

Renaissance



40

*Years of
Renaissance
Accelerating
Learning*

What
**Kids Are
Reading**

2026 Edition

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Introduction

By Tiffany P. Hogan, PhD, CCC-SLP | Professor and Research Associate

In an era dominated by notifications, infinite scroll, and bite-sized content, reading a book cover to cover has become almost countercultural for many young people. Yet the data in this year's *What Kids Are Reading* report tell a different story, one of millions of children still choosing books, still turning pages, still experiencing the cognitive and emotional journey that only sustained reading provides.

This matters now more than ever. Children's literacy skills are declining. National assessment data show troubling drops in reading proficiency, and educators across the country report students struggling with attention, comprehension, and the stamina required for extended text. These challenges didn't emerge in isolation. They've developed alongside seismic shifts in how young people encounter language and information, shifts toward fragmented, algorithm-driven content that rewards quick consumption over deep engagement.

But declining averages don't tell the whole story. The 4.7 million students represented in this report collectively read 161 million books during the 2024–2025 school year. That number alone should give us pause before we write off this generation. When given access, opportunity, and support, children will read. They will read widely and voraciously. And some who struggle early can become strong readers when the conditions are right.

This year's report introduces us to "Growing Readers," students who began the school year scoring below the 25th percentile but who demonstrated exceptional growth by spring. These children matter enormously. They represent not just statistical gains but genuine turning points, and their trajectories challenge deficit-oriented narratives about struggling readers. They show us how responsive children can be to effective literacy instruction, meaningful book access, and environments that treat reading as both skill-building and identity-shaping work.

What these Growing Readers need, and what all engaged readers need, is worth examining closely. First, they need volume. Reading skill develops through reading itself, and there's no shortcut around extensive practice with connected text.

Children need opportunities to read frequently, across genres and formats, in school and beyond. Second, they need choice within structure. The books children select matter not because self-selected reading alone drives growth, but because

engagement fuels persistence, and persistence builds proficiency. Third, they need texts that are both accessible and challenging. Books they can successfully navigate while still encountering new vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and sophisticated ideas.

Equally important is what surrounds the reading experience. Growing Readers need adults who notice their progress, who can identify when a child needs a different level of support or a different kind of book, and who understand that reading development is rarely linear. They need classroom communities where reading is valued and visible, where books are discussed and recommended,

Reading skill develops through reading itself, and there's no shortcut around extensive practice with connected text.

Engagement fuels persistence, and persistence builds proficiency.

where literacy is understood not as a discrete subject but as the foundation for all learning. They need assessment that informs instruction rather than simply sorting students, and intervention frameworks that respond quickly when children falter.

The digital reading habits in this report also deserve attention. The 1.5 million students engaging with texts on myON remind us that reading encompasses multiple modalities. While we should remain thoughtful about screen time and possible digital distraction, digital platforms can expand access, scaffold struggling readers, and meet children where their literacy lives increasingly unfold. The real question isn't whether digital reading "counts." It's how we ensure that all reading experiences, across all formats, develop the deep comprehension, critical thinking, and sustained attention that literacy demands.

Perhaps most importantly, the children represented in this report need us to resist despair about the current moment. Yes, social media competes for attention. Yes, literacy challenges are real and consequential. But these data show what remains possible when schools prioritize reading, when teachers connect children with books, and when systems support rather than sort young readers.







The books in these pages—the fantasy series that captivated fifth graders, the graphic novels that hooked reluctant readers, the informational texts that kindergartners couldn't put down—represent millions of small victories against the forces pulling children away from sustained reading. Each book finished is evidence of a child's developing identity as a reader, their growing stamina for complex text, and their expanding understanding of themselves and their world.

This is the work ahead: ensuring every child has access to books they can and want to read, instruction that builds their skills, and communities that value their growth. The children in this report show us it's possible. Now we must make it universal.

These data show what remains possible when schools prioritize reading, when teachers connect children with books, and when systems support rather than sort young readers.



Tiffany P. Hogan, PhD, CCC-SLP is a Professor at MGH Institute of Health Professions in Boston and Research Associate at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Hogan studies language and reading assessment and interventions and implementation of evidence-based practices in schools, especially for neurodiverse children with Developmental Language Disorder, Dyslexia, and/or Speech Sound Disorders. Her advocacy for children with language, speech, and literacy differences has led her to co-found a DLD informational website, www.dldandme.org, and host a podcast, SeeHearSpeak Podcast.

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-  @seehearspeakpodcast
-  SeeHearSpeak

40 Years of Accelerating Learning

Celebrating the most enduring program in K–12 education

Since its launch in 1986, **Accelerated Reader** has helped millions of students to fall in love with books and reading—and changed how technology is used in classrooms worldwide. To celebrate this milestone, we asked six of our Accelerated Reader Content Designers to tell us about a favorite childhood book that sparked their own reading journey.



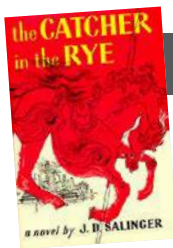
Stories of adventure and resilience

Once upon a time, there was a shy girl who loved to read. One afternoon, she stumbled across [Little Black, A Pony](#) by Walter Farley (1.7, LG). She was instantly hooked on Farley's Black Stallion series, which focuses on the unshakeable bond between an Arabian stallion and Alec, his human friend.

After reading all 20 books in the series, the girl discovered many other adventure stories. Jack London's [White Fang](#) (7.4, MG, 970L) and [The Call of the Wild](#) (8.0, MG, 1120L) became particular favorites.

The girl eventually married another reading enthusiast, and they raised three voracious readers of their own. The girl is now a grandmother, but she never lost her love of stories about adventure, survival, and resilience. She's lucky to have a job that, over the years, has put so many memorable stories into her hands.

— Ann H. (Content Designer since 2001)



Learning powerful life lessons

When I was 13, an older cousin handed me his tattered copy of [The Catcher in the Rye](#) (4.7, UG, 790L). I'd never heard of the book or its author. All I knew was what my cousin said: "This book is about *you*."

Of course, the novel's narrator, Holden Caulfield, and I were very different. He was a privileged kid from New York in the 1950s, while I was a middle-class kid in small-town Vermont in the 1980s. That didn't matter. I couldn't put the book down. Holden's voice was unlike anything I'd ever read. It felt like he was speaking directly to me. I shared his disdain for "phonies" and felt his ache as childhood slipped away.

As an adult, I can do now what I couldn't back then: articulate the heartbreak at the core of Holden's dream. You can't catch people in the rye. You can't shield them from life's pain. *The Catcher in the Rye* is still one of the best books I've ever read. It hit me hard. And it sparked a love of books and storytelling that I carry with me to this day.

— Frank D. (Content Designer since 2002)



The rewards of hard work

One of my favorite childhood books was [The Little Red Hen](#) (2.0, LG). The story follows the Hen, a hardworking character. Time and again, she asks the other farm animals for help with daily tasks, but they repeatedly turn her down.

The Hen doesn't give up. She plants the wheat, harvests it, hauls it to the mill, and finally bakes a loaf of bread, all on her own. When the delicious

smell fills the air, the other animals want a slice. But the Hen stands firm: because they didn't lend a hand, they don't get a bite.

I've always loved this story because it's a powerful reminder of what an individual can achieve through hard work and determination.

—Nikki R. (Content Designer since 2013)



Exploring new cultures

As a ten-year-old, my favorite book was [Esperanza Rising](#) by Pam Muñoz Ryan (5.3, MG, 750L). I found this book at a key time in my life, because my family had recently adopted my youngest brother from Guatemala.

The Hispanic culture in the novel really resonated with me. It made me want to learn

more about Latin America and about my brother's Guatemalan heritage. I also found Esperanza's strength, courage, and determination inspiring, and I really enjoyed learning about life experiences so different from my own.

—Lucy M. (Content Designer since 2022)



Visiting a galaxy far, far away

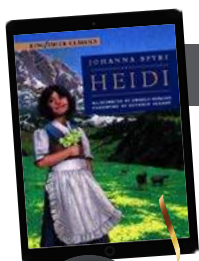
As a kid, my favorite book was the novelization of the movie [Star Wars](#) (6.0, MG, 860L). I especially looked up to the main female character, Princess Leia, and her commitment to fighting for what she believed in. She was the first of many strong females in the *Star Wars* universe.

Accelerated Reader offers many *Star Wars*-related book quizzes. I've written quizzes for graphic novel series for lower-grade readers

(such as *Star Wars: Rebels*), as well as series for high schoolers (including *Star Wars: Thrawn*).

I enjoy being transported back into the *Star Wars* universe and being introduced to new characters and plots—all while thinking back to the story that started it all.

—Julie U. (Content Designer since 2005)



Finding the magic in everyday life

As a child, my favorite book was [Heidi](#) by Johanna Spyri (8.2, MG, 960L). I spent a week each summer on my grandparents' farm and, like Heidi, found enjoyment in the rhythms of rural life.

Heidi's kindness and her ability to bring comfort to others also reminded me of how small gestures can have a lasting impact on the people

around us. Looking back, I realize the novel isn't just a story about a girl in the Swiss mountains. It's about healing, belonging, and the quiet strength that comes from being rooted in place and people. And it reminds me that the most meaningful parts of life can be the ones that feel most familiar.

—Sena N. (Content Designer since 2011)





Custom Reports

Use *What Kids Are Reading* data to customize booklists for individual students or groups, filtered by state, grade, reading level, and more.

What Kids Are Reading

Grades K–2

Let's explore what kids are reading, based on data from Accelerated Reader and myON for the 2024–2025 school year:

- **Signature Books, State by State** and **Fresh Finds in Fall** for Grades K–2.
- Lists of popular picks for Growing Readers in Grades K–2—who started the year with low reading achievement but finished with exceptionally high growth—including **Top Titles, Hot Topics, Highly Rated, Most Read To/With, Shared Connections**, and **Notable Nonfiction**.
- Grade-specific lists of **Top Print, Popular Digital, Nonfiction Picks, Selecciones en español**, and **Series Sets** popular in Grades K, 1, and 2.

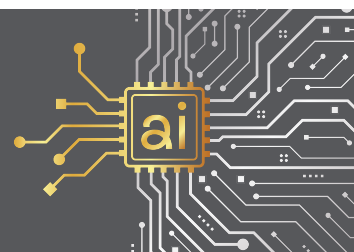
The Data

Each title includes details like ATOS level, Interest level, Lexile measure, and tags indicating if the book is on myON, nonfiction, or available to quiz on in Spanish in Accelerated Reader.

For more on how we know what kids are reading, see *About the Report* (p. 63) or the two Research Spotlights: *How Kids Are Reading* (p. 20) and *Insights on Growing Readers* (p. 46).

We Asked AI: Popular Topics for Grades K–2

What book topics do kids aged 5–8 and their caregivers search for most? We asked our favorite AI tool and received these suggestions:



1. Friendship and social skills

Books that teach about kindness, sharing, and making friends

- **Be Kind**
Pat Zietlow Miller
(2.2, LG, 480L)



3. School and first experiences

Stories about starting school, losing a tooth, or making new friends

- **The Pigeon HAS to Go to School!**
Mo Willems
(1.5, LG, 450L)



2. Animals and nature

Stories featuring talking animals, pets, or wildlife adventures

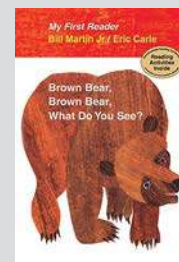
- **If You Give a Moose a Muffin** **SP**
Laura Numeroff
(2.4, LG, 590L)



4. Interactive and rhyming books

Books with repetition, rhymes, or interactive elements like flaps

- **Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?**
Bill Martin Jr.
(1.5, LG, 200L)





Signature Books by State

The title and author of each signature book for Grades K–2 appear below (see map, [p. 10](#)).

AK	The Bad Seed Goes to the Library Jory John
AL	Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You? Dr. Seuss
AR	The Very Impatient Caterpillar Ross Burach
AZ	Where the Wild Things Are Maurice Sendak
CA	Not Norman: A Goldfish Story Kelly Bennett
CO	Put Me in the Zoo Robert Lopshire
CT	Pig the Rebel Aaron Blabey
DE	Big Shark, Little Shark Anna Membrino
FL	Help! A Story of Friendship Holly Keller
GA	Biscuit Flies a Kite Alyssa Satin Capucilli
HI	Mr. Putter & Tabby See the Stars Cynthia Rylant
IA	Fly Guy & Fly Girl: Night Fright Tedd Arnold
ID	Bad Kitty Does Not Like Snow Nick Bruel
IL	Officer Buckle and Gloria Peggy Rathmann
IN	Giggle, Giggle, Quack Doreen Cronin
KS	Attack of the 50-Foot Fly Guy! Tedd Arnold
KY	Pete the Cat: The Great Leprechaun Chase James Dean
LA	Pete the Cat: Big Easter Adventure Kimberly Dean
MA	Stellaluna Janell Cannon
MD	It's Not Easy Being a Bunny Marilyn Sadler
ME	Sleepy Dog Harriet Ziefert
MI	I Love School! Hans Wilhelm
MN	The Bad Guys Aaron Blabey
MO	Diary of a Worm Doreen Cronin
MS	The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything Linda Williams

MT	Chrysanthemum Kevin Henkes
NC	A Color of His Own Leo Lionni
ND	Sneezy the Snowman Maureen Wright
NE	We Don't Eat Our Classmates Ryan T. Higgins
NH	Goodnight Moon Margaret Wise Brown
NJ	Duck for President Doreen Cronin
NM	Clifford the Big Red Dog Norman Bridwell
NV	The Day the Crayons Quit Drew Daywalt
NY	Just Go to Bed Mercer Mayer
OH	Henry and Mudge: The First Book of Their Adventures Cynthia Rylant
OK	Pig the Tourist Aaron Blabey
OR	Interrupting Chicken David Ezra Stein
PA	Grace for President Kelly DiPucchio
RI	Fly Guy and the Alienzz Tedd Arnold
SC	Snowmen at Night Caralyn Buehner
SD	I Was So Mad Mercer Mayer
TN	Fox the Tiger Corey R. Tabor
TX	Creepy Pair of Underwear! Aaron Reynolds
UT	The Rainbow Fish Marcus Pfister
VA	Jump, Pup! Susan B. Neuman
VT	Pete the Cat: Valentine's Day Is Cool Kimberly Dean
WA	Dinosaurs Before Dark Mary Pope Osborne
WI	Mittens Lola M. Schaefer
WV	Room on the Broom Julia Donaldson
WY	I Need My Monster Amanda Noll



**Our district utilizes Accelerated Reader and myON,
and we've seen great success in using these programs
to motivate our students.**

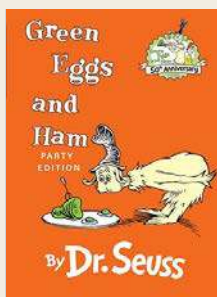
Andrea R., Elementary Literacy Coordinator

What Kids Are Reading

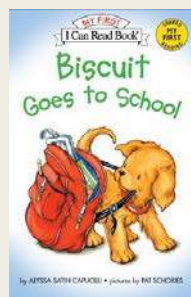
Growing Readers in Grades K–2

Top Titles

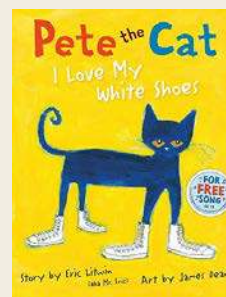
Growing Readers in Grades K–2 read three books most during the 2024–2025 school year.



1. Green Eggs and Ham SP
Dr. Seuss
(1.5, LG, 210L)



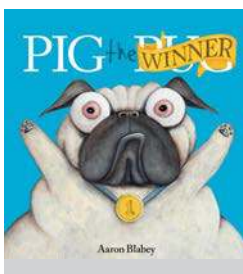
2. Biscuit Goes to School SP
Alyssa Satin Capucilli
(0.9, LG, 160L)



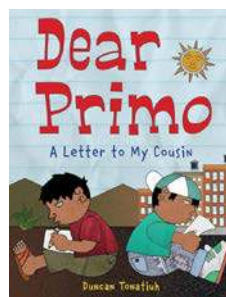
3. Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes SP
Eric Litwin
(1.5, LG, 460L)

Hot Topics

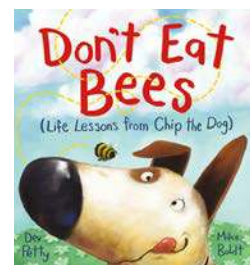
Growing Readers in Grades K–2 read most about Animals, People, and Humor, like these popular titles.



1. Animals
Pig the Winner SP
Aaron Blabey
(2.3, LG, 480L)



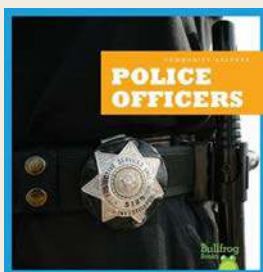
2. People
Dear Primo: A Letter to My Cousin SP
Duncan Tonatiuh
(3.2, LG, 610L)



3. Humor/Funny
Don't Eat Bees (Life Lessons from Chip the Dog)
Dev Petty
(1.9, LG, 530L)

Highly Rated

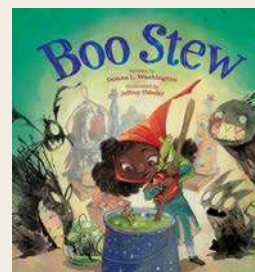
After quizzing in Accelerated Reader, Growing Readers in Grades K–2 rated three books highest on a 4-star scale.



