Concord. But the Revolutionary War didn't officially start for more than a year after Prescott's ride. No joke. Discover the nonfiction series that smashes everything you thought you knew about history.

## *Lions and Liars* by Kate Beasley

Frederick Frederickson has a food-chain theory about life. There are lions, like the school bully. Gazelles, like the bullied kids. There are meerkats, and the fleas that live on the butts of meerkats. Frederick's a flea.

Fifth grade is off to a terrible start when Frederick is sent to a disciplinary camp for troublesome boys. His fellow troop mates—Nosebleed, Specs, The Professor, and little-yet-lethal Ant Bite—are terrifying. But in between trust-building exercises and midnight escape attempts, a tenuous friendship grows between them. Which is lucky, because a Category 5 hurricane is coming and everyone will have to work together—lions and fleas alike—to survive!

## *Mo'ne Davis: Remember My Name* by Mo'ne Davis

At the age of thirteen, Mo'ne Davis became the first female pitcher to win a game in the Little League World Series and the first Little Leaguer to be featured on the cover of *Sports Illustrated*. A month later she earned a place in the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

This inspiring memoir from a girl who learned to play baseball with the boys and rose to national stardom before beginning eighth grade will encourage young readers to reach for their dreams no matter the odds. Mo'ne's story is one of determination, hard work, and an incredible fastball.

Mo'ne Davis is a multisport athlete who also plays basketball and soccer, and is an honor roll student at her school in Philadelphia.

With an 8-page full-color photo insert, this memoir celebrates our fascination with baseball in a story of triumph to be shared with generations of young athletes to come.

## *Nat Enough* by Maria Scrivan

Making friends isn't easy, but losing them is even harder! Natalie has never felt that she's enough -- athletic enough, stylish enough, or talented enough. And on the first day of middle school, Natalie discovers that things are worse than she thought -- now she's not even cool enough for her best friend, Lily! As Natalie tries to get her best friend back, she learns more about her true self and natural talents. If Natalie can focus on who she is rather than who she isn't, then she might realize she's more than enough, just the way she is.

## *Pax* by Sara Pennypacker

Pax was only a kit when his family was killed, and "his boy" Peter rescued him from abandonment and certain death. Now the war front approaches, and when Peter's father enlists, Peter has to move in with his grandpa. Far worse than being forced to leave home is the fact that Pax can't go. Peter listens to his stern father--as he usually does--and throws Pax's favorite toy soldier into the woods. When the fox runs to retrieve it, Peter and his dad get back in the car and leave him there--alone. But before Peter makes it through even one night under his grandfather's roof, regret and duty spur him to action; he packs for a trek to get his best friend back and sneaks into the night. This is the story of Peter, Pax, and their independent struggles to return to one another against all odds. Told from the alternating viewpoints of Peter and Pax.

## *Rez Dogs* by Joseph Bruchac

Malian was visiting her grandparents on the reservation when the COVID-19 pandemic started. Now she's staying there, away from her parents and her school in Boston. Everyone is worried about the pandemic, but on the reservation, everyone protects each other, from Malian caring for her grandparents to the local dog, Malsum, guarding their house. They always survive together.

Malian hears stories from her grandparents about how it has always been this way in their community: Stories about their ancestors, who survived epidemics of European diseases; about her grandfather, who survived a terrible government boarding school; and about Malian's own mother, who survived and returned to her Native community after social services took her away to live in foster care as a child. With their community and caring for one another, Malian and her family will survive this pandemic, too.

## *Simon B. Rhymin'* by Dwayne Reed

Eleven-year-old Simon Barnes dreams of becoming a world-famous rapper that everyone calls Notorious D. O. G. But for now, he's just a Chicago fifth grader who's small for this age and afraid to use his voice.

Simon prefers to lay low at school and at home, even though he's constantly spitting rhymes in his head. But when his new teacher assigns the class an oral presentation on something that affects their community, Simon must face his fears.

With some help from an unexpected ally and his neighborhood crew, will Simon gain the confidence to rap his way to an A and prove that one kid can make a difference in his 'hood?

## *The Way to Rio Luna* by Zoraida Cordova

Eleven-year-old Danny Monteverde believes in magic. He knows that pixie dust is real, that wardrobes act as portals, and that rabbit holes lead to Wonderland. Most of all, he believes that his older sister, Pili, is waiting for him somewhere in Rio Luna, the enchanted land in their favorite book of fairy tales.

Danny doesn't care what the adults say. He knows that Pili isn't another teen runaway. When the siblings were placed in separate foster homes, she promised that she'd come back for him, and they'd build a new life together in Rio Luna.

Yet as the years pass, Danny's faith begins to dim. But just when he thinks it might be time to put foolish fairy tales behind him, he finds a mysterious book in the library. It's a collection of stories that contain hints about how to reach another world. A map to Rio Luna . . . and to Pili.

As his adventure takes him from New York to Ecuador to Brazil, Danny learns that meeting your favorite characters isn't always a dream come true. But nothing will stop him from finding his sister . . . even if it means standing up to the greatest threat the magical realm has ever known.

## *What is Nintendo?* by Gina Shaw

Founded in 1889, Nintendo started out as a small playing card company in Japan. Though the cards sold well, Nintendo really became popular when it began creating toys in the 1960s, and then became internationally renowned after developing video games and consoles in the 1970s and '80s. After introducing the world to some of the best-known and top-selling video game franchises of all-time, such as Super Mario Bros., The Legend of Zelda, Animal Crossing, and Pokemon, it's clear to see why Nintendo is beloved by parents as a company that creates non-violent, family-friendly entertainment for kids.

With fun black-and-white illustrations and an engaging 16-page photo insert, readers will be excited to read this latest addition to Who HQ!

## *Word Travelers and the Taj Mahal Mystery* by Raj Haldar

Eddie and Molly-Jean are next door neighbors and best friends. One Saturday, Eddie's mom sends him up to the attic to get his great-grandpa's most prized possession (a book, of course). Eddie and Molly-Jean are suddenly transported to India where they must use their word knowledge to solve a mystery and help a new friend save his school.

This new series will follow the two best friends as they discover the hidden stories behind common words. Using their Awesome Enchanted Book and a healthy dose of imagination, the daring duo transport themselves to exotic locales, always encountering new adventures and learning how different cultures have contributed to the English language along the way.