

## Elaine Jaltema's Recommended Books

The following books have been popular reading material by many of grade 4-7 students. It is only a small portion of the books I recommend as I seldom find time to update it. Details about more titles can be found in the password-protected section of the pita website.

I am unaware of content that may be deemed offensive, except as noted. Those marked with \* have been especially popular with my students and I particularly like those marked with √ because of their educational content and/or quality of the literature. Some are not yet marked with \* because not many of my students have yet discovered it.

Not all books available in libraries are suitable for students to use for classroom study. Teachers should feel confident in using novels listed in the ERAC catalogue ([www.bcerac.ca](http://www.bcerac.ca)) as well as those supplied by their school district resource centers. As ERAC cannot possibly evaluate all novels, teachers may want to consider using novels not yet in the catalogue, especially those from known authors and those that have won awards. Teachers should be careful in selecting novels that are not supplied by their District or listed in the ERAC catalogue to avoid books with questionable content. This list is my own list of books that have been used by me for classroom use or that I am familiar with because my students have read them for independent reading. Teachers are encouraged to help keep this list up-to-date by sending messages to [elainejaltema@gmail.com](mailto:elainejaltema@gmail.com) to suggest additions or revisions.

Reading levels reflect my experience for independent reading. Books may be suitable for slightly younger children for read-alouds and independent reading by very skilled readers. Numbers in brackets are given by Scholastic.

<b>RL</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Title</b>	
5+	Almond	Skellig	overcoming family challenges
5+	Armstrong	Souder	historical fiction; Afro-American
4-7	*√Avi	Poppy (series)	standing up to bullies; mice and owls
6+	Avi	Crispin	Boy runs from Medieval landlord
5+	√Avi	Never Mind	Twins seeking own identity; humour
5+	√Avi	Perloo the Bold	adventure-fantasy; teaches about government
6-9 (5.9)	Babbitt	Tuck Everlasting	family faces challenge of accidental immortality
5+	*Bailey, Linda	Detective series	mystery series; humour
4+	√Barkhouse	Pit Pony	historical – coal mining in Cape Breton
3-5	√Bauer	A Bear Named Trouble	animal rights & safety
6+	Bauer	Hope Was Here	teens help get honest mayor elected in US
(5.6)	√Bauer	On My Honor	honesty; dealing with death & responsibility
5+	*Berton	Secret World of Og	humour; fantasy; overcoming prejudice
4+	Blume	Blubber	overweight girl gets teased (best used with teacher guidance as the girls are really nasty bullies)
4-5 (4.2)	*Blume	Superfudge & others in series	Humour/family
4-5 (4.2)	*Blume	Otherwise Known as Sheila the Great	Humour/family
4-5 (4.9)	*Blume	Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing	Humour/family
4-7	Butcher	The Gramma War	importance of family history & empathy
5+ (4.7)	*Choldenko	Al Capone Does My Shirts	empathy towards autistic family member
5+	√Clark	Freedom Crossing	historical fiction; freeing American slaves
4-6 (4.7)	Cleary	Dear Mr. Henshaw	writing letters to resolve personal problems