1. Police Officers NF
Cari Meister
(0.9, LG, 350L)



2. Bunnies NF
Kelly Doudna
(0.8, LG)



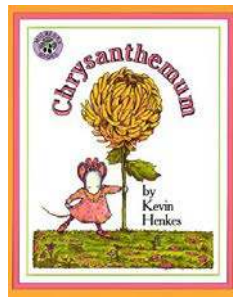
3. Boo Stew
Donna L. Washington
(3.5, LG, 590L)

Growing Readers: Kids who scored below the 25th percentile on the Star Reading assessment in fall but ended with high fall-to-spring growth with a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) of 75 or above.*

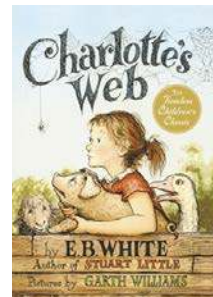
* SGPs range from 1–99, with interpretations like Percentile Rank scores (and 50 as the national average): <https://docs.renaissance.com/R57137>.



1. 69% To/With
Stellaluna SP
Janell Cannon
(3.5, LG, 550L)



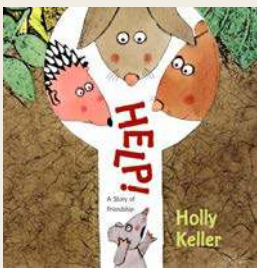
2. 68% To/With
Chrysanthemum SP
Kevin Henkes
(3.3, LG, 570L)



3. 68% To/With
Charlotte's Web SP
E.B. White
(4.4, MG, 680L)

Most Read To/With

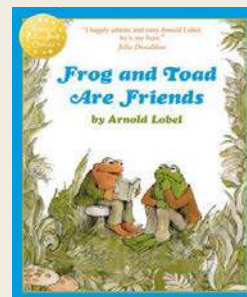
Teachers often read to kids or pair them with a peer to read with for support. Three books were read to/with Growing Readers in Grades K–2 most during the school year.



Help! A Story of Friendship
Holly Keller
(2.3, LG, 510L)



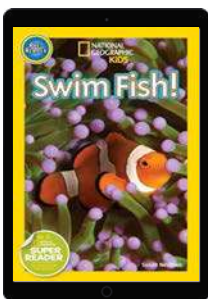
Mr. Putter & Tabby See the Stars
Cynthia Rylant
(2.7, LG, 470L)



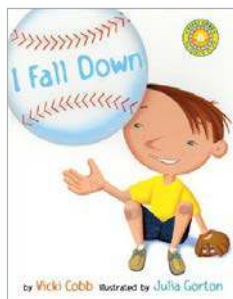
Frog and Toad Are Friends SP
Arnold Lobel
(2.9, LG, 400L)

Shared Connections

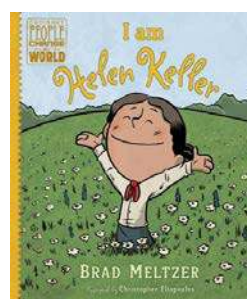
These titles proved popular as Growing Readers in Grades K–2 sought stories centered on friendships, families, and the connections that shape our lives.



Swim, Fish! Explore the Coral Reef myON NF
Susan B. Neuman
(1.2, LG, 370L)



I Fall Down NF
Vicki Cobb
(2.9, LG, 570L)



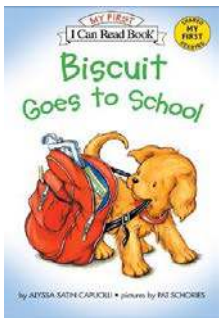
I Am Helen Keller NF
Brad Meltzer
(3.1, LG, 570L)

Notable Nonfiction

With topics that spark curiosity about the world, how things work, and the animals around us, these nonfiction titles were popular choices for Growing Readers in Grades K–2.

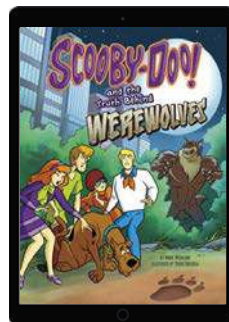
What Kids Are Reading

Grade K



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 124,815 kids in Grade K read, on average, 22 print books and 7,118 words during the 2024–2025 school year. Overall, 46% of books were read to kids, 29% were read with kids, and 25% were read independently.



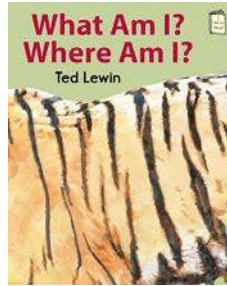
Popular Digital

Our myON data show that 81,620 kids in Grade K spent 16,169,905 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Biscuit Series SP
Alyssa Satin Capucilli (0.7–1.8, LG, 110L–500L)</p> | <p>1 Scooby-Doo! and the Truth Behind Werewolves myON NF
Mark Weakland (2.7, LG, 550L)</p> |
| <p>2 Dr. Seuss Collection SP
Dr. Seuss (0.6–5.2, LG, 180L–1000L)</p> | <p>2 Azaleah Lane Series myON
Nikki Shannon Smith (3.4–3.5, LG, 490L–610L)</p> |
| <p>3 The Pigeon Series SP
Mo Willems (0.7–1.5, LG, 90L–470L)</p> | <p>3 Maximum Horsepower!: A Monster Truck Myth myON
Blake Hoena (3.5, LG, 660L)</p> |
| <p>4 Elephant & Piggie Series SP
Mo Willems (0.5–1.4, LG, 40L–330L)</p> | <p>4 All About Snakes and Lizards myON NF SP
Helen Gregory (2.2, LG, 420L)</p> |
| <p>5 Pete the Cat Series SP
James Dean (1.2–4.3, LG, 160L–650L)</p> | <p>5 Megalodon myON NF
Janet Riehecky (1.6, LG, 450L)</p> |
| <p>6 David Series SP
David Shannon (0.9, LG, 210L)</p> | <p>6 Quest for the Unicorn's Horn myON
Elizabeth Pagel-Hogan (1.9, LG)</p> |
| <p>7 The Very Hungry Caterpillar SP
Eric Carle (2.9, LG, 460L)</p> | <p>7 Colossal Course!: A Monster Truck Myth myON
Blake Hoena (3.5, LG, 550L)</p> |
| <p>8 Big Egg
Molly Coxe (0.4, LG, 220L)</p> | <p>8 Read All About Cats myON NF
Jaclyn Jaycox (3.3, LG, 610L)</p> |
| <p>9 Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?
Bill Martin Jr. (1.5, LG, 200L)</p> | <p>9 Fast Cars myON NF
Barbara Alpert (2.9, LG, 710L)</p> |
| <p>10 See Me Run
Paul Meisel (0.3, LG, 80L)</p> | <p>10 Dogs myON NF
Lisa J. Amstutz (0.9, LG, 280L)</p> |

Nonfiction Picks

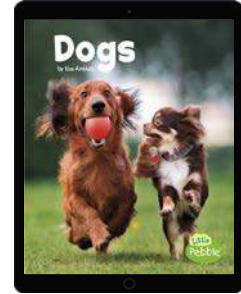
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade K.



What Am I? Where Am I? NF
Ted Lewin
(0.4, LG, 140L)



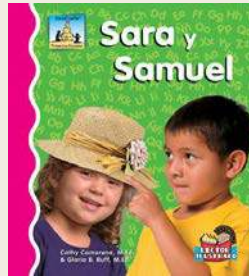
I Am Water NF SP
Jean Marzollo
(0.6, LG, 150L)



Dogs myON NF
Lisa J. Amstutz
(0.9, LG, 280L)

Selecciones en español

Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade K.



Sara y Samuel SP
Cathy Camarena
(0.5, LG)



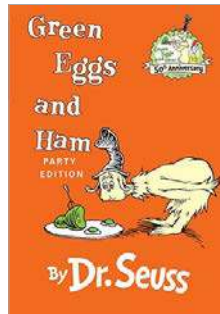
El Sol (libro bilingüe) myON SP
Martha E.H. Rustad
(1.6, LG)



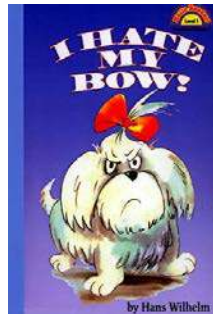
Navidad (libro bilingüe) myON SP
Martha E.H. Rustad
(1.9, LG)

Series Sets

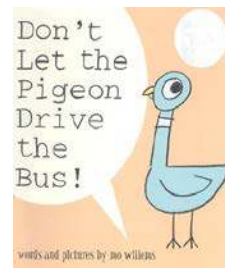
Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade K readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



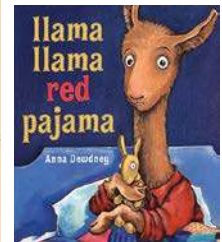
Dr. Seuss Collection SP
Dr. Seuss
(0.6–5.2, LG, 180L–1000L)



Noodles Series SP
Hans Wilhelm
(0.3–1.0, LG, 80L–330L)



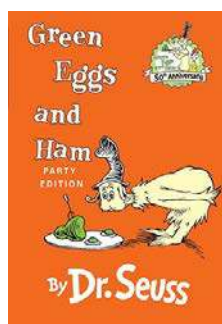
The Pigeon Series SP
Mo Willems
(0.7–1.5, LG, 90L–470L)



Llama Llama Series SP
Anna Dewdney
(1.4–4.0, LG, 230L–580L)

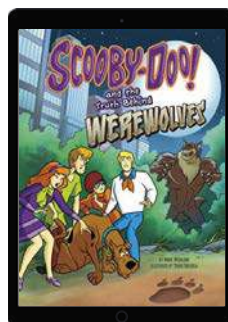
What Kids Are Reading

Grade 1



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 498,753 kids in Grade 1 read, on average, 42 print books and 23,392 words during the 2024–2025 school year. Overall, 28% of books were read to kids, 19% were read with kids, and 53% were read independently.



Popular Digital

Our myON data show that 185,311 kids in Grade 1 spent 65,415,093 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

1 **Dr. Seuss Collection** **SP**
Dr. Seuss (0.6–5.2, LG, 180L–1000L)

2 **Biscuit Series** **SP**
Alyssa Satin Capucilli (0.7–1.8, LG, 110L–500L)

3 **Elephant & Piggie Series** **SP**
Mo Willems (0.5–1.4, LG, 40L–330L)

4 **Fly Guy Series** **SP**
Tedd Arnold (1.2–2.7, LG, 270L–530L)

5 **Pete the Cat Series** **SP**
James Dean (1.2–4.3, LG, 160L–650L)

6 **The Pigeon Series** **SP**
Mo Willems (0.7–1.5, LG, 90L–470L)

7 **Are You My Mother?** **SP**
P.D. Eastman (1.6, LG, 240L)

8 **David Series** **SP**
David Shannon (0.9, LG, 210L)

9 **Go, Dog. Go!** **SP**
P.D. Eastman (1.2, LG, 240L)

10 **If You Give . . . Series** **SP**
Laura Numeroff (1.0–2.7, LG, 170L–590L)

1 **Scooby-Doo! and the Truth Behind Werewolves** **myON NF**
Mark Weakland (2.7, LG, 550L)

2 **Azaleah Lane Series** **myON**
Nikki Shannon Smith (3.4–3.5, LG, 490L–610L)

3 **Megalodon** **myON NF**
Janet Riehecky (1.6, LG, 450L)

4 **Maximum Horsepower!: A Monster Truck Myth** **myON**
Blake Hoena (3.5, LG, 660L)

5 **Quest for the Unicorn's Horn** **myON**
Elizabeth Pagel-Hogan (1.9, LG)

6 **Dogs and Their Puppies** **myON NF**
Linda Tagliaferro (1.4, LG, 380L)

7 **Read All About Cats** **myON NF**
Jaclyn Jaycox (3.3, LG, 610L)

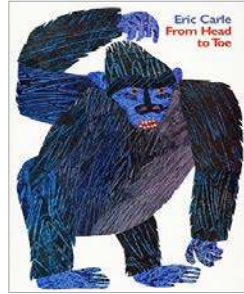
8 **Peek-A-Boo Ghosts** **myON**
Charles Reasoner (0.7, LG, 150L)

9 **Colossal Course!: A Monster Truck Myth** **myON**
Blake Hoena (3.5, LG, 550L)

10 **Hair Scare!** **myON**
John Sazaklis (2.4, LG, 520L)

Nonfiction Picks

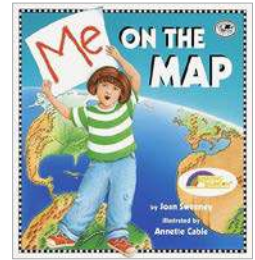
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 1.



From Head to Toe **NF SP**
Eric Carle
(1.0, LG, 210L)



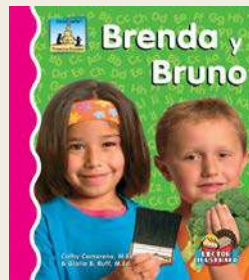
Everyone Feels Angry Sometimes **myON NF SP**
Cari Meister
(1.5, LG, 410L)



Me on the Map **NF**
Joan Sweeney
(1.8, LG, 280L)

Selecciones en español

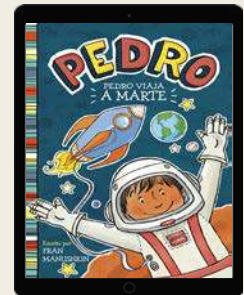
Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 1.



Brenda y Bruno **SP**
Cathy Camarena
(0.4, LG)



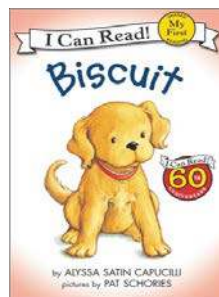
La historia de un pato bebé
(libro bilingüe) **myON SP**
Martha E.H. Rustad
(1.5, LG)



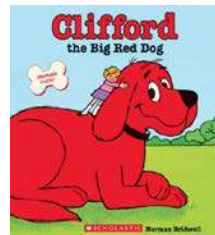
Pedro viaja a Marte **myON SP**
Fran Manushkin
(1.9, LG, 460L)

Series Sets

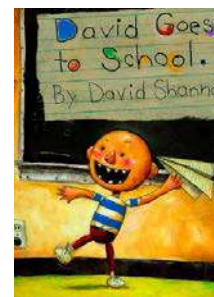
Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 1 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



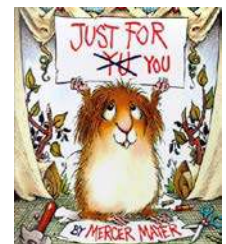
Biscuit Series **SP**
Alyssa Satin Capucilli
(0.7–1.8, LG, 110L–500L)



Clifford the Big Red Dog Series **SP**
Norman Bridwell
(0.4–4.0, LG, 130L–630L)



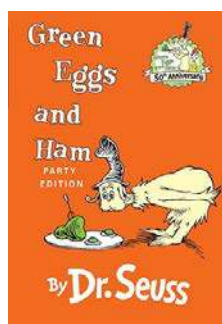
David Series **SP**
David Shannon
(0.9, LG, 210L)



Little Critter Series **SP**
Mercer Mayer
(0.3–3.7, LG, 170L–900L)

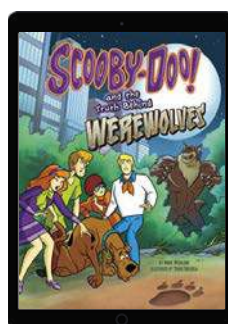
What Kids Are Reading

Grade 2



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 721,599 kids in Grade 2 read, on average, 53 print books and 72,323 words during the 2024–2025 school year. Overall, 20% of books were read to kids, 11% were read with kids, and 69% were read independently.



Popular Digital

Our myON data show that 241,866 kids in Grade 2 spent 104,033,578 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

1 **Dr. Seuss Collection** **SP**
Dr. Seuss (0.6–5.2, LG, 180L–1000L)

2 **If You Give . . . Series** **SP**
Laura Numeroff (1.0–2.7, LG, 170L–590L)

3 **The Very Hungry Caterpillar** **SP**
Eric Carle (2.9, LG, 460L)

4 **The Bad Seed Series** **SP**
Jory John (1.8–3.1, LG, 390L–550L)

5 **There Was an Old Lady Series** **SP**
Lucille Colandro (1.2–4.5, LG, 240L–540L)

6 **Dog Man Series** **SP**
Dav Pilkey (2.3–2.8, LG/MG, 210L–550L)

7 **Big Red Lollipop**
Rukhsana Khan (2.2, LG, 490L)

8 **Creepy Tales Series** **SP**
Aaron Reynolds (2.3–2.8, LG, 470L–500L)

9 **Pete the Cat Series** **SP**
James Dean (1.2–4.3, LG, 160L–650L)

10 **Clark the Shark Series** **SP**
Bruce Hale (1.4–3.0, LG, 450L–630L)

1 **Scooby-Doo! and the Truth Behind Werewolves** **myON NF**
Mark Weakland (2.7, LG, 550L)

2 **The Dramatic Life of Azaleah Lane** **myON**
Nikki Shannon Smith (3.5, LG, 490L)

3 **The Scrumptious Life of Azaleah Lane** **myON**
Nikki Shannon Smith (3.4, LG, 570L)

4 **Sports Car Design** **myON NF**
Mae Respicio (3.4, MG, 620L)

5 **Cowgirl Grit** **myON**
Jake Maddox (3.3, MG, 600L)

6 **Zeke Meeks vs. the Horrifying TV-Turnoff Week** **myON SP**
D.L. Green (3.3, LG, 580L)

7 **Cristiano Ronaldo** **myON NF**
Mari Schuh (2.5, LG, 520L)

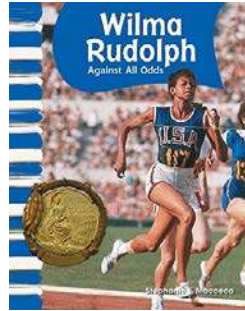
8 **Game Over** **myON**
Benjamin Bird (2.6, LG, 510L)

9 **Swamp Creature Teacher** **myON**
John Sazaklis (2.5, LG, 510L)

10 **Hide-and-Creep (Scary Graphics)** **myON**
Jessica Freeburg (2.5, MG, 520L)

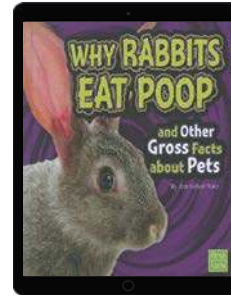
Nonfiction Picks

Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 2.



