Suggested Summer Reading for Rising Grades 3 - 4

We have a wide range of readers in rising Grades 3 & 4 this year, and no one list could cover all of them. Please take a look at some of the other recommended summer reading lists for more ideas, especially for family read-alouds. Happy reading!

**Read-to-self books**

**Non-fiction**

*National Geographic Readers* from National Geographic (various authors)

Children are fascinated by the world around them and the National Geographic Readers line of books feed that curiosity. The *Little Kid's First Big Book* series, which is not just for Little Kids, is another excellent non-fiction choice.

*Lesser Spotted Animals; Lesser Spotted Animals 2; Even More Lesser Spotted Animals* (series) by Martin Brown

Find out all about the amazing animals you need to know but never get to read about, from the numbat to the zorilla, and everything in between.

*DK Children's Visual Encyclopedias, DK Eyewitness Books*, and others from Dorling Kindersley

DK publishes excellent children's books on a wide range of topics; it’s worth checking out their website for non-fiction ideas. Many of their books are published in partnership with the Smithsonian, so readers might see some things in the book they can see in real life, just a Metro ride away!
Guinness World Records

People track some truly bizarre records and Guinness World Records is where they end up! For example, did you know that the first working Lego prosthetic arm was invented by an 18-year-old man in Andorra? Now you do!

Nathan Hale’s Hazardous Tales (series) by Nathan Hale

Nathan Hale’s Hazardous Tales take young readers into American history with graphic novels that bring the dangerous, bloody, exciting history of America to life. From the Revolutionary War to the Civil War, World War I and World War II, the Donner Party, the Marquis de Lafayette, Harriet Tubman, the Alamo, and more all come to life in a way that will excite young readers of history.

Everything Awesome About Dinosaurs; Everything Awesome About Sharks and Other Underwater Creatures; Everything Awesome About Space by Mike Lowery

The “Everything Awesome” books are awesome. With little known facts, fun and wacky illustrations, and a drawing section at the end, these appeal to our most discerning dinosaur, shark, and space aficionados.

Fiction

Two-Headed Chicken by Tom Angleberger

A two-headed chicken races across the multiverse to escape a hungry moose. What’s not to love? In this fourth wall–breaking graphic novel, our double-headed hero is chased through dozens of bizarre universes, from an ocean planet with a disturbing mermoose (that you can never unsee) to a world where chickens drive cars, and even to a land covered with . . . pizza sauce?

A Boy Called Bat (trilogy) by Elena K. Arnold

For Bixby Alexander Tam (nicknamed Bat), life tends to be full of surprises—some good, some not so good. Today is a good-surprise day. Bat’s mom, a veterinarian, has brought home a baby skunk, just until she can hand him over to a wild-animal shelter. But the minute Bat meets the kit, he knows they belong together. And he’s got one month to show his mom that a baby skunk might just make a pretty terrific pet.

The First Cat in Space Ate Pizza by Mac Barnett

Something terrible is happening in the skies! Rats are eating the MOON! There’s only ONE hero for the job, a bold and fearsome beast bioengineered in a secret lab to be the moon’s savior and Earth’s last hope! And that hero is . . . a cat.
The Terrible Two (series) By Mac Barnett, Jory John, Kevin Cornell (Illustrator)

From Mac Barnett (Sam and Dave Dig a Hole) and Jory John (The Good Egg)
Miles Murphy is known for one thing and one thing only: pranking. He’s the best prankster his school has ever seen. So, when he’s forced to move to boring, cow-filled Yawnee Valley, he assumes he’ll be the best prankster at his new school, too. There’s one problem. The school already has a prankster—and he’s good. Really good. Let the prank war begin!

The Miniature World of Marvin & James (series) by Elsie Broach

James is human, his best friend Marvin is a beetle. Join this unusual pair for their adventures in The Miniature World of Marvin & James.

In the first book, James is going on vacation; Marvin has to stay home. While James is gone, Marvin has to play with his annoying cousin, Elaine. Marvin and Elaine quickly find themselves getting into all sorts of trouble—even getting trapped inside a pencil sharpener! Marvin misses James and starts to worry about their friendship. Will James still be Marvin's friend when he gets home?

Star Wars: Jedi Academy (series) by Jeffrey Brown

Roan’s one dream is to leave home and attend Pilot Academy like his older brother, father, and grandfather. But just as Roan is mysteriously denied entrance to Pilot School, he is invited to attend Jedi Academy—a school that he didn’t apply to and only recruits children when they are just a few years old. That is, until now...