4-6	Cleary	Mouse & Motorcycle series	humour; adventures of a mouse
3-6	*Cleary	Ramona series	Humour; family relationships
4-7	*√Clements	Landry News	kids take action for justice; newspaper
4-7 (4.8)	*√Clements	Frindle	kids are powerful; understanding dictionary; humour
4-7	*√Clements	Janitor's Boy	boy learns to be proud of his father
4-7	*√Clements	Last Holiday Concert	Kids learn how to create a concert, working together
4-7	*√Clements	Lost and Found	identical twins fool school; humour
4-7 (5.0)	*√Clements	Report Card	girl hides fact she's a genius; organizes against tests
4-7	*√Clements	Room One	Empathy – helping others on their own terms
4-7 (4.7)	*Clements	School Story	girl author finds way to get her novel published
6.2	*Colfer	Artemis Fowl (series)	fantasy; adventure; humour
6+	√Colfer	Half-Moon Investigations	Detective story with humour; Irish
6+ (7.1)	√Cooper	Dark is Rising (series)	fantasy; adventure; mystery
5+	*Coville	Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher	fantasy; boy raises dragon
5+	Coville	The Monster's Ring	Fantasy; boy stands up to bullies with help of magic
5+	Coville	Skull of Truth	Boy stands up to bullies; learns value of truth
5-7 (6.6)	√Creech	Walk Two Moons	relationships; empathy; mystery
6+	*√Creech	Absolutely Normal Chaos	relationships; empathy; mystery
5-7 (4.5)	*√Creech	Granny Torrelli Makes Soup	Relationships between blind boy, girl & grandmother
4-7 (4.9)	*√Creech	Love That Dog	boy uses poetry to deal with dog's death
5-7	Creech	Bloomability	girl coming of age & overcoming family challenges
6+ (5.3)	√Creech	The Wanderer	girl & boy write from diff. perspectives; sea voyage
5-7 (5.2)	*√Curtis	Bud, Not Buddy	depression story of Afro-American boy
5.5	√Curtis	The Watsons Go To Birmingham 1963	social justice; black history
6+	Cushman	Midwife's Apprentice	inner strength; medieval
4-6 (5.8)	*Dahl	BFG	humour; big friendly giant
4+(5.2)	*Dahl	Matilda	humour
3-6	*Dahl	The Twits	humour
4+ (5.5)	Dahl	Witches	Humour
3-5	Dahl	James & The Giant Peach	Humour
4-6 (5.9)	Dahl	Charlie & the Chocolate Factory	Humour
5-7	Dahl	Danny, the Champion of the World	humour; relationships; adventure
5-7	*√D'Aadamo	Iqbal	child labour; based on true story
4-7	√DeFelice	Apprenticeship of Lucas Whitaker	historical fiction; during tb pandemic, germs and hygiene were discovered
4-7 (4.1)	*√Dicamillo	Because of Winn-Dixie	dog brings new relationships to lonely child
	*√Dicamillo	Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane	Character learns humility and patience
4-7 (4.8)	*√Dicamillo	Tale of Despereaux	fairy tale genre; adventure & humour
5-7 (5.4)	*D'Lacey	Ice Fire & sequels	fantasy; dragons & magic with modern family
4-6	√Dowd	Ring of Tall Trees	forest protection; aboriginal connection
5+ (5.1)	*√DuPrau	City of Ember & sequels	Resilience; social responsibility; peace; nuclear war forces the creation of a city underground
4-7	*√Ellis	Breadwinner & sequels	rights of women in modern Afghanistan
6+	*√Farmer	House of Scorpion	adventure; cloning
6+	Farmer	The Ear, The Eye, and the Arm	futuristic Zimbabwe; adventure

4-7	*√Fletcher	Spider Boy	Friendships and spider facts
5-7	√Fletcher	Flying Solo	kids' empowerment; relationships
4-6 (4.0)	Fleischman	The Whipping Boy	prince-pauper reversal; humour; adventure
5-7	*Friesen	Janey's Girl	ethical dilemma; relationships
4-7(4.9)	*Funke	Dragon Rider	adventure; fantasy
4-7 (4.9)	√*Funke	Inkheart & InkSpell (Ink Death is quite violent for elementary)	Adventure; fantasy ( caution: rude words appear 4 times in Ink Spell)
5-7 (4.9)	*Funke	Thief Lord	adventure; mystery; relationships
4-7	*√Gantos	Joey Pigza (series)	living with ADHD: humour; relationships
3-6	√Gardiner	Stone Fox	boy & dog act heroically; aboriginal connection
6+ (5.6)	√George	Julie of the Wolves	Inuit world; girl survives on her own; wolves
4-7	√George	There's an Owl in the Shower	family is caught in forestry vs owl conflict
3-5	*Godfrey	Welcome to the Club	Humour; friendship; acceptance
4-7	*√Gutman	Homework Machine	Kids learn value of learning rather than cheating
4-7	*√Gutman	Million Dollar Shot	basketball; advertising; ethical dilemma; humour
5-7 (5.6)	*√Haddix	Just Ella	Cinderella flees shallow castle life to aid refugees
5-8(5.5)	*√Haddix	Among the Hidden (& sequels)	suspense; human rights & overpopulation
5-8	*√Hale	Princess Academy	Exposes foolishness of emphasis on shallow "princess qualities" & myth of female fragility
6+	√Haworth-Attard	Irish Chain	Immigration; Canadian history; Halifax fire
4+	√Hesse	Music of the Dolphin	human rights; relationships; dolphins
6+	√Hiassen	Flush	Kids catch someone flushing sewage into ocean
5+	√*Hiassen	Hoot	Moral dilemma; owl protection;relationships
6+	√Hiassen	Scat	Mystery with ecological overtones & humour
6+ (5.1)	Hinton	The Outsiders	shows the inner sides of tough "greaser" youth; best used with teacher because of gang violence
6+	Hobbs	Far North	boys' survival; aboriginal connection
6+	Holm	I am David	boy escapes concentration camp; inner strength
5-7	Horvath	Everything on a Waffle	Humour; folksy small town life
5+	Houston	Frozen Fire (& sequel)	boys' survival; aboriginal connection
4-6	*Howe	Bunnicula (& sequels)	humour
5-7	*Kehret	Don't Tell Anyone	adventure; mystery; care of animals (cats)
5-7	*√Kehret	Stolen Children	Kidnapping; suspense; adventure
4-6	*√Kimmel Smith	War with Grandpa	relationships; humour; dilemma
3-5	*King Smith	A Mouse Called Wolf	humour
3-5	√King Smith	Babe	overcoming prejudice; empathy for animals
4-7 (5.3)	*Kinney	Diary of a Wimpy Kid	humour; full of cartoons
5-7	*Korman	No More Dead Dogs	humour; courage to be yourself
5-7	*Korman	Not This Time	humour; mystery
5-7	Korman	Radio Fifth Grade	humour; standing up to bullies
6-8	*√Korman	Schooled	"hippy" boy tries to fit in; similar to Stargirl
5-7	√Lawson	White Jade Tiger	historical fiction; Chinese immigration; mystery
4-5	LeGuin	Catwings	fantasy; overcoming prejudice
6+	L'Engle	Wrinkle in Time	science fiction; good vs evil