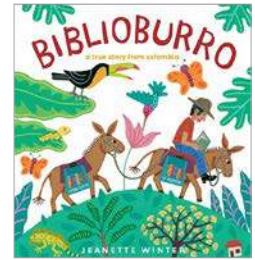
Wilma Rudolph: Against All Odds **NF**

Stephanie E. Macceca
(3.0, LG, 560L)



Why Rabbits Eat Poop and Other Gross Facts About Pets **myON NF**

Jody Sullivan Rake
(3.1, LG, 600L)



Biblioburro: A True Story from Colombia **NF SP**

Jeanette Winter
(3.4, LG, 540L)

Selecciones en español

Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 2.



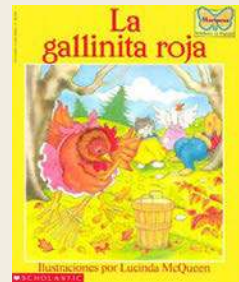
Anacondas (español) **myON SP**

Jaclyn Jaycox
(2.9, LG, 440L)



Portugal vs. España **myON SP**

Jules Allen
(3.3, MG, 480L)

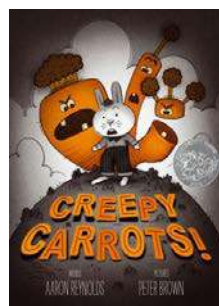


La gallinita roja **SP**

Elva R. López
(3.3, LG, 470L)

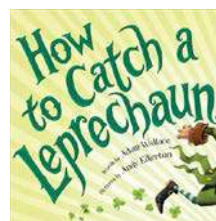
Series Sets

Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 2 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



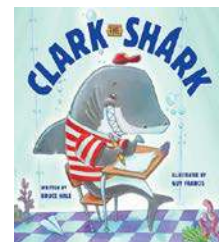
Creepy Tales Series **SP**

Aaron Reynolds
(2.3–2.8, LG, 470L–500L)



How to Catch Series **SP**

Adam Wallace
(1.9–3.5, LG, 500L–730L)



Clark the Shark Series **SP**

Bruce Hale
(1.4–3.0, LG, 450L–630L)



Fly Guy Series **SP**

Tedd Arnold
(1.2–2.7, LG, 270L–530L)

Research Spotlight

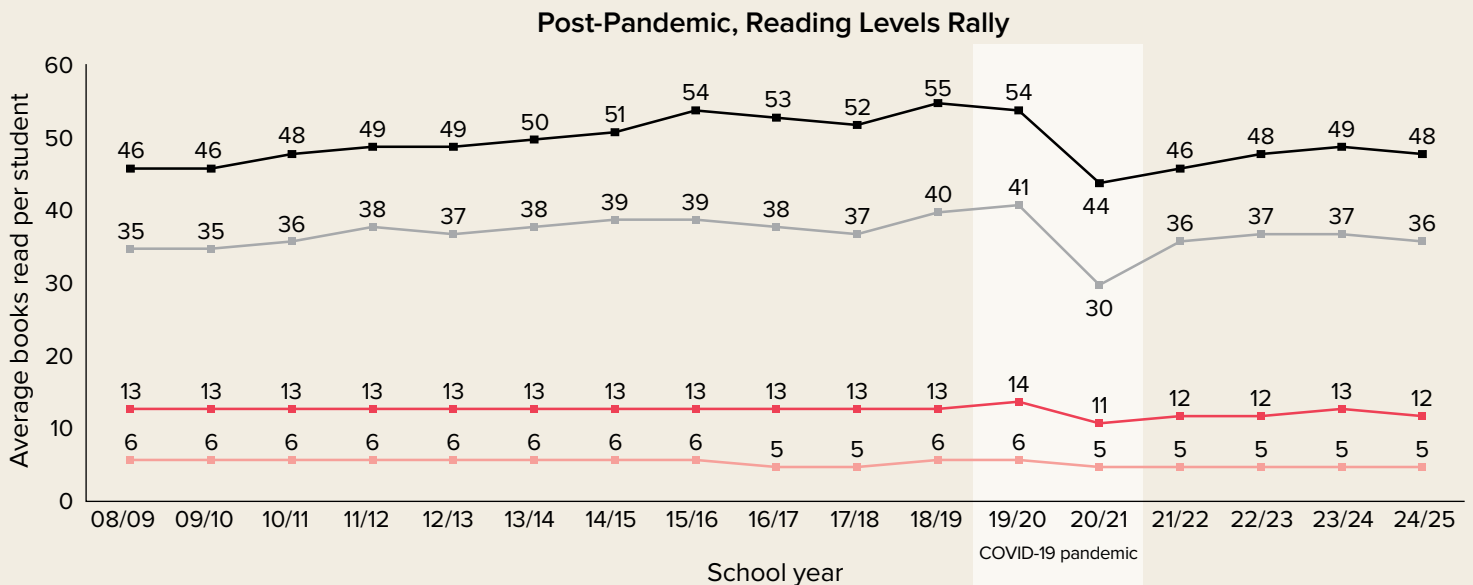
How Kids Are Reading

To share what we know about how kids are reading, we examined Accelerated Reader data for 4.7 million kids who read 161 million books in 19,962 schools during the 2024–2025 school year.

Are kids still reading?

After a disruption in school-based reading during the COVID-19 pandemic, on average, **the number of books read each school year by kids in Grades 1–8 is on the rebound**, while high school reading holds steady.

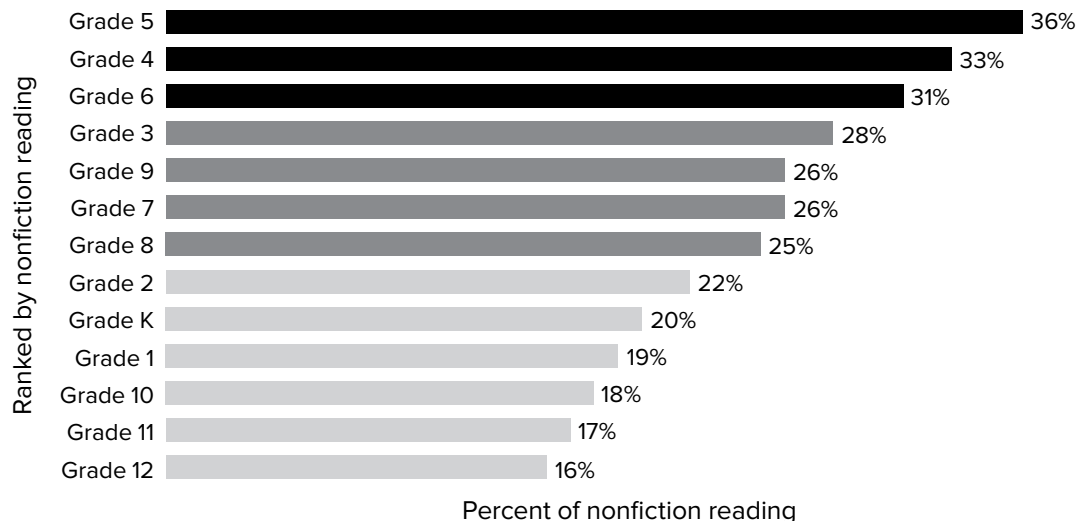
— Grades 1–2 — Grades 6–8
 — Grades 3–5 — Grades 9–12



Grades 3–9 Reveal in Real-World Reading

What are kids reading?

Overall, nonfiction represents from 16 to 36 percent of what kids are reading. **Nonfiction is most popular in Grades 4–6**, where a third of books read cover real-world topics, and in Grades 3 and 7–9, where one in four books do.



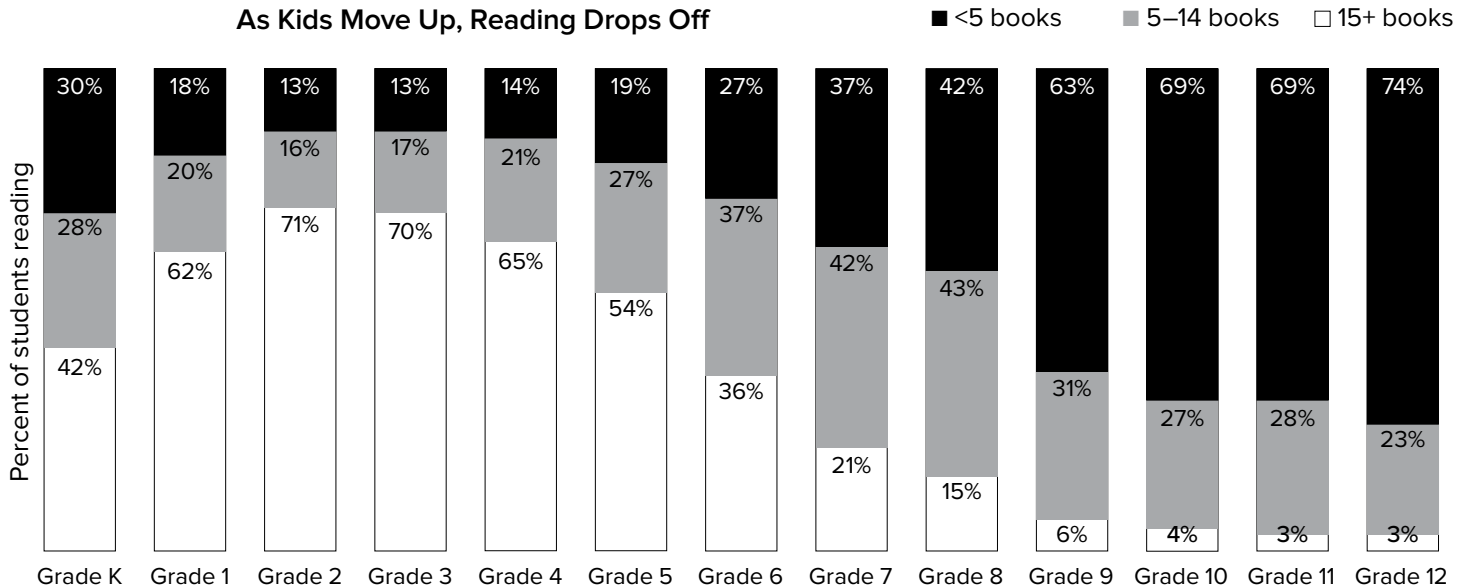
How much are kids reading?

Reading stamina is strongest in elementary school. In Grades 2–4 about two-thirds of kids read 15 or more books per school year, and in Grades 1 and 5 well over half of kids do, before reading quantity declines in middle school and beyond.

9X the books

Kids read 36 books in Grade 4, compared to 4 books in Grade 12

As Kids Move Up, Reading Drops Off

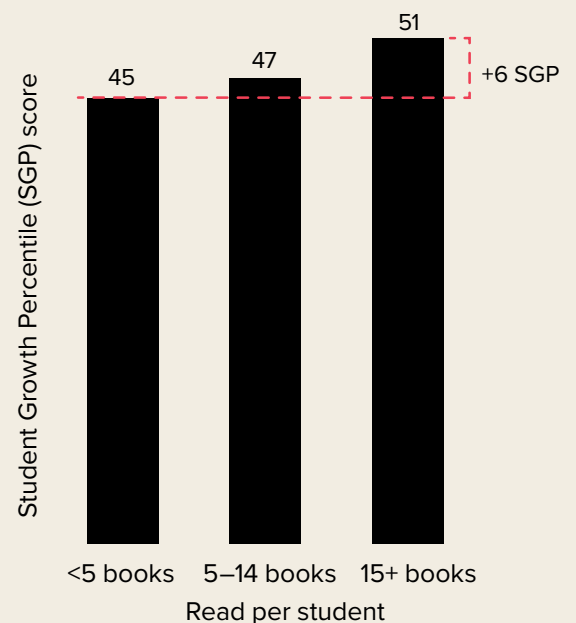


Why is it important to keep kids reading?

Kids who read more, grow more. Kids reading 5 to 14 books during the school year had a median SGP of 47, two points higher than kids reading fewer books, while kids who read even more gained an additional 4 SGP points.*

* SGPs range from 1–99, with interpretations like Percentile Rank scores (and 50 as the national average): <https://docs.renaissance.com/R57137>.

Growth Scores Ramp up with Each Book Read



110,000 more words
Reading 15+ books
nearly doubles exposure



Custom Reports

Use *What Kids Are Reading* data to customize booklists for individual students or groups, filtered by state, grade, reading level, and more.

What Kids Are Reading

Grades 3–5

Let's explore what kids are reading, based on data from Accelerated Reader and myON for the 2024–2025 school year:

- **Signature Books, State by State** and **Fresh Finds in Fall** for Grades 3–5.
- Lists of popular picks for Growing Readers in Grades 3–5—who started the year with low reading achievement but finished with exceptionally high growth—including **Top Titles, Hot Topics, Highly Rated, Most Read To/With, Shared Connections,** and **Notable Nonfiction.**
- Grade-specific lists of **Top Print, Popular Digital, Nonfiction Picks, Selecciones en español,** and **Series Sets** popular in Grades 3, 4, and 5.

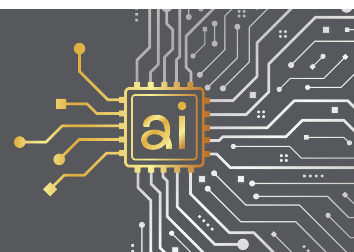
The Data

Each title includes details like ATOS level, Interest level, Lexile measure, and tags indicating if the book is on myON, nonfiction, or available to quiz on in Spanish in Accelerated Reader.

For more on how we know what kids are reading, see *About the Report* (p. 63) or the two Research Spotlights: *How Kids Are Reading* (p. 20) and *Insights on Growing Readers* (p. 46).

We Asked AI: Popular Topics for Grades 3–5

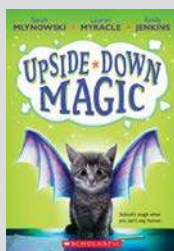
What book topics do kids aged 8–11 and their caregivers search for most? We asked our favorite AI tool and received these suggestions:



1. Adventure and fantasy

Stories with magical worlds, quests, and mythical creatures

- **Upside-Down Magic**
Sarah Mlynowski
(3.7, MG, 500L)



2. Mystery and problem-solving

Books with puzzles, clues, and young detectives

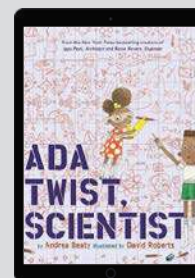
- **Crime in the Crypt**
Ron Roy
(4.0, LG, 580L)



3. STEM and science exploration

Books about space, inventions, and curious kids

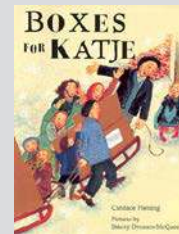
- **Ada Twist, Scientist** **myON SP**
Andrea Beaty
(3.4, LG, 550L)



4. Friendship and growing up

Stories about navigating friendships and school challenges

- **Boxes for Katje**
Candace Fleming
(3.5, LG, 460L)



Signature Books, State by State

Of the top 250 books read in Grades 3–5, covers shown in the map represent signature books where reading popularity in the state was in greatest contrast to the book’s nationwide ranking. For the full list of books, see *Signature Books by State* on [page 25](#).



Source: Accelerated Reader, 2024–2025 school year.

Fresh Finds in Fall

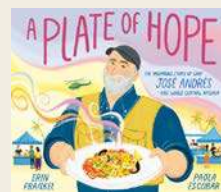
The joy of discovering a new-to-you book can be a great reading motivator. Consider these fresh options, which kids in Grades 3–5 first read and quizzed on in Fall 2025.



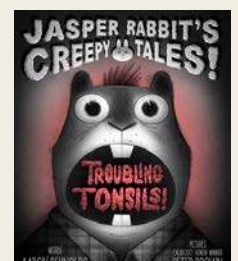
The Wild Robot on the Island
Peter Brown
(2.9, LG)



Dog Man: Big Jim Believes
Dav Pilkey
(3.2, MG, 410L)



A Plate of Hope: The Inspiring Story of Chef José Andrés and World Central Kitchen **NF SP**
Erin Frankel
(3.5, LG, 590L)



Troubling Tonsils!
Aaron Reynolds
(4.6, LG)



Signature Books by State

The title and author of each signature book for Grades 3–5 appear below (see map, [p. 24](#)).