This incredible, original story captures all of the humor, awkwardness, fun, and frustrations of middle school—all told through one boy's comics, journal entries, letters, doodles, and newspaper clippings.

The Wild Robot (trilogy) by Peter Brown

Can a robot survive in the wilderness?

When robot Roz opens her eyes for the first time, she discovers that she is all alone on a remote, wild island. She has no idea how she got there or what her purpose is—but she knows she needs to survive. After battling a violent storm and escaping a vicious bear attack, she realizes that her only hope for survival is to adapt to her surroundings and learn from the island's unwelcoming animal inhabitants.

No Talking (and others) by Andrew Clements

It's boys vs. girls when the noisiest, most talkative, and most competitive fifth graders in history challenge one another to see who can go longer without talking. Teachers and school administrators are in an uproar, until an innovative teacher sees how the kids’ experiment can provide a terrific and unique lesson in communication. In No Talking, Andrew Clements portrays a battle of wills between some spunky kids and a creative teacher with the perfect pitch for elementary school life that made Frindle an instant classic.
**Cat Ninja** (series) by Matthew Cody (Author), Yehudi Mercado (Illustrator)

Raised from a kitten by a kindly old ninja master, Claude now spends his days as the pampered house cat of an eleven-year-old boy. But when trouble arises, Claude dons his mask and springs into action as Cat Ninja—Metro City's secret protector! In Book 1 of the series, follow our feline hero's early exploits as he tries to keep his secret identity under wraps while thwarting the evil plans of slimy crooks, rampaging robots, and a certain rodent nemesis who lives under the same roof!

**The Chicken Squad: The First Misadventure** by Doreen Cronin, illus. by Kevin Cornell

Four chick siblings try to solve the mystery of the squirrel's HUGE, TERRIFYING, ENORMOUS, FRIGHTENING thing in the yard. But how are they supposed to do that when the squirrel can't even tell them what shape it is?!?!?

**Belly Up (Funjungle #1); Space Case (Moon Base Alpha #1)** by Stuart Gibbs

The Funjungle and Moon Base Alpha mystery series are both perennial favorites for Grade 4 and advanced Grade 3 readers at GHS. The Funjungle series is set at the Funjungle Zoo, where Teddy Fitzroy lives with his scientist parents. In Moon Base Alpha, Dashiell Gibson is one of the first kids to live on the moon… and he's bored out of his mind.

**Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel** by Niki Grimes

Spunky third-grader Dyamonde Daniel misses her old neighborhood, but when she befriends a boy named Free, another new student at school, she finally starts to feel at home.

**The 13-Story Treehouse** (The Treehouse Books #1) by Andy Griffiths, Terry Denton

Andy and Terry live in the world's most amazing treehouse, with a bowling alley, a see-through swimming pool, a secret underground laboratory, and a machine that follows you around and shoots marshmallows into your mouth whenever you are hungry. Life would be perfect… but they have to write their next book. And how is that possible with so many distractions, like flying cats, giant bananas, mermaids, sea monsters pretending to be mermaids, enormous gorillas, and dangerous burp gas-bubblegum bubbles!

**The Year of Billy Miller** (series) by Kevin Henkes

When Billy Miller has a mishap at the statue of the Jolly Green Giant at the end of summer vacation, he ends up with a big lump on his head. What a way to start school!

As the year goes by, though, Billy figures out how to navigate elementary school, how to appreciate his little sister, and how to be a more grown up and responsible member of the family and a help to his busy working mom and stay-at-home dad.
Secret Agent Jack Stalwart (series) by Elizabeth Singer Hunt

Secret Agent Jack Stalwart zooms to NYC where an Allosaurus toe is missing from the Natural History Museum. Jack's detection takes him to a competitive elementary school student determined to win the science fair by crossing his own dog with the DNA of a dangerous, carnivorous dinosaur. Soon the gargantuan creature is terrorizing New Yorkers and Jack must stop him before he devours the animals in the Central Park zoo!

Pie in the Sky by Remy Lai

Jingwen has just moved to a new country. He can't make friends because he doesn't speak the language and he's tired of looking after his little brother. To distract himself, Jingwen daydreams about making all the cakes on the menu at Pie in the Sky, the bakery his father planned to open before he passed away. The only problem is his mother has laid down one major rule: Jingwen is not to use the oven while she's at work. As Jingwen and his brother bake elaborate cakes, they'll have to cook up elaborate excuses to keep their secret.