4-7 (5.1)	*Levine	Ella Enchanted	adventure
5+ (6.1)	Lewis	Narnia series	adventure; good v evil
6+ (5.9)	*√Lowry	The Giver & sequels Gathering Blue and The Messenger	what is the value of individuality and choice?
4-7 (5.2)	*√Lowry	Number the Stars	family saves Jews during holocaust
6+	Lowry	Stay	a dog's story from the dog's perspective
4-7	*MacGregor	Screech Owl series	hockey team has adventures and solves mysteries
5-7	Maguire	Seven Spiders Spinning	parody of horror genre
6+ (5.4)	√Mikaelsen	Touching Spirit Bear	juvenile delinquent sent on own to find inner spirit
4+ (5.5)	*Miller	You Be the Jury	mysteries
4+	*Miller	You Be The Detective	mysteries
4-7 (5.9)	*Mowat	Owls in the Family	animals; humour
6+	Mowat	Lost in the Barrens	survival; aboriginal connection
6+	√Naidoo	The Other Side of Truth	corruption in Nigeria forces family to flee
4-7 (5.7)	*√Naylor	Shiloh (& sequels)	rescuing dog from abuse; moral dilemmas
7+ (7.1)	North	Rascal	true story of pet raccoon at the end of WW1
6+	√Nowak	Old Brown Suitcase	family of polish Jews immigrants in Canada
5+	√O'Brien	Mrs. Frisby & the Rats of Nihm	adventure; moral dilemmas; mice and rats
6+	*Oppel	Silverwing (& sequels)	adventure; bats
6+	*Oppel	Airborn & sequels	adventure
6+ (7.8)	*Paolini	Eragon & sequel Eldest	adventure; dragon
4-7	*√Park	Kid in the Red Jacket	humour; friendship; empathy
5-7	√Park	Single Shard	Korea (historical); inner strength
4-7	*√Park	Mick Harte Was Here	brother killed riding a bike without helmet
5+(6.1)	*√Paterson	Bridge to Terabithia	inner strength; relationships; death
5+(5.3)	*√Paterson	Great Gilly Hopkins	inner strength; family relationships; empathy
5+ (6.2)	*Paulsen	Hatchet (& sequels)	survival
5-7	*√Pearson	Awake & Dreaming	inner strength; family relationships; empathy
5-7	Pearson	Handful of Time	relationships; time travel
4-5	Peck	A Long Way From Chicago	Great Depression; humour; colourful grandma
6+ (6.3)	√Philbrick	Freak the Mighty	powerful; boy's friendship with a friend who is very disabled; also action & suspense; teacher guidance suggested because of some violence
6+	Raskin	Westing Game	mystery
6+	Richardson	After Hamelin	adventure; fantasy; follow-up to Pied Piper
4-6	Richler	Jacob Two-Two & the Hooded Fang	humour
5-8 (4.7)	*Riordan	Lightning Thief & sequels	mythology, popular culture, responsibility
5-7 (5.6)	Ritter	Boy Who Loved Baseball	sports
	*√Rowling	Harry Potter (series)	fantasy; adventure
6+	√Rylant	Missing May	relationship; adjustment to death
5+ (5.2)	*Sachar	Holes	adventure
6-9	*√Sachar	Small Steps	sequel to Holes; good for teaching reading strategies
5+ (5.5)	*√Sachar	There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom	relationships; bully is transformed
5-7	*√Sachar	Someday Angeline	friendship; accepting differences
5-7	*√Sachar	Dogs Don't Tell Jokes	friendship; accepting differences; humour