AK	Room on the Broom Julia Donaldson	MS	Memoirs of an Elf Devin Scillian
AL	The Foot Book Dr. Seuss	MT	Let's Go for a Drive! Mo Willems
AR	Dog Breath: The Horrible Trouble with Hally Tosis Dav Pilkey	NC	The Story of Ruby Bridges Robert Coles
AZ	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban J.K. Rowling	ND	Karen's Worst Day: A Graphic Novel Katy Farina
CA	Island of the Blue Dolphins Scott O'Dell	NE	I Survived the American Revolution, 1776 (Graphic Novel) Lauren Tarshis
CO	The Bad Beginning Lemony Snicket	NH	Ghosts (Graphic Novel) Raina Telgemeier
CT	The Recess Queen Alexis O'Neill	NJ	James and the Giant Peach Roald Dahl
DE	Yoon and the Jade Bracelet Helen Recorvits	NM	Captain Underpants and the Invasion of the Incredibly Naughty Cafeteria Ladies from Outer Space Dav Pilkey
FL	The City of Ember Jeanne DuPrau	NV	Maddi's Fridge Lois Brandt
GA	The Magician's Hat Malcolm Mitchell	NY	Kristy's Great Idea: A Graphic Novel Raina Telgemeier
HI	Who Would Win? Tyrannosaurus Rex vs. Velociraptor Jerry Pallotta	OH	Tuck Everlasting Natalie Babbitt
IA	I Survived: The Destruction of Pompeii, AD 79 Lauren Tarshis	OK	Bad Kitty: School Daze Nick Bruel
ID	The Invisible Boy Trudy Ludwig	OR	Allergic Megan Wagner Lloyd
IL	Sarah, Plain and Tall Patricia MacLachlan	PA	How to Catch a Leprechaun Adam Wallace
IN	Owl Moon Jane Yolen	RI	Who Would Win? Ultimate Ocean Rumble Jerry Pallotta
KS	I Survived: The Battle of Gettysburg, 1863 Lauren Tarshis	SC	Henry's Freedom Box Ellen Levine
KY	If You Take a Mouse to the Movies Laura Numeroff	SD	I Survived: The American Revolution, 1776 Lauren Tarshis
LA	Trombone Shorty Troy Andrews	TN	Love That Dog Sharon Creech
MA	Jessi's Secret Language: A Graphic Novel Chan Chau	TX	Being Frank Donna W. Earnhardt
MD	Tales from a Not-So-Best Friend Forever Rachel Renee Russell	UT	Sideways Stories from Wayside School Louis Sachar
ME	Oh, the Places You'll Go! Dr. Seuss	VA	Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type Doreen Cronin
MI	Kristy's Big Day: A Graphic Novel Gale Galligan	VT	The BFG Roald Dahl
MN	Dawn and the Impossible Three: A Graphic Novel Gale Galligan	WA	The Dragonet Prophecy Tui T. Sutherland
MO	I Survived: The Joplin Tornado, 2011 Lauren Tarshis	WI	Dinosaurs Before Dark Mary Pope Osborne
		WV	We Don't Eat Our Classmates Ryan T. Higgins
		WY	I Survived: The Bombing of Pearl Harbor, 1941 Lauren Tarshis



We read *The Lightning Thief* every year at the beginning of the year—it's intentional. By the end of the novel, they're ready to read the second book and keep going.

Chad P., 5th Grade English Language Arts Teacher

What Kids Are Reading

Growing Readers in Grades 3–5

Top Titles

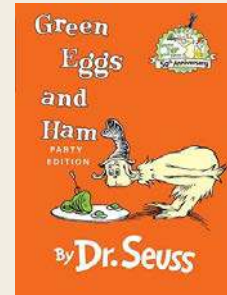
Growing Readers in Grades 3–5 read three books most during the 2024–2025 school year.



1. Dog Man: The Scarlet Shedder **SP**
Dav Pilkey
(2.8, LG, 320L)



2. Dog Man **SP**
Dav Pilkey
(2.6, LG, 390L)



3. Green Eggs and Ham **SP**
Dr. Seuss
(1.5, LG, 210L)

Hot Topics

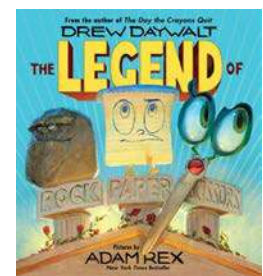
Growing Readers in Grades 3–5 read most about Animals, People, and Humor, like these popular titles.



1. Animals
Stone Fox **SP**
John Reynolds Gardiner
(4.0, MG, 610L)



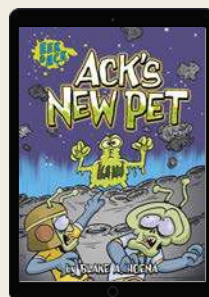
2. People
Grace for President
Kelly DiPucchio
(4.6, LG, 570L)



3. Humor/Funny
The Legend of Rock Paper Scissors **SP**
Drew Daywalt
(3.9, LG, 670L)

Highly Rated

After quizzing in Accelerated Reader, Growing Readers in Grades 3–5 rated three books highest on a 4-star scale.



1. Ack's New Pet **myON**
Blake A. Hoena
(2.3, LG, 450L)



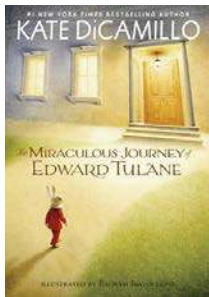
2. It's the End of the World and I'm in My Bathing Suit
Justin Reynolds
(5.6, MG, 870L)



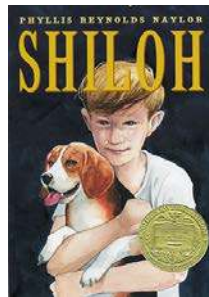
3. The Okay Witch (Graphic Novel)
Emma Steinkellner
(3.0, MG, 390L)

Growing Readers: Kids who scored below the 25th percentile on the Star Reading assessment in fall but ended with high fall-to-spring growth with a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) of 75 or above.*

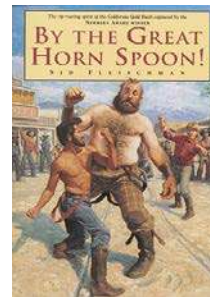
* SGPs range from 1–99, with interpretations like Percentile Rank scores (and 50 as the national average): <https://docs.renaissance.com/R57137>.



1. 61% To/With
The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane **SP**
 Kate DiCamillo
 (4.4, MG, 700L)



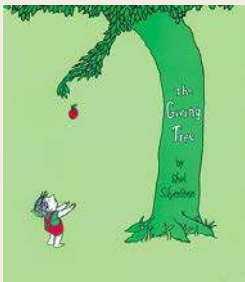
2. 60% To/With
Shiloh **SP**
 Phyllis Reynolds Naylor
 (4.4, MG, 890L)



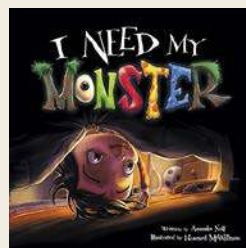
3. 60% To/With
By the Great Horn Spoon! **SP**
 Sid Fleischman
 (5.1, MG, 730L)

Most Read To/With

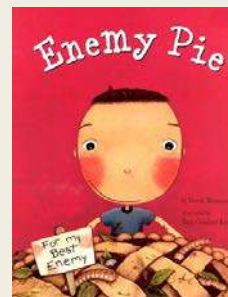
Teachers often read to kids or pair them with a peer to read with for support. Three books were read to/with Growing Readers in Grades 3–5 most during the school year.



The Giving Tree **SP**
 Shel Silverstein
 (2.6, LG, 530L)



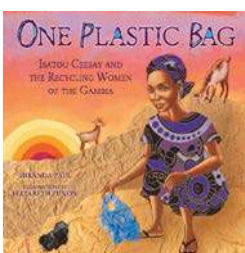
I Need My Monster
 Amanda Noll
 (3.0, LG, 600L)



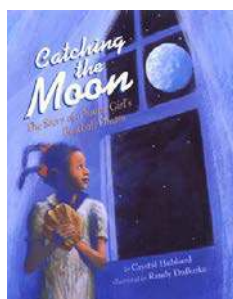
Enemy Pie **SP**
 Derek Munson
 (3.2, LG, 550L)

Shared Connections

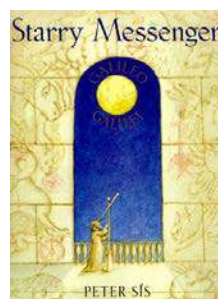
These titles proved popular as Growing Readers in Grades 3–5 sought stories centered on friendships, families, and the connections that shape our lives.



One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of the Gambia **NF**
 Miranda Paul
 (2.9, LG, 570L)



Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl's Baseball Dream **NF**
 Crystal Hubbard
 (4.3, LG, 640L)



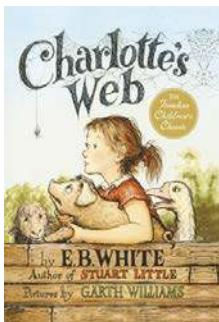
Starry Messenger **NF**
 Peter Sis
 (4.8, MG, 830L)

Notable Nonfiction

With topics that spark curiosity about the world, how things work, and the animals around us, these nonfiction titles were popular choices for Growing Readers in Grades 3–5.

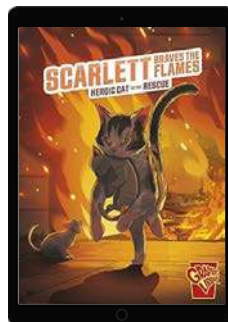
What Kids Are Reading

Grade 3



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 827,589 kids in Grade 3 read, on average, 46 print books and 155,228 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

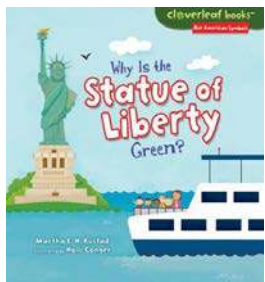
Our myON data show that 269,621 kids in Grade 3 spent 119,303,705 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

- 1 **Charlotte's Web** **SP**
E.B. White (4.4, MG, 680L)
- 2 **Because of Winn-Dixie** **myON SP**
Kate DiCamillo (3.9, MG, 670L)
- 3 **Scaredy Squirrel Series** **SP**
Mélanie Watt (3.0–3.6, LG, 520L–660L)
- 4 **Dog Man Series** **SP**
Dav Pilkey (2.3–2.8, LG/MG, 210L–550L)
- 5 **The Wild Robot Series**
Peter Brown (5.1–5.5, MG, 720L–740L)
- 6 **The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs** **SP**
Jon Scieszka (3.0, LG, 510L)
- 7 **A Bad Case of Stripes** **SP**
David Shannon (3.8, LG, 610L)
- 8 **Dr. Seuss Collection** **SP**
Dr. Seuss (0.6–5.2, LG, 180L–1000L)
- 9 **If You Give . . . Series** **SP**
Laura Numeroff (1.0–2.7, LG, 170L–590L)
- 10 **The Bad Seed Series** **SP**
Jory John (1.8–3.1, LG, 390L–550L)

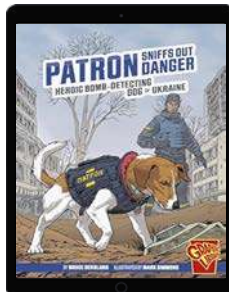
- 1 **Scarlett Braves the Flames: Heroic Cat to the Rescue (Graphic Library)** **myON NF**
Matthew K. Manning (3.9, MG, 690L)
- 2 **Corporal Wojtek Supplies the Troops: Heroic Bear of World War II (Graphic Library)** **myON NF**
Bruce Berglund (3.7, MG, 620L)
- 3 **Zeke Meeks vs. the Horrifying TV-Turnoff Week** **myON SP**
D.L. Green (3.3, LG, 580L)
- 4 **Hide-and-Creep (Scary Graphics)** **myON**
Jessica Freeburg (2.5, MG, 520L)
- 5 **Hettie and the London Blitz: A World War II Survival Story** **myON**
Jenni L. Walsh (4.2, MG, 600L)
- 6 **Best Friends Until the End (Scary Graphics)** **myON**
Steve Foxe (2.3, MG, 520L)
- 7 **Super Scary Stories** **myON NF**
Megan Cooley Peterson (3.6, MG, 600L)
- 8 **Bone-Chilling Ghost Stories** **myON NF**
Jen Jones (4.8, MG, 760L)
- 9 **Super Scary Ghosts** **myON NF**
Megan Cooley Peterson (4.2, LG, 710L)
- 10 **The Mystery of Bloody Mary (A Ghostly Graphic)** **myON NF**
Nel Yomtov (2.6, MG, 540L)

Nonfiction Picks

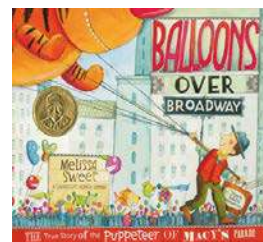
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 3.



Why Is the Statue of Liberty Green? NF
Martha E.H. Rustad
(3.3, LG, 590L)



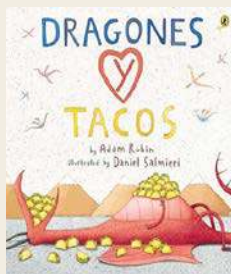
Patron Sniffs Out Danger: Heroic Bomb-Detecting Dog of Ukraine (Graphic Library) myON NF
Bruce Berglund
(4.3, MG, 670L)



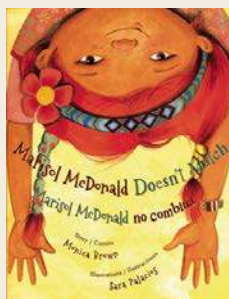
Balloons over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade NF
Melissa Sweet
(5.4, LG, 1000L)

Selecciones en español

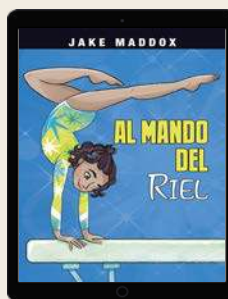
Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 3.



Dragones y tacos SP
Adam Rubin
(2.4, LG, 620L)



Marisol McDonald no combina (libro bilingüe) SP
Monica Brown
(2.8, LG, 580L)



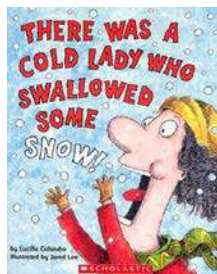
Al mando del riel myON SP
Jake Maddox
(3.8, MG, 630L)

Series Sets

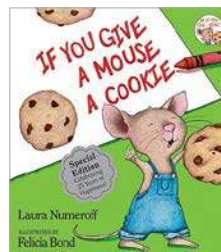
Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 3 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



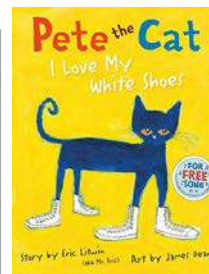
Scaredy Squirrel Series SP
Mélanie Watt
(3.0–3.6, LG, 520L–660L)



There Was an Old Lady Series SP
Lucille Colandro
(1.2–4.5, LG, 240L–540L)



If You Give . . . Series SP
Laura Numeroff
(1.0–2.7, LG, 170L–590L)



Pete the Cat Series SP
James Dean
(1.2–4.3, LG, 160L–650L)

What Kids Are Reading

Grade 4



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 796,723 kids in Grade 4 read, on average, 36 print books and 247,752 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

Our myON data show that 259,899 kids in Grade 4 spent 105,847,980 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

- 1 **Fudge Series** **SP**
Judy Blume (3.3–3.6, LG/MG, 470L–590L)
- 2 **Because of Winn-Dixie** **myON SP**
Kate DiCamillo (3.9, MG, 670L)
- 3 **Diary of a Wimpy Kid Series** **myON SP**
Jeff Kinney (5.2–6.5, MG, 910L–1060L)
- 4 **The Wild Robot Series**
Peter Brown (5.1–5.5, MG, 720L–740L)
- 5 **Dog Man Series** **SP**
Dav Pilkey (2.3–2.8, LG/MG, 210L–550L)
- 6 **Holes Series** **SP**
Louis Sachar (4.2–4.7, MG, 660L–690L)
- 7 **Frindle Series** **SP**
Andrew Clements (5.3–5.4, MG, 790L–830L)
- 8 **Wonder Series** **SP**
R.J. Palacio (3.5–4.8, MG, 440L–790L)
- 9 **The One and Only Ivan Series** **SP**
Katherine Applegate (3.6–4.2, MG, 560L–650L)
- 10 **The Best Christmas Pageant Ever**
Barbara Robinson (5.1, MG, 930L)

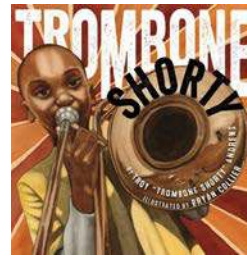
- 1 **Scarlett Braves the Flames: Heroic Cat to the Rescue (Graphic Library)** **myON NF**
Matthew K. Manning (3.9, MG, 690L)
- 2 **Corporal Wojtek Supplies the Troops: Heroic Bear of World War II (Graphic Library)** **myON NF**
Bruce Berglund (3.7, MG, 620L)
- 3 **Zeke Meeks vs. the Horrifying TV-Turnoff Week** **myON SP**
D.L. Green (3.3, LG, 580L)
- 4 **Hettie and the London Blitz: A World War II Survival Story** **myON**
Jenni L. Walsh (4.2, MG, 600L)
- 5 **Hide-and-Creep (Scary Graphics)** **myON**
Jessica Freeburg (2.5, MG, 520L)
- 6 **The Mystery of Bloody Mary (A Ghostly Graphic)** **myON NF**
Nel Yomtov (2.6, MG, 540L)
- 7 **Super Scary Stories** **myON NF**
Megan Cooley Peterson (3.6, MG, 600L)
- 8 **Scary Ghosts** **myON NF**
Jim Whiting (3.5, LG, 610L)
- 9 **Trakr Searches for Survivors: Heroic Police Dog of 9/11 (Graphic Library)** **myON NF**
Matthew K. Manning (3.6, MG, 690L)
- 10 **Super Scary Ghosts** **myON NF**
Megan Cooley Peterson (4.2, LG, 710L)

Nonfiction Picks

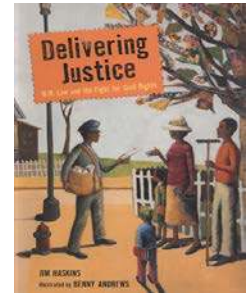
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 4.