Bob by Wendy Mass, Rebecca Stead, Nicholas Gannon (Illustrator)

It's been five years since Livy visited her grandmother. Now that she's back, Livy has the feeling she's forgotten something really important. It turns out she's right - Bob, a short, greenish creature dressed in a chicken suit, has been hiding in a closet for five years, just like Livy told him to. He can't remember who—or what—he is, or where he came from. But Livy promised she would help him find his way home. Now it's time to keep that promise.

Plant Omar: Accidental Trouble Magnet (series) by Zanib Mian, illus. Nasaya Mafaridik

Welcome to the imaginative brain of Omar! Omar and his family have just moved, and he is NOT excited about starting at a new school. What if the work is too hard or the kids are mean or the teacher is a zombie alien?! But when Omar makes a new best friend, things start looking up. That is, until a bully named Daniel makes every day a nightmare!

Desmond Cole, Ghost Patrol (series) by Andres Miedoso, illustrated by Victor Rivas

When supernatural things start happening in the house that timid Andres and his parents just moved into, next-door-neighbor Desmond Cole, age eight, comes to the rescue.

Clementine (series) and others by Sara Pennypacker, illus. Marla Frazee

Debuting with the eponymous title Clementine in 2006, the seven books in the series follow the eccentric and lovable, yet unintentionally devious, eight-year-old Clementine through third grade. This is also a great pick for a family read-aloud.
**A-to-Z Mysteries** (series) by Ron Roy

From the author: This series features three third-graders who solve crimes and mysteries, Dink Duncan, Josh Pinto, and Ruth Rose Hathaway. They have hobbies and pets and parents, but what they love most is a good mystery. You can read the 26 books in alphabetical order or skip around without missing anything.

**Wings of Fire** (series) by Tui Sutherland

The *Wings of Fire* series was originally published as traditional books but has also been adapted into hugely successful graphic novels. Several students who read the graphic novels this year moved on to the traditional books; if your child loves the graphic novels and isn’t quite ready to read the books themselves, the series is great for read-alouds.

**Sophia and Rainbow** (Unicorn Academy #1) by Julie Sykes (Author), Lucy Truman (Illustrator)

Imagine a school where you meet your own unicorn and learn to talk to them! Sophia is sure she and her unicorn, Rainbow will be great partners, but their first test isn’t a part of their lessons. Sparkle Lake gives unicorns their magic, and when it starts turning a funny color, everything goes wrong! Can Sophia and Rainbow brave the dangerous woods to save the unicorns' magic?

**Smile** (and others) by Raina Telgemeier

Based on the author’s childhood, *Smile* is Raina’s story about wanting to be a normal sixth grader. But one night after Girl Scouts she trips and falls, severely injuring her two front teeth. What follows is a long and frustrating journey with on-again, off-again braces, surgery, embarrassing headgear, and even a retainer with fake teeth attached. And that’s on top of all of the usual problems with school and friends.

**EllRay Jakes is Not a Chicken** (series) by Sally Warner, illustrated by Jamie Harper

EllRay, a third grader with a penchant for getting into trouble, deals with pressure from parents and peers alike in this comical and true-to-life series.

EllRay's little sister, a second grader, has her own series, **Absolutely Alfie**.

**Magical Reality of Nadia** (series) by Bassem Youssef, Catherine R. Daly, et al.

Nadia loves fun facts. Here are a few about her: 1) she collects bobbleheads -- 77 so far, 2) she moved from Egypt to the USA when she was six, 3) the hippo amulet she wears is actually from ancient Egypt, 4) she's going to win the contest to design a new exhibit at a local museum. (Okay, so that last one isn't a fact yet, but Nadia has plans to make it one.)

But when a new kid starts teasing Nadia about her heritage, it totally throws her off her game. Then her amulet starts glowing! She discovers that the hippo is holding a hilarious -- and helpful -- secret. Can she use it to confront the new kid and win the contest?
Family Read-and-Watch

Reading aloud as a family helps nurture a culture of reading at home. A study conducted by the Scholastic Publishing group identified the “decline by nine” phenomenon, a significant drop in reading frequency and enjoyment between the ages of 8 and 9. Consistently dedicating time to read together may help prevent this decline by encouraging children to continue to engage with books and modeling reading as an activity that is important enough to make time for on a busy day.

The books listed below have also been made into movies, which can be a fun “read first, watch next, then talk about” family activity.

**A Bear Called Paddington** by Michael Bond

Paddington Bear had traveled all the way from Peru when the Browns first met him in Paddington Station. Since then, their lives have never been quite the same . . . for ordinary things become extraordinary when a bear called Paddington is involved.

**James and the Giant Peach, Matilda, The Witches** (and others) by Roald Dahl

Roald Dahl's quirky books make great family read-alouds. His brave children and unusual situations have captured generations of readers. Roald Dahl is a perennial favorite but take the time to preview his stories - some children may not be comfortable with his non-traditionally happy endings.

