



# SUMMER READING LIST\* A Universe of Stories! ~ Grades 3-4

Suggested space-themed summer reading  
compiled for the Connecticut State Department of Education  
by Linda Williams, Connecticut State Library

## PICTURE BOOKS

**Armstrong: The Adventurous Journey of a Mouse to the Moon** by *Torben Kuhlmann*  
A mouse decides to fly to the moon. | Lexile: 730

## CHAPTER BOOKS

**The Boy Who Climbed into the Moon** by *David Almond*  
Helped by a very long ladder, some unusual acquaintances, two rather worried parents, and a great deal of community spirit, a young English boy makes an astonishing discovery when he embarks on a mission to prove that the moon is nothing but a big hole in the sky. | *USBBY* | Lexile: 470

**I Love You, Michael Collins** by *Lauren Baratz-Logsted*  
In 1969, as her own family is falling apart, ten-year-old Mamie finds comfort in conducting a one-sided correspondence with the least famous astronaut heading toward the moon on Apollo 11. | *NCSS* | Lexile: 800

**Sputnik's Guide to Life on Earth** by *Frank Cottrell Boyce*  
Separated from his grandfather and placed in a foster home, Prez forges a friendship with an alien who appears as a dog to everyone else and entreats Prez to help compile a list of Earth's redeeming qualities. | Lexile: 530

**Martin Bridge: Ready for Takeoff!** by *Jessica Scott Kerrin*  
In three short stories, Martin develops a crush on his new bus driver, takes care of his friend's hamster with tragic results, and participates in a rocket exhibition that threatens a friendship. | *ALA* | Lexile: 540

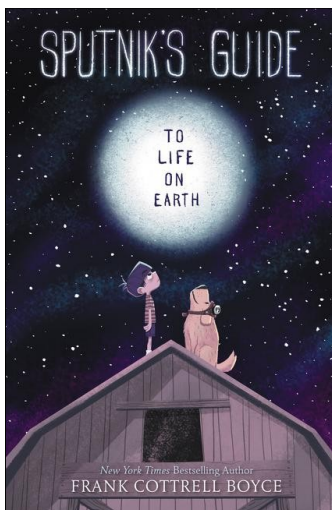
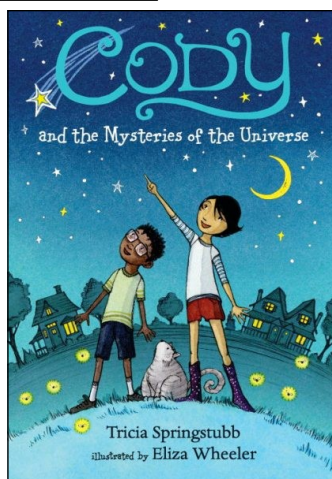
**Space Taxi** by *Wendy Mass & Michael Brawer*  
On "Take Your Kid to Work Day," eight-year-old Archie discovers that his father drives a space taxi that shuttles aliens from one area of the universe to another. | Lexile: 460

**Herbert's Wormhole** by *Peter Nelson*  
When almost-sixth-grader Alex, a video game fanatic, is forced on a "playdate" with his neighbor Herbert, an inventor, the two travel to the twenty-second century and face off against aliens, who are not as beneficent as most people think. | *Nutmeg 2012* | Lexile: 780

**Planet Earth is Blue** by *Nicole Panteleakos*  
On the autism spectrum and nearly nonverbal, twelve-year-old Nova is happy in her new foster home and school, but eagerly anticipates the 1986 Challenger launch, for which her sister, Bridget, promised to return. | Lexile: 740

**To the Moon!** by *Paul A. Reynolds*  
Twin mice Sydney and Simon compete to create the most interesting project about the Earth's moon for their elementary school, and win the first prize—a chance to meet a real astronaut.