Escaping Titanic: A Young Girl's True Story of Survival **myON NF**
Marybeth Lorbiecki
(3.9, MG, 710L)



Trombone Shorty **NF**
Troy Andrews
(4.2, LG, 760L)



Delivering Justice: W.W. Law and the Fight for Civil Rights **NF**
Jim Haskins
(5.9, LG, 850L)

Selecciones en español

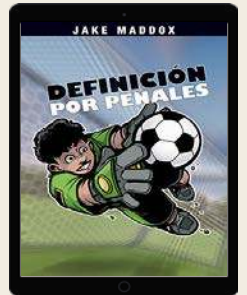
Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 4.



Max va a la biblioteca **myON SP**
Adria F. Klein
(2.6, LG, 290L)



México vs. Estados Unidos **myON SP**
Jules Allen
(2.7, MG, 400L)



Definición por penales **myON SP**
Jake Maddox
(3.9, MG, 680L)

Series Sets

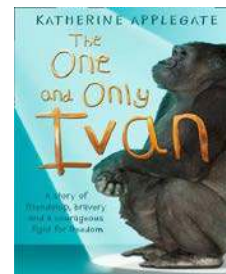
Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 4 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



Fudge Series **SP**
Judy Blume
(3.3–3.6, LG/MG, 470L–590L)



Who Would Win? Series **SP**
Jerry Pallotta
(3.4–4.4, LG, 550L–780L)



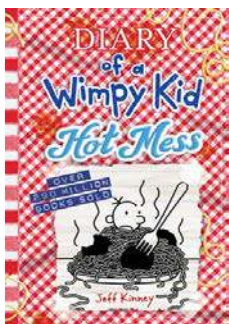
The One and Only Ivan Series **SP**
Katherine Applegate
(3.6–4.2, MG, 560L–650L)



The Baby-Sitters Club Graphic Novels Series **SP**
Raina Telgemeier
(2.2–3.2, MG, 280L–580L)

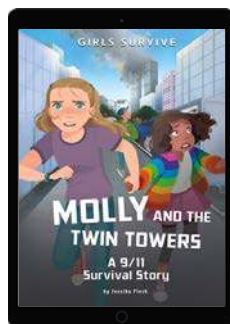
What Kids Are Reading

Grade 5



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 751,093 kids in Grade 5 read, on average, 26 print books and 307,448 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

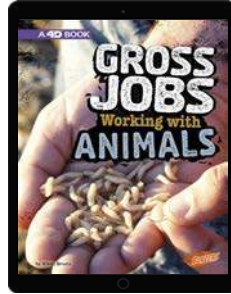
Our myON data show that 240,478 kids in Grade 5 spent 80,371,571 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

- 1 **Diary of a Wimpy Kid Series** **myON SP**
Jeff Kinney (5.2–6.5, MG, 910L–1060L)
- 2 **Wonder Series** **SP**
R.J. Palacio (3.5–4.8, MG, 440L–790L)
- 3 **Holes Series** **SP**
Louis Sachar (4.2–4.7, MG, 660L–690L)
- 4 **Brian's Saga** **SP**
Gary Paulsen (5.5–5.9, MG/MG+, 960L–1140L)
- 5 **Number the Stars** **SP**
Lois Lowry (4.5, MG, 670L)
- 6 **Esperanza Rising** **SP**
Pam Muñoz Ryan (5.3, MG, 750L)
- 7 **Chronicles of Narnia Series** **SP**
C.S. Lewis (5.4–5.9, MG, 790L–970L)
- 8 **The Wild Robot Series**
Peter Brown (5.1–5.5, MG, 720L–740L)
- 9 **Restart**
Gordon Korman (5.1, MG, 730L)
- 10 **Frindle Series** **SP**
Andrew Clements (5.3–5.4, MG, 790L–830L)

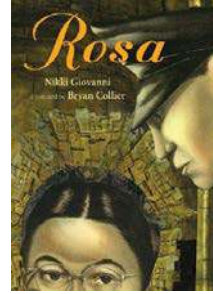
- 1 **Molly and the Twin Towers: A 9/11 Survival Story** **myON**
Jessica Fleck (4.2, MG, 600L)
- 2 **Hettie and the London Blitz: A World War II Survival Story** **myON**
Jenni L. Walsh (4.2, MG, 600L)
- 3 **Ann Fights for Freedom: An Underground Railroad Survival Story** **myON**
Nikki Shannon Smith (4.0, MG, 600L)
- 4 **What You Never Knew About Cristiano Ronaldo** **myON NF**
Martha E.H. Rustad (3.0, MG, 570L)
- 5 **The Grin in the Dark** **myON**
J.A. Darke (4.3, MG, 700L)
- 6 **Hide-and-Creep (Scary Graphics)** **myON**
Jessica Freeburg (2.5, MG, 520L)
- 7 **What You Never Knew About Lionel Messi** **myON NF**
Isaac Kerry (3.5, MG, 590L)
- 8 **Creepy Urban Legends** **myON**
Blake Hoena (3.2, MG, 510L)
- 9 **Super Scary Ghosts** **myON NF**
Megan Cooley Peterson (4.2, LG, 710L)
- 10 **Super Scary Stories** **myON NF**
Megan Cooley Peterson (3.6, MG, 600L)

Nonfiction Picks

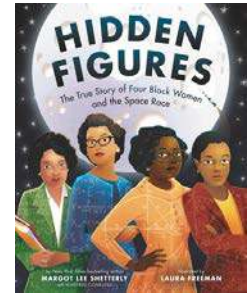
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 5.



Gross Jobs Working with Animals **myON NF**
Nikki Bruno
(3.5, MG, 570L)



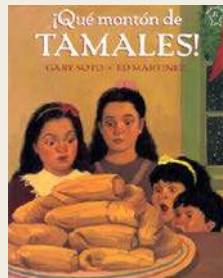
Rosa **NF**
Nikki Giovanni
(4.9, LG, 800L)



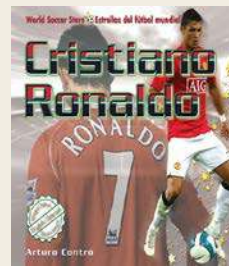
Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race **NF**
Margot Lee Shetterly
(5.8, LG, 980L)

Selecciones en español

Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 5.



¡Qué montón de tamales! **SP**
Gary Soto
(3.4, LG, 540L)



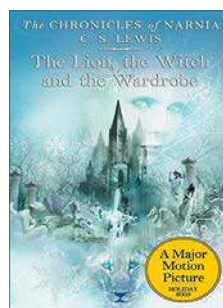
Cristiano Ronaldo **(español) SP**
Arturo Contró
(3.8, LG)



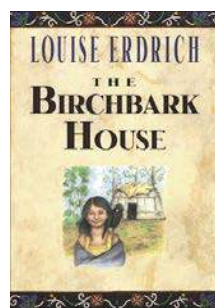
En el fútbol está la fuerza **myON SP**
Jake Maddox
(4.4, MG, 700L)

Series Sets

Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 5 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



Chronicles of Narnia Series **SP**
C.S. Lewis
(5.4–5.9, MG, 790L–970L)



Birchbark House Series
Louise Erdrich
(5.1–6.1, MG, 800L–970L)



The Wild Robot Series
Peter Brown
(5.1–5.5, MG, 720L–740L)



I Survived Graphic Novel Series **SP**
Lauren Tarshis
(2.7–3.6, MG, 390L–570L)



Custom Reports

Use *What Kids Are Reading* data to customize booklists for individual students or groups, filtered by state, grade, reading level, and more.

What Kids Are Reading Grades 6–8

Let's explore what kids are reading, based on data from Accelerated Reader and myON for the 2024–2025 school year:

- **Signature Books, State by State** and **Fresh Finds in Fall** for Grades 6–8.
- Lists of popular picks for Growing Readers in Grades 6–8—who started the year with low reading achievement but finished with exceptionally high growth—including **Top Titles, Hot Topics, Highly Rated, Most Read To/With, Shared Connections**, and **Notable Nonfiction**.
- Grade-specific lists of **Top Print, Popular Digital, Nonfiction Picks, Selecciones en español**, and **Series Sets** popular in Grades 6, 7, and 8.

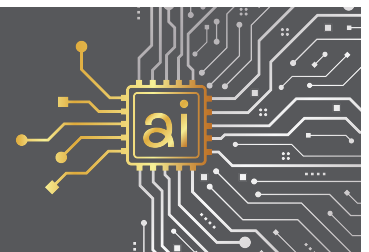
The Data

Each title includes details like ATOS level, Interest level, Lexile measure, and tags indicating if the book is on myON, nonfiction, or available to quiz on in Spanish in Accelerated Reader.

For more on how we know what kids are reading, see *About the Report* (p. 63) or the two Research Spotlights: *How Kids Are Reading* (p. 20) and *Insights on Growing Readers* (p. 46).

We Asked AI: Popular Topics for Grades 6–8

What book topics do kids aged 11–14 and their caregivers search for most? We asked our favorite AI tool and received these suggestions:



1. Coming-of-age and identity

Books about self-discovery, fitting in, and growing up

- **Guts (Graphic Novel)** **NF SP**
Raina Telgemeier
(2.6, MG, 480L)



3. Mystery and thrillers

Stories with suspense, twists, and young sleuths

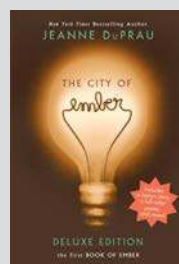
- **Notorious**
Gordon Korman
(5.0, MG, 740L)



2. Fantasy and dystopian worlds

Complex worlds with magic, adventure, or survival themes

- **The City of Ember**
Jeanne DuPrau
(5.0, MG, 680L)



4. STEM and real-world topics

Stories about science, technology, and environmental issues

- **The Wild Robot Escapes**
Peter Brown
(5.1, MG, 720L)





Signature Books by State

The title and author of each signature book for Grades 6–8 appear below (see map, [p. 36](#)).

AK	Into the Wild Erin Hunter	MT	Brian's Winter Gary Paulsen
AL	Love That Dog Sharon Creech	NC	Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life James Patterson
AR	Blood on the River: James Town 1607 Elisa Carbone	ND	The Red Pyramid Rick Riordan
AZ	Maniac Magee Jerry Spinelli	NE	The Selection Kiera Cass
CA	The Egypt Game Zilpha Keatley Snyder	NH	The Unteachables Gordon Korman
CO	Kristy's Great Idea: A Graphic Novel Raina Telgemeier	NJ	Coraline Neil Gaiman
CT	New Kid (Graphic Novel) Jerry Craft	NM	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Roald Dahl
DE	The Blood of Olympus Rick Riordan	NV	Walk Two Moons Sharon Creech
FL	Old Yeller Fred Gipson	NY	The Stonekeeper (Graphic Novel) Kazu Kibuishi
GA	A Night Divided Jennifer A. Nielsen	OH	Chasing Lincoln's Killer James L. Swanson
HI	The Last Kids on Earth Max Brallier	OK	Hoot Carl Hiaasen
IA	Allergic (Graphic Novel) Megan Wagner Lloyd	OR	Winter Turning Tui T. Sutherland
ID	The Wild Robot Escapes Peter Brown	PA	Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie Jordan Sonnenblick
IL	The Tryout (Graphic Novel) Christina Soontornvat	RI	Frizzy (Graphic Novel) Claribel A. Ortega
IN	Island of the Blue Dolphins Scott O'Dell	SC	I Survived: The Attack of the Grizzlies, 1967 (Graphic Novel) Lauren Tarshis
KS	Fish in a Tree Lynda Mullaly Hunt	SD	I Survived: The American Revolution, 1776 Lauren Tarshis
KY	The Best Christmas Pageant Ever Barbara Robinson	TN	Summer of the Mariposas Guadalupe García McCall
LA	My Side of the Mountain Jean Craighead George	TX	Homer: The Odyssey Gillian Cross
MA	I Survived: The Great Molasses Flood, 1919 Lauren Tarshis	UT	I Survived: The Attack of the Grizzlies, 1967 Lauren Tarshis
MD	Wrath of the Triple Goddess Rick Riordan	VA	I Survived: The California Wildfires, 2018 Lauren Tarshis
ME	I Survived: The Battle of Gettysburg, 1863 Lauren Tarshis	VT	Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone J.K. Rowling
MI	Alone Megan E. Freeman	WA	Keeper of the Lost Cities Shannon Messenger
MN	I Survived: The Children's Blizzard, 1888 Lauren Tarshis	WI	Sunrise on the Reaping Suzanne Collins
MO	The Fort Gordon Korman	WV	I Survived: The Sinking of the Titanic, 1912 (Graphic Novel) Lauren Tarshis
MS	What You Never Knew About Cristiano Ronaldo Martha E.H. Rustad	WY	The Cay Theodore Taylor



When students connect with stories that feel personal and meaningful, reading becomes enjoyable and confidence grows—especially in fluency work.

Jenna C., K–8 Academic Tutor

What Kids Are Reading

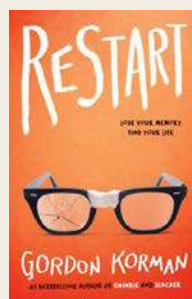
Growing Readers in Grades 6–8

Top Titles

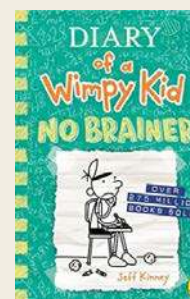
Growing Readers in Grades 6–8 read three books most during the 2024–2025 school year.



1. The Outsiders SP
S.E. Hinton
(4.7, UG, 750L)



2. Restart
Gordon Korman
(5.1, MG, 730L)



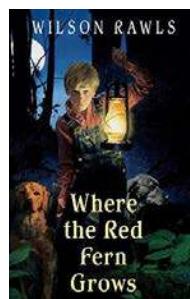
3. Diary of a Wimpy Kid: No Brainer SP
Jeff Kinney
(6.2, MG, 1040L)

Hot Topics

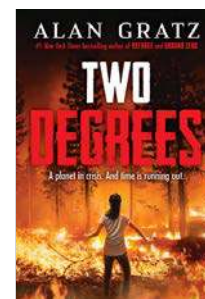
Growing Readers in Grades 6–8 read most about People, Animals, and Adventure, like these popular titles.



1. People
Summer of the Mariposas SP
Guadalupe García McCall
(5.4, MG+, 840L)



2. Animals
Where the Red Fern Grows SP
Wilson Rawls
(4.9, MG, 700L)



3. Adventure
Two Degrees
Alan Gratz
(5.2, MG, 770L)

Highly Rated

After quizzing in Accelerated Reader, Growing Readers in Grades 6–8 rated three books highest on a 4-star scale.



1. Kunkush: The True Story of a Refugee Cat myON NF
Marne Ventura
(3.8, MG, 640L)



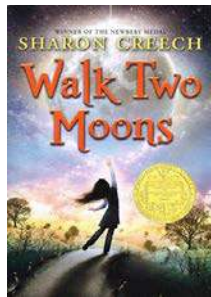
2. Fighting to Survive in the Wilderness: Terrifying True Stories myON NF
Eric Braun
(5.8, MG, 870L)



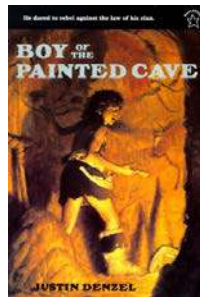
3. The Mummy at Midnight myON SP
Steve Brezenoff
(3.5, MG, 620L)

Growing Readers: Kids who scored below the 25th percentile on the Star Reading assessment in fall but ended with high fall-to-spring growth with a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) of 75 or above.*

* SGPs range from 1–99, with interpretations like Percentile Rank scores (and 50 as the national average): <https://docs.renaissance.com/R57137>.



1. 58% To/With
Walk Two Moons **SP**
Sharon Creech
(4.9, MG, 770L)



2. 58% To/With
Boy of the Painted Cave
Justin Denzel
(5.2, MG, 800L)



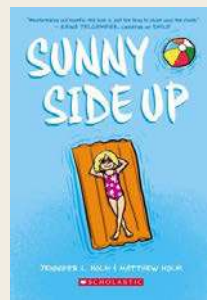
3. 55% To/With
The Westing Game **SP**
Ellen Raskin
(5.3, MG, 750L)

Most Read To/With

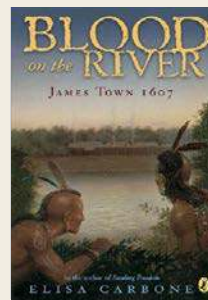
Teachers often read to kids or pair them with a peer to read with for support. Three books were read to/with Growing Readers in Grades 6–8 most during the school year.