5-7	*√Salisbury	Under the Blood Red Sun	during ww2, family of Japanese-Americans living in Hawaii; friendship between boys
4-7	Schwartz	Starshine & Fanged Vampire Spider	kid power; girl rallies friends to change spiders' reputation
3-6	*Scieszka	Time Warp Trio (series)	humour; low-reading level with high interest
4-7	*√Scrimger	Nose from Jupiter (& sequels)	standing up to bullies; humour; relationships
5+	*Sleator	Boxes	suspense; science fiction
3-6	*√Smith	War with Grandpa	empathy; humour; relationships
3-6	√Smith	Taste of Blackberries	friend dies; relationships
5-8	*√Snyder	The Egypt Game	Mystery; suspense; lots of Egyptology
5-7	*√Spencer	This Means War	Kid power; saving an apartment by working together
4-8	*Spinelli	Eggs	Friendship helps 2 students deal with boy's grief & girl's dysfunctional family
4-7 (5.4)	*√Spinelli	Maniac Magee	racial desegregation; tall tale genre
5+ (5.5)	*√Spinelli	Wringer	boy finds voice to stand against cruelty
5+	√Spinelli	Library Card	4 short stories of lives transformed by reading
4-7 (5.5)	*√Spinelli	Loser	cheerful nerd, rejected by peers, finds acceptance
5-7	*√Spinelli	Crash	tough jock torments then befriends kind nerd
5+ (6.1)	*√Spinelli	Stargirl & sequel	reactions of teens to non-conformist girl
5+ (5.2)	*√Spinelli	Milkweed	Holocaust
	Taylor	Trouble with Tuck	Dog goes blind
6-8	Tolan	Surviving the Applewhites	humour; eccentric family
6+ (5.5)	*√Van Draanen	Flipped	humour; story told from 2 different perspectives
4+	*√Walsh	Moses, Me and Murder	historical fiction; Barkerville
4+	√Walsh	Shabash	Sikh boy's struggle for inclusion in minor hockey
5-8	*√Walters	Safe as Houses	Historical kids survive flood by quick-thinking
3+	*√Walters	Three on Three & other books in the basketball series	basketball; friendships between genders and confronting stereotypes of kids who are poor
5+	*Walters	Camp X & sequels	ww2 – spy camps in Canada; historical fiction
5+	*Walters	Ricky	kid power; animal rights; standing up to bullies
5+	Walters	Hydrofoil Mystery	Canadian historical fiction; adventure
5-7 (5.0)	*√Walters	Elixer	testing on animals to discover insulin
4-9	Walters	Voyageur	Trudeau rescues a canoeing family; historical fiction
5-9	*√Walters	War of the Eagles & sequel Caged Eagles	During WWII – internment of Japanese; hero of War of the Eagles is part aboriginal
5-9	Walters	We All Fall Down	Historical fiction – 9/11 World Trade Centre crisis
6-7	Whelan	Listening for Lions	ethical dilemma; Kenya in 1919
4-6 (4.9)	*√White	Charlotte's Web	animals' perspective
4-6 (5.1)	White	Trumpet of the Swan	animal; humour
5+	Wilson	Murder on the Canadian	mystery (Tom Austen detective series)
5+	Wilson	Inuk Mountie Adventure	mystery (Tom Austin detective series)
5+	*Wright	Dollhouse Murders	suspense; relationships