**Cody and the Mysteries of the Universe** by *Tricia Springstubb*  
When Cody's best friend Spencer moves to her street, an excited Cody asks for Spencer's help tackling the mystery of a neighbor who has a skull-and-crossbones sign in his window, while a new school year ushers in "new school jitters" for Spencer, and for Cody, a newly forged bond with a teacher who shares her love for Mozart. | *Nutmeg 2019* | Lexile: 460



## GRAPHIC NOVELS

**Jedi Academy** by *Jeffrey Brown*  
When Roan's application to pilot school is rejected, he finds he has been invited to study under Master Yoda at the Jedi Academy. | *ALA*, *Nutmeg 2016* | Lexile: 650

**Leo Geo and the Cosmic Crisis** by *Jon Chad*  
Armed with his knowledge of science, Leo Geo becomes an astronaut and heads into space, where he encounters pirates and tries to stop a comet that is headed toward his brother's science laboratory on Earth.

# SUMMER READING LIST\*

## **Zita the Spacegirl: Far From Home** by Ben Hatke

Zita rushes to the rescue after her best friend is abducted by an alien doomsday cult, and, before long, finds herself hailed as an intergalactic hero. | *ALA, Nutmeg 2015* | Lexile: 310

## **Hilo: The Boy Who Crashed to Earth** by Judd Winick

When a mysterious boy falls from the sky, friends D.J. and Gina must discover the secrets of his identity and help him save the world. | *Nutmeg 2017* | Lexile: 460

## POETRY

## **The Day the Universe Exploded My Head** by Allan Wolf

With poetry that is equal parts accurate and entertaining, accompanied by lively, whimsical and energetic illustrations, amateur stargazers and budding astrophysicists will be enthralled by the many wonders of the universe as presented in this picture book that includes notes about the poems, a glossary and a list of resources.

## NONFICTION

## **Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11** by Brian Floca

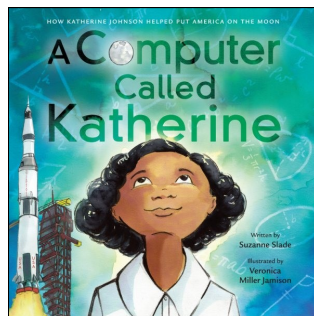
Here is the story of the Apollo 11 mission to the Moon -- a story of leaving and returning during the summer of 1969, and a story of home, seen whole, from far away by steady astronauts in their great machines. | *ALA, NCTE* | Lexile: 830

## **Impact!: Asteroids and the Science of Saving the World** by Elizabeth Rusch

Asteroids come in all shapes and sizes--and hit our planet in them, too. But what happens if a catastrophically large one approaches earth? By looking on the ground at historical asteroid craters and present-day falls, and up into space for the big ones yet to come, a wide variety of scientists are trying to figure out how to track asteroids--and how to avoid devastating impacts in the future. | *ALA* | Lexile: 1070

## **Exoplanets** by Seymour Simon

Introduces exoplanets, examining the planets outside of our solar system, discussing what makes them habitable, and exploring the efforts to discover new life. | *NSTA*



## BIOGRAPHY

## **Look Up!: Henrietta Leavitt, Pioneering Woman Astronomer** by Robert Burleigh

An illustrated portrait of astronomer Henrietta Swan Leavitt traces the years she spent measuring stars from her position at the Harvard College Observatory and her important discoveries that enabled the scientific community to gain a fuller understanding of the universe's vast size. | *NCSS* | Lexile: 600

## **Mission to Space** by John B. Herrington

Chickasaw astronaut, John Herrington, shares his flight on the space shuttle Endeavour and his thirteen-day mission to the international Space Station. | *ALA*

## **Fascinating: The Life of Leonard Nimoy** by Richard Michelson

An uplifting picture book portrait of the late actor best known as Spock from *Star Trek* describes his upbringing as the child of immigrant parents, his early dreams of becoming an entertainer and the ways his famous character reflected his experiences of being different. | *NCSS* | Lexile: 920

## **Starry Messenger: A Book Depicting the Life of a Famous Scientist, Mathematician,**

## **Astronomer, Philosopher, Physicist, Galileo Galilei** by Peter Sis

Describes the life and work of the courageous man who changed the way people saw the galaxy, by offering objective evidence that the earth was not the fixed center of the universe. | *ALA, NCTE* | Lexile: 830

## **A Computer Called Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Helped Put America on the Moon** by Suzanne

## *Slade*

Shares the story of the pioneering African American mathematician, Katherine Johnson, who helped calculate America's first manned flight into space, its first manned orbit of Earth, and the world's first trip to the moon.