Frizzy (Graphic Novel) **SP**
Claribel A. Ortega
(3.0, MG, 430L)



Sunny Side Up (Graphic Novel)
Jennifer L. Holm
(2.4, MG, 490L)



Blood on the River: James Town 1607
Elisa Carbone
(5.3, MG, 820L)

Shared Connections

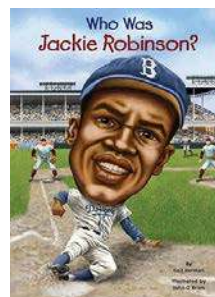
These titles proved popular as Growing Readers in Grades 6–8 sought stories centered on friendships, families, and the connections that shape our lives.



Four Eyes (Graphic Novel) **NF SP**
Rex Ogle
(2.6, MG, 280L)



Before She Was Harriet **NF**
Lesa Cline-Ransome
(4.5, LG)



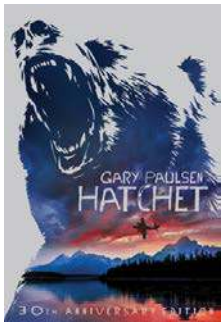
Who Was Jackie Robinson? **NF**
Gail Herman
(4.5, MG, 670L)

Notable Nonfiction

With topics that spark curiosity about the world, how things work, and the animals around us, these nonfiction titles were popular choices for Growing Readers in Grades 6–8.

What Kids Are Reading

Grade 6



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 425,160 kids in Grade 6 read, on average, 16 print books and 338,477 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

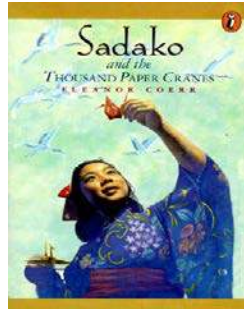
Our myON data show that 123,135 kids in Grade 6 spent 30,827,743 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

- 1 **Brian's Saga** **SP**
Gary Paulsen (5.5–5.9, MG/MG+, 960L–1140L)
- 2 **Percy Jackson and the Olympians Series** **SP**
Rick Riordan (4.1–5.6, MG, 590L–790L)
- 3 **Diary of a Wimpy Kid Series** **myON SP**
Jeff Kinney (5.2–6.5, MG, 910L–1060L)
- 4 **A Long Walk to Water: Based on a True Story** **SP**
Linda Sue Park (5.0, MG+, 720L)
- 5 **Holes Series** **SP**
Louis Sachar (4.2–4.7, MG, 660L–690L)
- 6 **Restart**
Gordon Korman (5.1, MG, 730L)
- 7 **Number the Stars** **SP**
Lois Lowry (4.5, MG, 670L)
- 8 **Bud, Not Buddy** **SP**
Christopher Paul Curtis (5.0, MG, 950L)
- 9 **Wonder Series** **SP**
R.J. Palacio (3.5–4.8, MG, 440L–790L)
- 10 **Hunger Games Series** **SP**
Suzanne Collins (5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)

- 1 **What You Never Knew About Cristiano Ronaldo** **myON NF**
Martha E.H. Rustad (3.0, MG, 570L)
- 2 **Ann Fights for Freedom: An Underground Railroad Survival Story** **myON**
Nikki Shannon Smith (4.0, MG, 600L)
- 3 **The Grin in the Dark** **myON**
J.A. Darke (4.3, MG, 700L)
- 4 **Jellaby: Monster in the City (Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Kean Soo (2.0, MG, 560L)
- 5 **What You Never Knew About Lionel Messi** **myON NF**
Isaac Kerry (3.5, MG, 590L)
- 6 **Famous Ghost Stories of Asia** **myON NF**
Jillian L. Harvey (5.0, MG, 760L)
- 7 **Bone-Chilling Ghost Stories** **myON NF**
Jen Jones (4.8, MG, 760L)
- 8 **Ninja-rella: A Graphic Novel** **myON SP**
Joey Comeau (3.0, MG, 530L)
- 9 **Chadwick Boseman** **myON NF**
Aubrey Zalewski (3.3, MG, 530L)
- 10 **Ghoulish Ghost Stories** **myON NF**
Joan Axelrod-Contrada (4.8, MG, 790L)

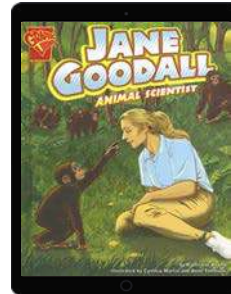
Nonfiction Picks

Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 6.



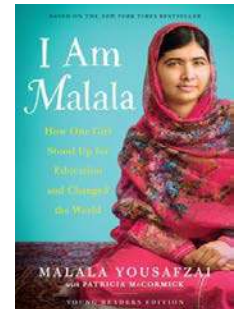
Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes **NF SP**

Eleanor Coerr
(4.1, MG, 690L)



Jane Goodall: Animal Scientist (Graphic Library) **myON NF SP**

Katherine Krohn
(4.4, MG, 650L)



I Am Malala: Young Readers Edition **NF SP**

Malala Yousafzai
(5.9, MG, 830L)

Selecciones en español

Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 6.



Relevo inesperado en el sóftbol **myON SP**

Jake Maddox
(3.3, MG, 510L)



La lección de August **SP**

R.J. Palacio
(4.4, MG, 710L)

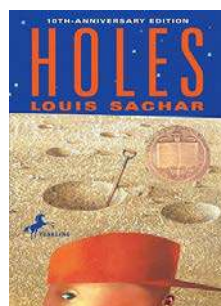


Esperanza renace **SP**

Pam Muñoz Ryan
(5.3, MG, 740L)

Series Sets

Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 6 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



Holes Series **SP**

Louis Sachar
(4.2–4.7, MG, 660L–690L)



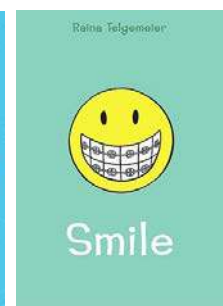
Dog Man Series **SP**

Dav Pilkey
(2.3–2.8, LG/MG, 210L–550L)



Wonder Series **SP**

R.J. Palacio
(3.5–4.8, MG, 440L–790L)

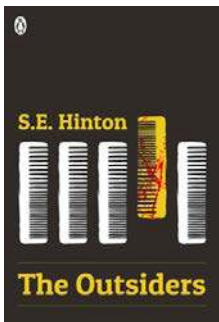


Smile/Sisters/Guts (Graphic Novels) **NF SP**

Raina Telgemeier
(2.4–2.6, MG, 290L–480L)

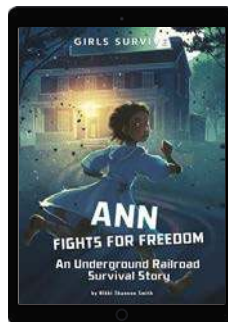
What Kids Are Reading

Grade 7



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 269,035 kids in Grade 7 read, on average, 10 print books and 325,728 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

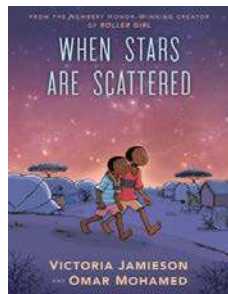
Our myON data show that 69,802 kids in Grade 7 spent 12,370,490 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

- 1 **The Outsiders** **SP**
S.E. Hinton (4.7, UG, 750L)
- 2 **The Giver Quartet** **SP**
Lois Lowry (4.9–5.7, MG/MG+, 680L–760L)
- 3 **Hunger Games Series** **SP**
Suzanne Collins (5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)
- 4 **A Long Walk to Water: Based on a True Story** **SP**
Linda Sue Park (5.0, MG+, 720L)
- 5 **Percy Jackson and the Olympians Series** **SP**
Rick Riordan (4.1–5.6, MG, 590L–790L)
- 6 **Diary of a Wimpy Kid Series** **myON SP**
Jeff Kinney (5.2–6.5, MG, 910L–1060L)
- 7 **Restart**
Gordon Korman (5.1, MG, 730L)
- 8 **Freak the Mighty Series**
Rodman Philbrick (5.0–5.5, MG/UG, 870L–930L)
- 9 **The Land of Stories Series** **myON SP**
Chris Colfer (5.0–6.1, MG, 720L–860L)
- 10 **Refugee**
Alan Gratz (5.3, MG, 800L)

- 1 **Ann Fights for Freedom: An Underground Railroad Survival Story** **myON**
Nikki Shannon Smith (4.0, MG, 600L)
- 2 **King of Pop: The Story of Michael Jackson** **myON NF**
Terry Collins (4.4, MG, 590L)
- 3 **Paintball Punk (Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Sean Tulien (2.5, MG, 520L)
- 4 **Have a Hot Time, Hades!** **myON**
Kate McMullan (3.8, MG, 610L)
- 5 **Jellaby: The Lost Monster (Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Kean Soo (2.0, MG, 540L)
- 6 **Emmi in the City: A Great Chicago Fire Survival Story** **myON**
Salima Alikhan (4.3, MG, 640L)
- 7 **LeBron James** **myON NF**
Jill Kalz (4.9, MG)
- 8 **Great White Sharks: On the Hunt** **myON NF**
Janet Riehecky (3.0, MG, 550L)
- 9 **Video Game Victors (Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Jake Maddox (3.2, MG, 540L)
- 10 **The Last Human** **myON**
Lee Bacon (4.2, MG)

Nonfiction Picks

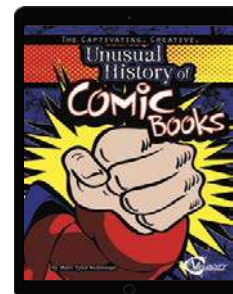
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 7.



When Stars Are Scattered **NF SP**
Victoria Jamieson
(3.7, MG, 530L)



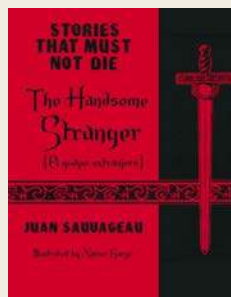
Brown Girl Dreaming **NF SP**
Jacqueline Woodson
(5.3, MG, 990L)



Captivating, Creative, Unusual History of Comic Books **myON NF**
Jennifer M. Besel
(5.8, MG, 840L)

Selecciones en español

Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 7.



El guapo extranjero (libro bilingüe) **SP**
Juan Sauvageau
(3.6, MG)



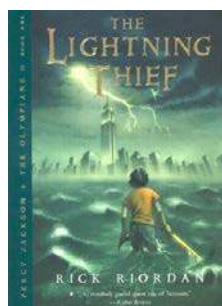
Campamento miedo **SP**
Jaime Alfonso Sandoval
(4.2, MG)



El único destino **SP**
Alexandra Diaz
(5.2, MG, 790L)

Series Sets

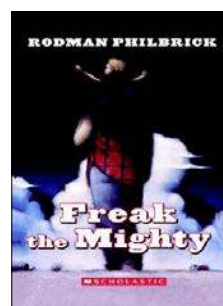
Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 7 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



Percy Jackson and the Olympians Series **SP**
Rick Riordan
(4.1–5.6, MG, 590L–790L)



Heroes of Olympus Series **SP**
Rick Riordan
(4.5–5.2, MG, 640L–690L)



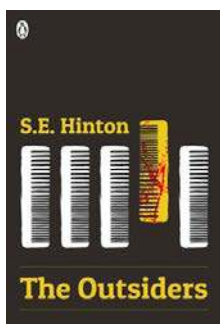
Freak the Mighty Series
Rodman Philbrick
(5.0–5.5, MG/UG, 870L–930L)



I Survived Series **SP**
Lauren Tarshis
(3.8–5.1, MG, 550L–740L)

What Kids Are Reading

Grade 8



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 236,009 kids in Grade 8 read, on average, 9 print books and 315,554 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

Our myON data show that 53,712 kids in Grade 8 spent 8,946,373 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

1 **The Outsiders** **SP**
S.E. Hinton (4.7, UG, 750L)

2 **The Giver Quartet** **SP**
Lois Lowry (4.9–5.7, MG/MG+, 680L–760L)

3 **The Tell-Tale Heart**
Edgar Allan Poe (7.3, UG, 820L)

4 **Hunger Games Series** **SP**
Suzanne Collins (5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)

5 **The Monkey's Paw**
W.W. Jacobs (6.5, UG, 1110L)

6 **The Diary of Anne Frank (Two-Act Play)**
Frances Goodrich (3.1, MG)

7 **The Boy in the Striped Pajamas** **SP**
John Boyne (5.8, UG, 1000L)

8 **Diary of a Wimpy Kid Series** **myON SP**
Jeff Kinney (5.2–6.5, MG, 910L–1060L)

9 **The Land of Stories Series** **myON SP**
Chris Colfer (5.0–6.1, MG, 720L–860L)

10 **Restart**
Gordon Korman (5.1, MG, 730L)

1 **Have a Hot Time, Hades!** **myON**
Kate McMullan (3.8, MG, 610L)

2 **Paintball Punk (Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Sean Tulien (2.5, MG, 520L)

3 **King of Pop: The Story of Michael Jackson** **myON NF**
Terry Collins (4.4, MG, 590L)

4 **Jellaby: The Lost Monster (Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Kean Soo (2.0, MG, 540L)

5 **Get to Work, Hercules!** **myON**
Kate McMullan (3.7, MG, 530L)

6 **Video Game Victors (Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Jake Maddox (3.2, MG, 540L)

7 **Comeback Catcher (Graphic Novel)** **myON SP**
Jake Maddox (2.8, MG, 530L)

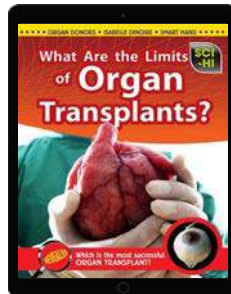
8 **What Are the Limits of Organ Transplants?** **myON NF**
Anna Claybourne (6.7, MG, 980L)

9 **Say Cheese, Medusa!** **myON**
Kate McMullan (3.8, MG, 610L)

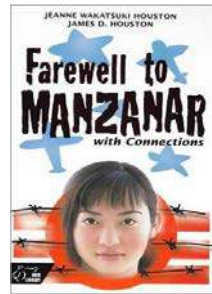
10 **The Thing in the Woods** **myON SP**
Steve Brezenoff (3.3, MG, 600L)

Nonfiction Picks

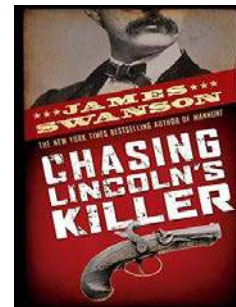
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 8.



What Are the Limits of Organ Transplants? **myON NF**
Anna Claybourne
(6.7, MG, 980L)



Farewell to Manzanar **NF**
Jeanne Houston
(6.7, MG, 1040L)



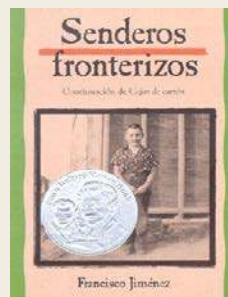
Chasing Lincoln's Killer **NF**
James L. Swanson
(7.5, MG+, 980L)

Selecciones en español

Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 8.



Mala suerte **SP**
Helena González Vela
(4.9, UG)



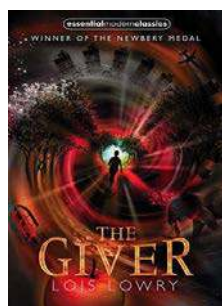
Senderos fronterizos **SP**
Francisco Jiménez
(5.3, MG)



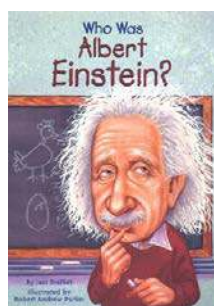
Retrato en sepia **SP**
Isabel Allende
(5.6, UG)

Series Sets

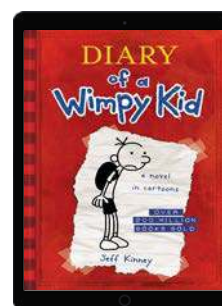
Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 8 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



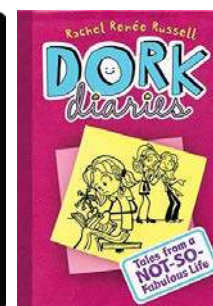
The Giver Quartet **SP**
Lois Lowry
(4.9–5.7, MG/MG+, 680L–760L)



Who Was? Series **NF SP**
Jess M. Brallier
(4.1–7.1, MG, 570L–1130L)



Diary of a Wimpy Kid Series **myON SP**
Jeff Kinney
(5.2–6.5, MG, 910L–1060L)



Dork Diaries Series **SP**
Rachel Renée Russell
(4.2–5.4, MG, 660L–890L)

Research Spotlight

Insights on Growing Readers

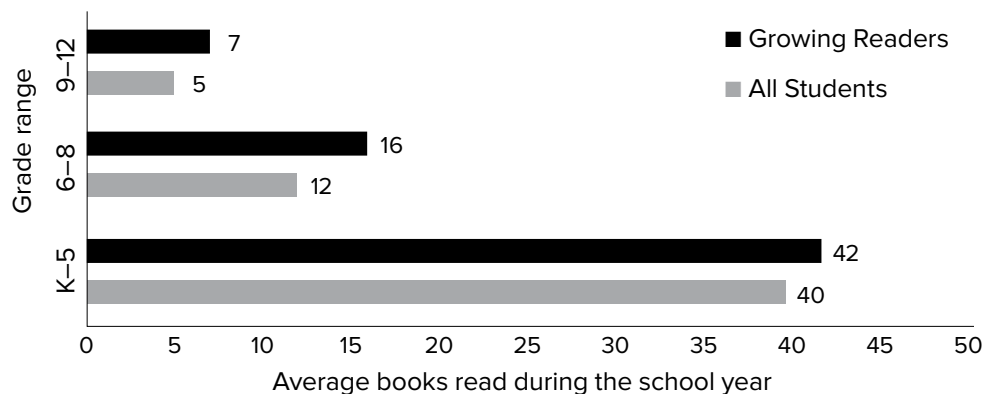
To learn more about the reading habits of the kids whose reading scores have rallied throughout the school year, we examined Accelerated Reader data for Growing Readers,* a subset of the 4.7 million kids who read 161 million books in 19,962 schools during the 2024–2025 school year.