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

One summer’s day, ten-year-old India Opal Buloni goes to the local supermarket for some groceries—and comes home with a dog. But Winn-Dixie is no ordinary dog. It's because of Winn-Dixie that Opal begins to make friends. And it's because of Winn-Dixie that she finally dares to ask her father about her mother, who left when Opal was three. In fact, as Opal admits, just about *everything* that happens that summer is because of Winn-Dixie.

**Diary of a Wimpy Kid** (book series) by Jeff Kinney

It's a new school year, and Greg Heffley finds himself thrust into middle school, where undersized weaklings share the hallways with kids who are taller, meaner, and already shaving. The hazards of growing up before you're ready are uniquely revealed through words and drawings as Greg records them in his diary.

But Greg is happy to have Rowley, his sidekick, along for the ride. But when Rowley's star starts to rise, Greg tries to use his best friend's newfound popularity to his own advantage, kicking off a chain of events that will test their friendship in hilarious fashion.
**Babe the Gallant Pig** by Dick King Smith

When Babe arrives at Hogget Farm, Mrs. Hogget's thoughts turn to sizzling bacon and juicy pork chops—until he reveals a surprising talent for shepherding, that is. Before long, Babe is handling Farmer Hogget's flock better than any sheepdog ever could. Babe is so good, in fact, that the farmer enters him into the Grand Challenge Sheepdog Trials. Will it take a miracle for Babe to win?

**The Borrowers** by Mary Norton, illustrated by: Beth and Joe Krush

Arietty Clock and her parents are tiny people called Borrowers. They live in a house inhabited by giant “human beans,” where they do their best to stay hidden. But Arietty strikes up a friendship with a human boy and Arietty's father is horrified. When the cook starts to notice that food is disappearing, the Clock family may need the boy's help after all.


**Nim’s Island** by Wendy Orr

Take a spunky heroine competently surviving on her own on a deserted island. Add in animal friends who seem to understand, the vaguest of villains hovering in the background and easily overcome, a smattering of scientific information effortlessly absorbed and a very satisfying conclusion. Then write it in breezy style, making the various pieces of the story fit together in a jigsaw-puzzle way. All together it makes for one delightful story.

**Bridge to Terabithia** by Katherine Paterson

Jess has been practicing all summer to be the fastest runner in fifth grade. And he almost is, until a new girl, Leslie Burke, arrives. The two become fast friends; spending most days in the woods behind Leslie's house, where they invent an enchanted land called Terabithia. One morning, Leslie goes to Terabithia without Jess and a tragedy occurs. It will take the love of his family and the strength that Leslie has given him for Jess to deal with his grief.

**The Invention of Hugo Cabret** by Brian Selznik

Orphan, clock keeper, and thief, Hugo lives in the walls of a busy Paris train station, where his survival depends on secrets and anonymity. But when his world suddenly interlocks with an eccentric, bookish girl and a bitter old man who runs a toy booth in the station, Hugo’s undercover life, and his most precious secret, are put in jeopardy. A cryptic drawing, a treasured notebook, a stolen key, a mechanical man, and a hidden message from Hugo's dead father form the backbone of this intricate, tender, and spellbinding mystery.

Martin Scorsese's 2011 *Hugo* won five Academy Awards.
Magazines

Reading magazines is an opportunity for children to read in small sections and explore new interests. They’re also great for reading aloud from to you and/or siblings at times when there’s not much to do - on a road trip or in an airport, for example.

**Highlights for Children**

*Highlights Magazine* started in 1946 and has become a classic in children's magazines for ages 6-12.

**Ranger Rick**

Published by the National Wildlife Federation, the Ranger Rick magazines focus on animals and the natural world. They are written at progressive reading levels, from *Cub* and *Zootles* for pre-readers and early readers, progressing through *Zoobooks, Ranger Rick Jr.*, and *Ranger Rick*. *ZooDinos* is a special interest publication for dinosaur fans!

**National Geographic Kids**

From National Geographic, the National Geographic Kids magazines focus mainly on information about animals, with National Geographic’s signature spectacular photographs.

**Sports Illustrated Kids**

The iconic magazine of all things sports-related packaged for young readers.

**The Week Junior**

*The Week Junior* is a weekly news magazine that helps 8-to-14-year-olds make sense of the world with topical and timely takes on a broad range of subjects. In 32 colorful pages, the magazine provides context and clarity on complex issues and current events, encouraging lively classroom discussions and debates.