## **To the Stars!: The First American Woman to Walk in Space** by Carmella Van Vleet

Shares the story of renowned astronaut and distinguished scientist Kathryn Sullivan, describing how she defied the conventions of her childhood to pursue interests previously limited to boys and how she became the first woman to walk in space. | *NCSS* | Lexile: 680

\*Many of the listed books were selected as exemplary books by one or more of the following organizations: the *American Library Association* (ALA), the *International Literacy Association* (ILA), the *National Council for the Social Studies* (NCSS), the *National Council of Teachers of English* (NCTE), the *National Council of Teachers of Mathematics* (NCTM), the *National Science Teachers Association* (NSTA), the *American Association for the Advancement of Science* (AAAS) or the *United States Board on Books for Young People* (USBBY). Other awards as noted.



# SUMMER READING

## New Favorites & Classics

For Grades 3-4

### READ NUTMEG AWARD NOMINEES!

Find the Elementary (Grade 3) & Intermediate (Grade 4) Nutmeg lists at: <http://nutmegaward.org>

### FAVORITES & CLASSICS

#### **Mr. Popper's Penguins** by Richard Atwater

The unexpected delivery of a large crate containing an Antarctic penguin changes the life and fortunes of Mr. Popper, a house painter obsessed by dreams of the Polar regions. | ALA | Lexile: 910

#### **Tuck Everlasting** by Natalie Babbitt

The Tuck family is confronted with an agonizing situation when they discover that a ten-year-old girl and a malicious stranger now share their secret about a spring whose water prevents one from ever growing any older. | ALA | Lexile: 770

#### **Madeline** by Ludwig Bemelmans

Madeline, smallest and naughtiest of the twelve little charges of Miss Clavel, wakes up one night with an attack of appendicitis. | ALA | Lexile: 330

#### **On a Beam of Light: A Story of Albert Einstein\*** by Jennifer Berne

Follows the life of the famous physicist, from his early ideas to his groundbreaking theories. | ALA | Lexile: 680

#### **James and the Giant Peach** by Roald Dahl

Wonderful adventures abound after James escapes from his fearful aunts by rolling away inside a giant peach. | Lexile: 870

#### **Because of Winn-Dixie** by Kate DiCamillo

Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni describes her first summer in the town of Naomi, Florida, and all the good things that happen to her because of her big ugly dog Winn-Dixie. | ALA | Lexile: 670

#### **My Father's Dragon** by Ruth Stiles Gannett

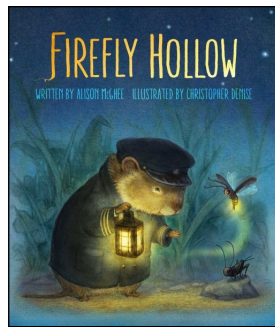
A young boy determines to rescue a poor baby dragon who is being used by a group of lazy wild animals to ferry them across the river on Wild Island. | ALA | Lexile: 970

#### **The Story of Ferdinand** by Munro Leaf

Ferdinand likes to sit quietly and smell the flowers, but one day he gets stung by a bee and his snorting and stomping convince everyone that he is the fiercest of bulls. | Lexile: 760

#### **The Tales of Uncle Remus** as told by Julius Lester

A retelling of the African American tales about the adventures and misadventures of Brer Rabbit and his friends and enemies. | ALA | Lexile: 780



#### **Pippi Longstocking** by Astrid Lindgren

Escapades of a lucky little girl who lives with a horse and a monkey — but without any parents — at the edge of a Swedish village. | Lexile: 870

#### **Sarah, Plain and Tall** by Patricia MacLachlan

When their father invites a mail-order bride to come live with them in their prairie home, Caleb and Anna are captivated by their new mother and hope that she will stay. | ALA | Lexile: 660

#### **Firefly Hollow\*** by Alison McGhee

Because their dreams of daring adventures go against the cautious teachings of their nations, Firefly and Cricket set out on their own, find a home with kindly Vole, and together help a grieving "miniature giant" named Peter. | Lexile: 690

#### **Juana & Lucas\*** by Juana Medina

A spunky young girl from Colombia loves playing with her canine best friend and resists boring school activities, especially learning English, until her family tells her that a special trip is planned to an English-speaking place. | ALA, Nutmeg 2019 | Lexile: 870