* Growing Readers scored below the 25th percentile on the Star Reading assessment in fall but ended with high fall-to-spring growth with a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) of 75 or above. SGPs range from 1–99, with interpretations like Percentile Rank scores (and 50 as the national average): <https://docs.renaissance.com/R57137>.

Ahead in the stacks

In each grade range, on average, **Growing Readers read more books during the school year than kids overall.** The largest gap in reading volume is in Grades 6–8, where Growing Readers top their peers with four additional books read.

Plot Twist, Growing Readers Outread the Rest



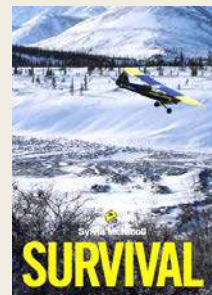
HiLo books hold interest

HiLo (High Interest, Low Readability) books feature engaging, age-appropriate content for struggling or reluctant readers and cover topics like sports, adventure, or mystery (see popular examples below). With simplified language and a lower reading level than the reader’s age/grade, the text in HiLo books is easier to decode and comprehend, helping readers to gain both confidence and enjoyment.

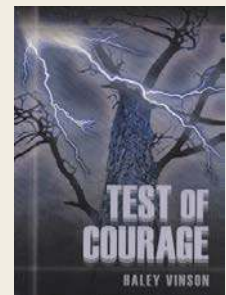
22%
of Growing
Readers read
HiLo books



What You Never Knew About Simone Biles **myON NF**
Helen Cox Cannons
(3.1, MG, 550L)



Survival
Sylvia McNicoll
(3.4, MG+, 460L)

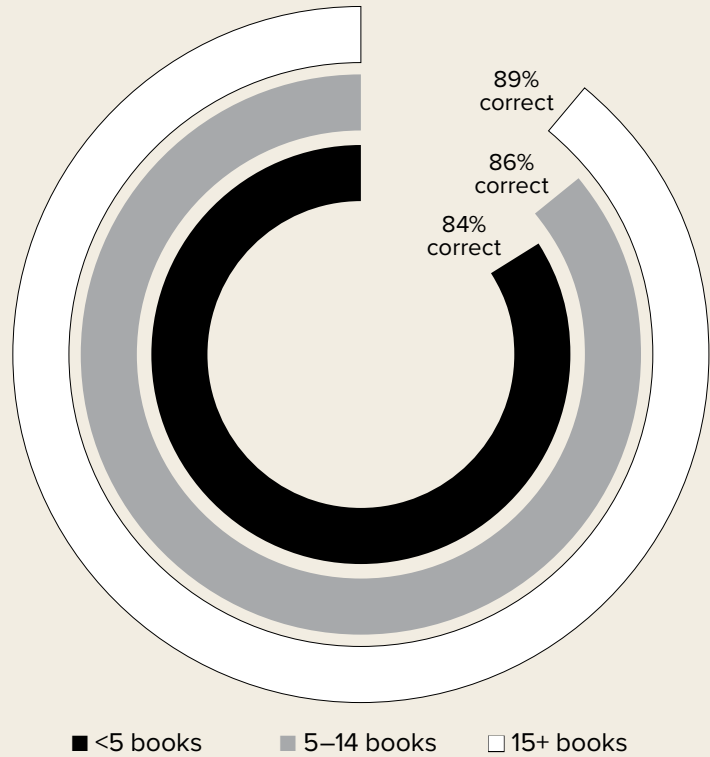


Test of Courage
Haley Vinson
(3.0, UG, 410L)

Reading fuels comprehension

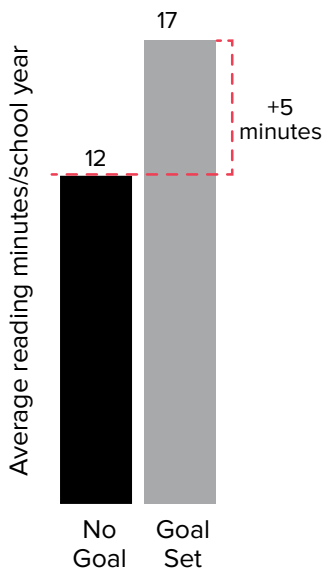
Growing Readers fare well on comprehension quizzes taken after reading each book, scoring in the 80 percent correct range—and quiz scores jump from 84 to nearly 90 percent correct the more books Growing Readers read.

Growing Readers Binge Books, Then Crush Quizzes

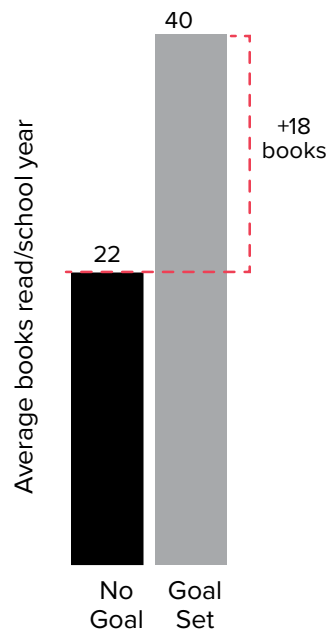


1 in 3 books
is read to/with
Growing Readers

Time Flies When Growing Readers Set Goals



Books Pile Up for Growing Readers with Goals



Goal-setting matters

Compared to kids without reading practice goals, on average, **Growing Readers with set goals** read for more minutes and finish more books during the school year.

84%
of Growing Readers set reading goals—versus 78% of kids overall.



Custom Reports

Use *What Kids Are Reading* data to customize booklists for individual students or groups, filtered by state, grade, reading level, and more.

What Kids Are Reading Grades 9–12

Let's explore what kids are reading, based on data from Accelerated Reader and myON for the 2024–2025 school year:

- **Signature Books, State by State** and **Fresh Finds in Fall** for Grades 9–12.
- Lists of popular picks for Growing Readers in Grades 9–12—who started the year with low reading achievement but finished with exceptionally high growth—including **Top Titles, Hot Topics, Highly Rated, Most Read To/With, Shared Connections**, and **Notable Nonfiction**.
- Grade-specific lists of **Top Print, Popular Digital, Nonfiction Picks, Selecciones en español**, and **Series Sets** popular in Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12.

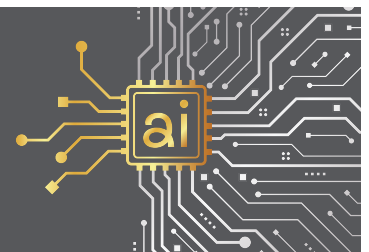
The Data

Each title includes details like ATOS level, Interest level, Lexile measure, and tags indicating if the book is on myON, nonfiction, or available to quiz on in Spanish in Accelerated Reader.

For more on how we know what kids are reading, see *About the Report* (p. 63) or the two Research Spotlights: *How Kids Are Reading* (p. 20) and *Insights on Growing Readers* (p. 46).

We Asked AI: Popular Topics for Grades 9–12

What book topics do kids aged 14–18 and their caregivers search for most? We asked our favorite AI tool and received these suggestions:



1. Romance and relationships

Stories about first love, heartbreak, and friendships

- **P.S. I Still Love You**
Jenny Han
(4.3, UG, 640L)



2. Fantasy and sci-fi

Stories featuring complex, immersive worlds with high-stakes plots

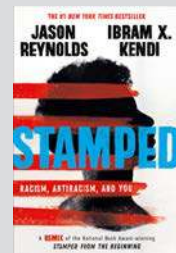
- **Six of Crows**
Leigh Bardugo
(5.5, MG+, 790L)



3. Social justice and activism

Stories about standing up for what's right and making a difference

- **Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You** **NF SP**
Jason Reynolds
(7.4, MG+, 1000L)



4. Psychological thrillers and mysteries

Dark, gripping stories with unexpected twists

- **The Inheritance Games**
Jennifer Lynn Barnes
(4.7, UG, 640L)





Signature Books by State

The title and author of each signature book for Grades 9–12 appear below (see map, [p. 50](#)).

AK	The Old Man and the Sea Ernest Hemingway
AL	Concrete Rose Angie Thomas
AR	Ghost Jason Reynolds
AZ	Freak the Mighty Rodman Philbrick
CA	The Wave Todd Strasser
CO	Life of Pi Yann Martel
CT	Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave Frederick Douglass
DE	None of the top books were read in Grades 9–12.
FL	The Monkey's Paw W.W. Jacobs
GA	Jane Eyre (Unabridged) Charlotte Brontë
HI	And Then There Were None Agatha Christie
IA	The Cellar Natasha Preston
ID	Prisoner B-3087 Alan Gratz
IL	Code of Honor Alan Gratz
IN	The Help Kathryn Stockett
KS	The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (Unabridged) Mark Twain
KY	Unwind Neal Shusterman
LA	The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks Rebecca Skloot
MA	Ready Player One Ernest Cline
MD	Fazbear Frights: The Cliffs Scott Cawthon
ME	All the Bright Places Jennifer Niven
MI	The Things They Carried Tim O'Brien
MN	Restore Me Tahereh Mafi
MO	The Do-Over Lynn Painter
MS	Antigone Sophocles

MT	Legend Marie Lu
NC	Five Survive Holly Jackson
ND	Point of Retreat Colleen Hoover
NE	The Handmaid's Tale Margaret Atwood
NH	None of the top books were read in Grades 9–12.
NJ	Paper Towns John Green
NM	The Notebook Nicholas Sparks
NV	Brave New World Aldous Huxley
NY	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows J.K. Rowling
OH	The Fellowship of the Ring J.R.R. Tolkien
OK	In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and its Consequences Truman Capote
OR	Ender's Game Orson Scott Card
PA	Monster Walter Dean Myers
RI	None of the top books were read in Grades 9–12.
SC	Without Merit Colleen Hoover
SD	The Summer of Broken Rules K.L. Walther
TN	The Fall of the House of Usher Edgar Allan Poe
TX	The Odyssey: A Graphic Novel Gareth Hinds
UT	The Elite Kiera Cass
VA	The Pigman Paul Zindel
VT	Turtles All the Way Down John Green
WA	Five Feet Apart Rachael Lippincott
WI	Killer Instinct: A Naturals Novel Jennifer Lynn Barnes
WV	A Court of Wings and Ruin Sarah J. Maas
WY	Heart Bones Colleen Hoover



I knew that I had hooked my students
with *A Separate Peace*, by John Knowles,
when I walked through the lunchroom and they were
having a conversation about Gene and Finny.

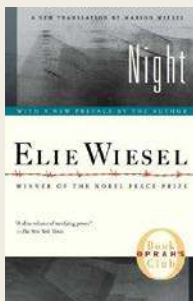
Stephanie H., High School English Language Arts Instructor

What Kids Are Reading

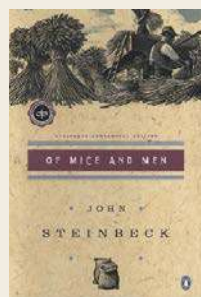
Growing Readers in Grades 9–12

Top Titles

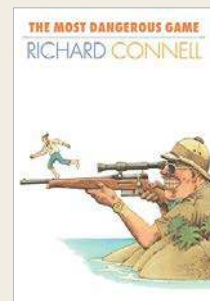
Growing Readers in Grades 9–12 read three books most during the 2024–2025 school year.



1. Night NF
Elie Wiesel
(4.8, UG, 590L)



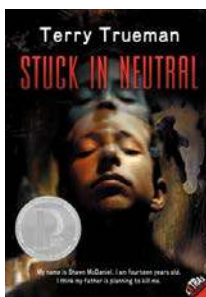
2. Of Mice and Men SP
John Steinbeck
(4.5, UG, 630L)



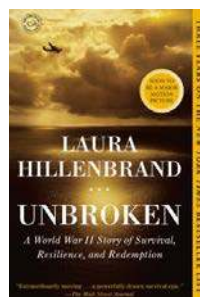
3. The Most Dangerous Game
Richard Connell
(5.3, UG)

Hot Topics

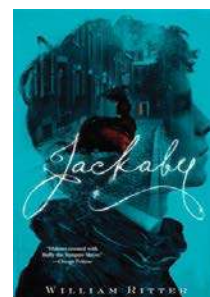
Growing Readers in Grades 9–12 read most about People, Adventure, and Mysteries, like these popular titles.



1. People
Stuck in Neutral
Terry Trueman
(5.7, MG, 820L)



2. Adventure
Unbroken NF
Laura Hillenbrand
(7.7, UG, 1010L)



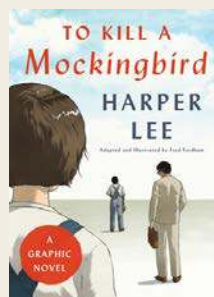
3. Mysteries
Jackaby
William Ritter
(6.2, UG, 920L)

Highly Rated

After quizzing in Accelerated Reader, Growing Readers in Grades 9–12 rated three books highest on a 4-star scale.



1. The Cuddling Ghost (libro bilingüe) SP
Juan Sauvageau
(4.1, MG)



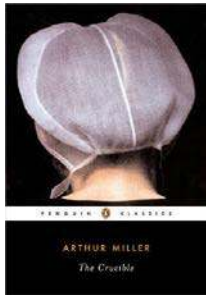
2. To Kill a Mockingbird: A Graphic Novel
Fred Fordham
(4.3, MG+, 690L)



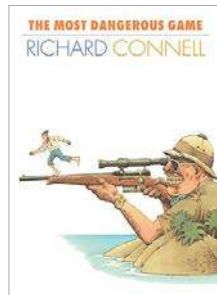
3. The House of the Scorpion SP
Nancy Farmer
(5.1, MG+, 660L)

Growing Readers: Kids who scored below the 25th percentile on the Star Reading assessment in fall but ended with high fall-to-spring growth with a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) of 75 or above.*

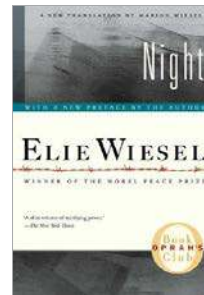
* SGPs range from 1–99, with interpretations like Percentile Rank scores (and 50 as the national average): <https://docs.renaissance.com/R57137>.



1. 69% To/With
The Crucible
Arthur Miller
(4.9, UG)



2. 62% To/With
The Most Dangerous Game
Richard Connell
(5.3, UG)



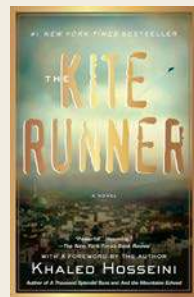
3. 55% To/With
Night NF
Elie Wiesel
(4.8, UG, 590L)

Most Read To/With

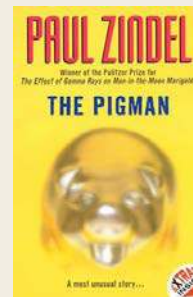
Teachers often read to kids or pair them with a peer to read with for support. Three books were read to/with Growing Readers in Grades 9–12 most during the school year.



To All the Boys I've Loved Before
Jenny Han
(4.2, UG, 630L)



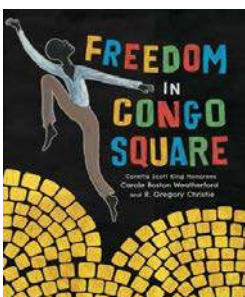
The Kite Runner
Khaled Hosseini
(5.2, UG, 840L)



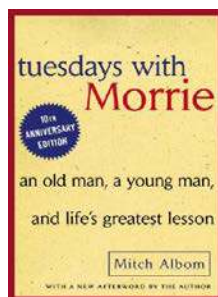
The Pigman
Paul Zindel
(5.5, UG, 880L)

Shared Connections

These titles proved popular as Growing Readers in Grades 9–12 sought stories centered on friendships, families, and the connections that shape our lives.



Freedom in Congo Square NF
Carole Boston Weatherford
(5.4, LG, 600L)



Tuesdays with Morrie NF
Mitch Albom
(5.5, UG, 830L)



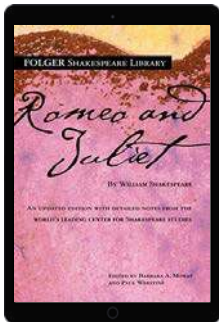
Into the Wild NF
Jon Krakauer
(8.1, MG, 1270L)

Notable Nonfiction

With topics that spark curiosity about the world, how things work, and the animals around us, these nonfiction titles were popular choices for Growing Readers in Grades 9–12.