#### **Archer's Quest** by Linda Sue Park

Twelve-year-old Kevin Kim helps Chu-mong, a legendary king of ancient Korea, return to his own time. | ALA, Nutmeg 2010 | Lexile: 690

#### **Pax\*** by Sara Pennypacker

After being forced to give up his pet fox Pax, a young boy named Peter decides to leave home and get his best friend back. | ALA | Lexile: 760





# SUMMER READING

## New Favorites & Classics

For Grades 3-4

### **Pink and Say** by Patricia Polacco

Say Curtis describes his meeting with Pinkus Aylee, a black soldier, during the Civil War, and their capture by Southern troops. Based on a true story about the author's great-great-grandfather. | Lexile: 600

### **Tar Beach** by Faith Ringgold

A young girl dreams of flying above her Harlem home, claiming all she sees for herself and her family. Based on the author's quilt painting of the same name. | ALA | Lexile: 790

### **The Noisy Paint Box\*** by Barb Rosenstock

An exuberantly illustrated introduction to the early life of abstract painter Vasya [Wassily] Kandinsky describes how his creative life was profoundly shaped by a neurological condition called "synesthesia," which caused him to experience colors as sounds, and sounds as colors. | ALA, NCTE, NCSS | Lexile: 630

### **Grandfather's Journey** by Allen Say

A Japanese American man recounts his grandfather's journey to America which he also undertakes later, and the feelings of being torn by a love for two different countries. | Lexile: 650

### **Where the Sidewalk Ends** by Shel

*Silverstein*

A boy who turns into a TV set and a girl who eats a whale are only two of the characters in this collection of humorous poetry illustrated with the author's own drawings.

### **Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters** by John

*Stephoe*

Mufaro's two beautiful daughters, one bad-tempered, one kind and sweet, go before the king, who is choosing a wife. | ALA | Lexile: 790

### **All-of-a-Kind Family** by Sydney Taylor

The adventures of five sisters growing up in a Jewish family in New York in the early twentieth century. | Lexile: 750

### **Harriet the Invincible\*** by Ursula Vernon

Never a conventional princess, Harriet becomes an adventurer after learning she is cursed to fall into a deep sleep on her twelfth birthday, but after two years of slaying ogres, cliff-diving, and more with her riding quail, Mumfrey, things go awry at home and she must seek a prince to set things right. | ALA, *Nutmeg 2017* | Lexile: 810

### **Charlotte's Web** by E. B. White

Wilbur, the pig, is desolate when he discovers that he is destined to be the farmer's Christmas dinner until his spider friend, Charlotte, decides to help him. | Lexile: 680

### **The Velveteen Rabbit** by Margery Williams

By the time the Velveteen Rabbit is dirty, worn out, and about to be burned, he has almost given up hope of ever finding the magic called Real. | Lexile: 820

### **Dragonwings** by Lawrence Yep

In the early twentieth century a young Chinese boy joins his father in San Francisco and helps him realize his dream of making a flying machine. | Lexile: 870

### **Lon Po Po** by Ed Young

Three sisters staying home alone are endangered by a hungry wolf who is disguised as their grandmother. | Lexile: 670

### **Rumpelstiltskin** by Paul O. Zelinsky

A strange little man helps the miller's daughter spin straw into gold for the king on the condition that she will give him her first-born child. | Lexile: 620

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## SERIES

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**Ramona** by Beverly Cleary

**Amber Brown** by Paula Danziger

**Bink & Gollie** by Kate DiCamillo

**Mercy Watson** by Kate DiCamillo

**Sassy** by Sharon Draper

**Nikki and Deja** by Karen English

**Babymouse** by Jennifer L. Holm

**Bunnicula** by James Howe

**Frog and Toad** by Arnold Lobel

**Gooney Bird** by Lois Lowry

**Lulu** by Hilary McKay

**Magic Treehouse** by Mary Pope Osborne

**Junie B. Jones** by Barbara Park

**Clementine** by Sara Pennypacker

**Calvin Coconut** by Graham Salisbury

**The Time Warp Trio** by Jon Scieszka

**EllRay Jakes** by Sally Warner

**Commander Toad** by Jane Yolen

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