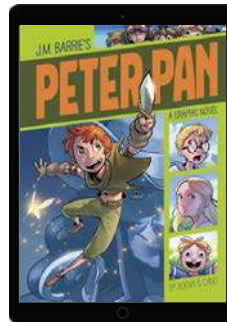
What Kids Are Reading

Grade 9



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 35,172 kids in Grade 9 read, on average, 6 print books and 228,691 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

Our myON data show that 8,919 kids in Grade 9 spent 911,367 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

1 **Romeo and Juliet** **myON SP**
William Shakespeare (8.6, UG)

2 **The Most Dangerous Game**
Richard Connell (5.3, UG)

3 **To Kill a Mockingbird Series** **SP**
Harper Lee (5.6–5.9, UG, 790L–870L)

4 **Animal Farm** **SP**
George Orwell (7.3, UG, 1170L)

5 **Hunger Games Series** **SP**
Suzanne Collins (5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)

6 **The Night Trilogy** **NF/F**
Elie Wiesel (4.4–5.4, UG, 520L–740L)

7 **Of Mice and Men** **SP**
John Steinbeck (4.5, UG, 630L)

8 **The Land of Stories Series** **myON SP**
Chris Colfer (5.0–6.1, MG, 720L–860L)

9 **The Outsiders** **SP**
S.E. Hinton (4.7, UG, 750L)

10 **Restart**
Gordon Korman (5.1, MG, 730L)

1 **J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan (A Graphic Novel)** **myON SP**
Blake Hoena (3.0, MG, 520L)

2 **SWAT Teams: The Missions** **myON NF**
Robert Grayson (6.5, MG, 920L)

3 **King of Pop: The Story of Michael Jackson** **myON NF**
Terry Collins (4.4, MG, 590L)

4 **Police Dogs** **myON NF**
Tammy Gagne (5.1, MG, 840L)

5 **Military Dogs** **myON NF**
Tammy Gagne (5.1, MG, 830L)

6 **Homer's The Odyssey (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Diego Agrimbau (3.7, MG, 520L)

7 **Muhammad Ali: American Champion (Graphic Library)** **myON NF SP**
Michael Burgan (3.8, MG, 570L)

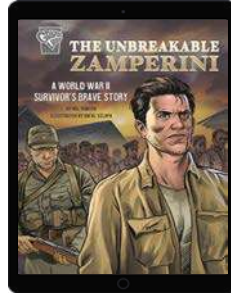
8 **Jackie Robinson: Baseball's Great Pioneer (Graphic Library)** **myON NF SP**
Jason Glaser (3.8, MG, 570L)

9 **Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Martin Powell (3.1, MG)

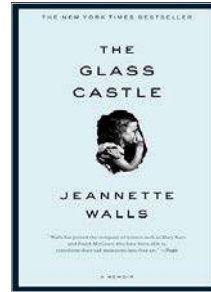
10 **The Adventures of Hercules (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Martin Powell (3.7, MG, 500L)

Nonfiction Picks

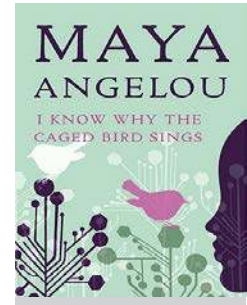
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 9.



The Unbreakable Zamperini: A World War II Survivor's Brave Story (Graphic Library) myON NF
Nel Yomtov
(4.3, MG, 620L)



The Glass Castle: A Memoir NF
Jeannette Walls
(5.9, UG, 1010L)



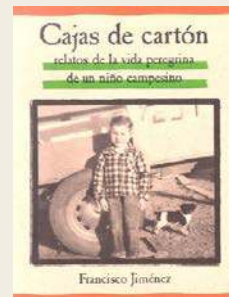
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings NF SP
Maya Angelou
(6.7, UG, 1010L)

Selecciones en español

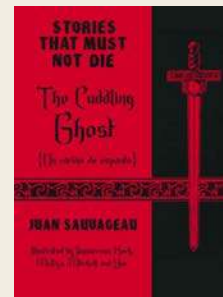
Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 9.



La llorona (libro bilingüe) SP
Juan Sauvageau
(3.2, MG)



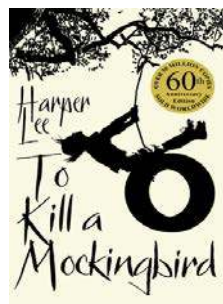
Cajas de cartón SP
Francisco Jiménez
(5.3, MG)



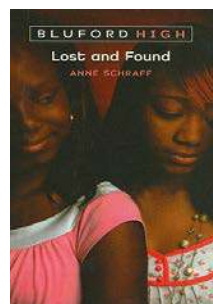
Un cariño de espanto (libro bilingüe) SP
Juan Sauvageau
(3.5, MG)

Series Sets

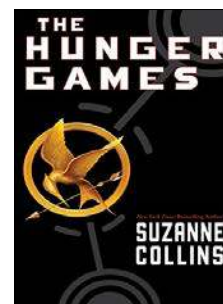
Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 9 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



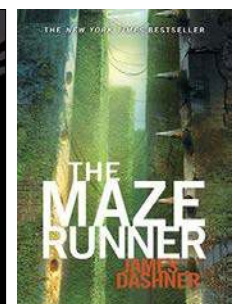
To Kill a Mockingbird Series SP
Harper Lee
(5.6–5.9, UG, 790L–870L)



Bluford High Series
Paul Langan
(4.0–4.9, MG+/UG, 570L–760L)



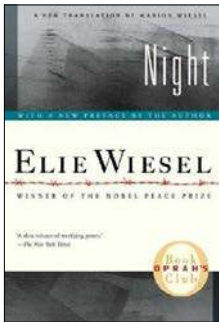
Hunger Games Series SP
Suzanne Collins
(5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)



The Maze Runner Series SP
James Dashner
(3.3–5.7, MG/UG, 360L–810L)

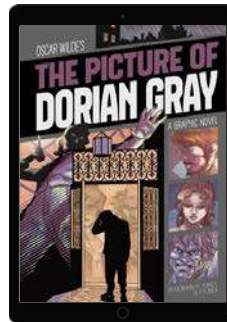
What Kids Are Reading

Grade 10



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 27,939 kids in Grade 10 read, on average, 5 print books and 242,559 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

Our myON data show that 5,602 kids in Grade 10 spent 702,790 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

1 **The Night Trilogy** **NF/F**
Elie Wiesel (4.4–5.4, UG, 520L–740L)

2 **To Kill a Mockingbird Series** **SP**
Harper Lee (5.6–5.9, UG, 790L–870L)

3 **Of Mice and Men** **SP**
John Steinbeck (4.5, UG, 630L)

4 **Hunger Games Series** **SP**
Suzanne Collins (5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)

5 **Lord of the Flies** **SP**
William Golding (5.0, UG, 770L)

6 **The Land of Stories Series** **myON SP**
Chris Colfer (5.0–6.1, MG, 720L–860L)

7 **Macbeth** **myON**
William Shakespeare (10.9, UG)

8 **It Ends with Us Series**
Colleen Hoover (4.6–5.0, UG)

9 **Restart**
Gordon Korman (5.1, MG, 730L)

10 **The Metamorphosis** **myON**
Franz Kafka (10.5, UG, 1340L)

1 **Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Jorge C. Morhain (3.2, MG, 360L)

2 **Edgar Allan Poe: Fall of the House of Usher (Graphic Novel)** **myON SP**
Matthew K. Manning (2.2, MG, 530L)

3 **Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Martin Powell (3.1, MG)

4 **W.W. Jacobs's The Monkey's Paw (Oxford Bookworms)** **myON**
Diane Mowat (420L)

5 **Stories of Women in World War II: We Can Do It!** **myON NF**
Andrew Langley (6.5, MG, 940L)

6 **Lockdown** **myON**
Diane Tullson (3.6, UG, 550L)

7 **What You Never Knew About Lionel Messi** **myON NF**
Isaac Kerry (3.5, MG, 590L)

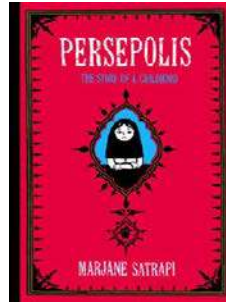
8 **The Future of Life on Earth (Freestyle Express)** **myON NF**
Michael Bright (5.5, MG, 1090L)

9 **What Do We Know About the Solar System? (Freestyle Express)** **myON NF**
Ian Graham (4.9, MG, 700L)

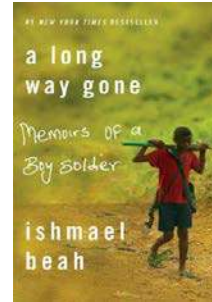
10 **King of Pop: The Story of Michael Jackson** **myON NF**
Terry Collins (4.4, MG, 590L)

Nonfiction Picks

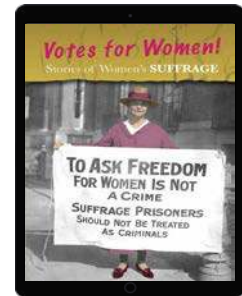
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 10.



Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood (Graphic Library) NF
Marjane Satrapi
(3.3, UG, 380L)



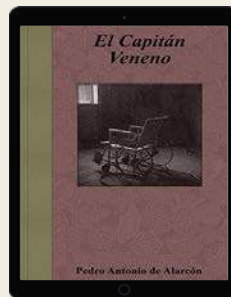
A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier NF
Ishmael Beah
(6.1, UG, 920L)



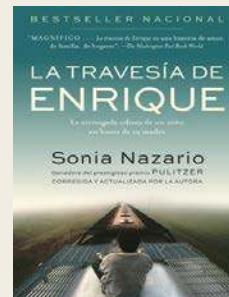
Stories of Women's Suffrage: Votes for Women! myON NF
Charlotte Guillain
(7.5, MG, 1100L)

Selecciones en español

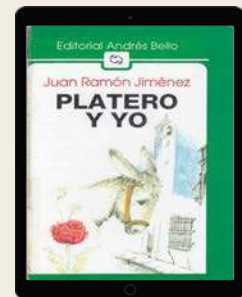
Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 10.



El Capitán Veneno myON SP
Pedro Antonio de Alarcón



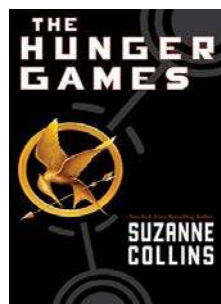
La travesía de Enrique SP
Sonia Nazario
(5.6, UG, 770L)



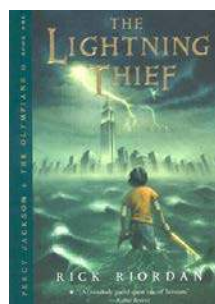
Platero y yo myON SP
Juan Ramón Jiménez
(7.8, MG)

Series Sets

Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 10 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



Hunger Games Series SP
Suzanne Collins
(5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)



Percy Jackson and the Olympians Series SP
Rick Riordan
(4.1–5.6, MG, 590L–790L)



The Land of Stories Series myON SP
Chris Colfer
(5.0–6.1, MG, 720L–860L)



Five Nights at Freddy's Series
Scott Cawthon
(5.2–5.7, MG, 680L–790L)

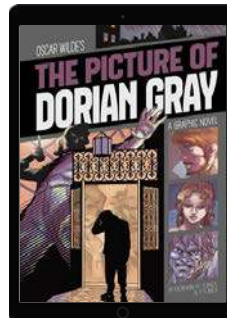
What Kids Are Reading

Grade 11



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 19,935 kids in Grade 11 read, on average, 4 print books and 245,686 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

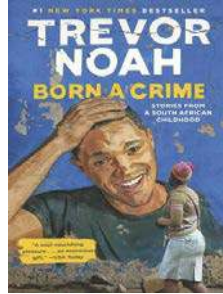
Our myON data show that 3,652 kids in Grade 11 spent 448,029 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

- 1 **The Great Gatsby** **myON SP**
F. Scott Fitzgerald (7.3, UG, 1010L)
- 2 **The Crucible**
Arthur Miller (4.9, UG)
- 3 **Of Mice and Men** **SP**
John Steinbeck (4.5, UG, 630L)
- 4 **To Kill a Mockingbird Series** **SP**
Harper Lee (5.6–5.9, UG, 790L–870L)
- 5 **The Land of Stories Series** **myON SP**
Chris Colfer (5.0–6.1, MG, 720L–860L)
- 6 **Hunger Games Series** **SP**
Suzanne Collins (5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)
- 7 **It Ends with Us Series**
Colleen Hoover (4.6–5.0, UG)
- 8 **Fahrenheit 451** **SP**
Ray Bradbury (5.2, UG, 890L)
- 9 **A Raisin in the Sun**
Lorraine Hansberry (5.5, UG)
- 10 **Restart**
Gordon Korman (5.1, MG, 730L)

- 1 **Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Jorge C. Morhain (3.2, MG, 360L)
- 2 **Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Martin Powell (3.1, MG)
- 3 **Stories of Women in World War II: We Can Do It!** **myON NF**
Andrew Langley (6.5, MG, 940L)
- 4 **The Most Haunted Places in the World** **myON NF**
Emily Rajj (4.3, MG, 780L)
- 5 **The 9/11 Terrorist Attacks: A Day That Changed America** **myON NF**
Amy Maranville (4.6, MG, 650L)
- 6 **The Great Gatsby** **myON**
F. Scott Fitzgerald (7.3, UG, 1010L)
- 7 **Smart Spending: The Teens' Guide to Cash, Credit, and Life's Costs** **myON NF**
Kara McGuire (1050L)
- 8 **Mary Shelley's Frankenstein (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Michael Burgan (3.0, MG, 510L)
- 9 **So You Want to Be President of the United States** **myON NF**
Elizabeth Pagel-Hogan (5.7, MG, 860L)
- 10 **For the Right to Learn: Malala Yousafzai's Story** **myON NF**
Rebecca Langston-George (4.9, MG, 720L)

Nonfiction Picks

Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 11.



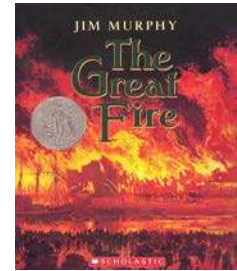
Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood **NF**

Trevor Noah
(5.4, UG, 770L)



Stories of Women in the 1960s: Fighting for Freedom **myON NF**

Cath Senker
(7.4, MG, 1050L)



The Great Fire **NF**

Jim Murphy
(7.6, UG, 1130L)

Selecciones en español

Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 11.



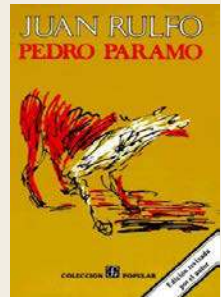
Charlie Vega tiene un problema gordo **SP**

Crystal Maldonado
(3.1, UG)



Como agua para chocolate **SP**

Laura Esquivel
(5.3, UG, 1080L)

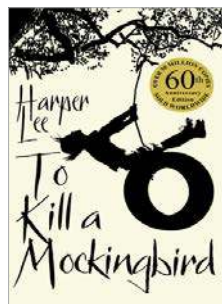


Pedro Páramo **SP**

Juan Rulfo
(7.6, UG, 580L)

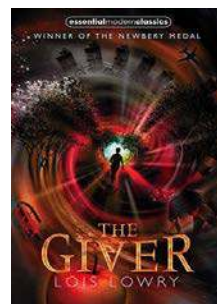
Series Sets

Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 11 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



To Kill a Mockingbird Series **SP**

Harper Lee
(5.6–5.9, UG, 790L–870L)



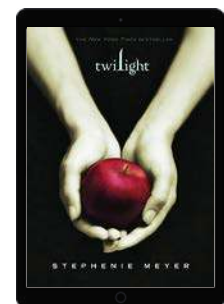
The Giver Quartet **SP**

Lois Lowry
(4.9–5.7, MG/MG+, 680L–760L)



The Land of Stories Series **myON SP**

Chris Colfer
(5.0–6.1, MG, 720L–860L)

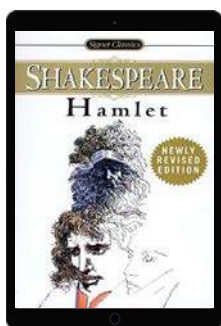


The Twilight Saga **myON SP**

Stephenie Meyer
(4.5–7.6, UG, 670L–720L)

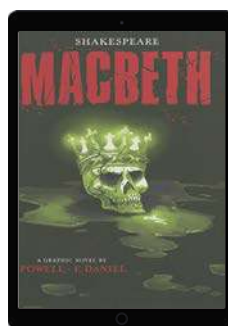
What Kids Are Reading

Grade 12



Top Print

Our Accelerated Reader data show that 15,051 kids in Grade 12 read, on average, 4 print books and 234,115 words during the 2024–2025 school year.



Popular Digital

Our myON data show that 2,977 kids in Grade 12 spent 539,724 minutes reading digitally during the school year.

1 **Hamlet** **myON**
William Shakespeare (10.5, UG)

2 **Frankenstein (Unabridged)** **myON**
Mary Shelley (12.4, UG, 1170L)

3 **The Land of Stories Series** **myON SP**
Chris Colfer (5.0–6.1, MG, 720L–860L)

4 **It Ends with Us Series**
Colleen Hoover (4.6–5.0, UG)

5 **Macbeth** **myON**
William Shakespeare (10.9, UG)

6 **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time**
Mark Haddon (5.4, UG, 1090L)

7 **The Kite Runner**
Khaled Hosseini (5.2, UG, 840L)

8 **Restart**
Gordon Korman (5.1, MG, 730L)

9 **Hunger Games Series** **SP**
Suzanne Collins (5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)

10 **Beowulf**
Unknown (10.4, UG)

1 **Shakespeare: Macbeth (A Graphic Novel)** **myON SP**
Martin Powell (3.3, MG, 600L)

2 **Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Jorge C. Morhain (3.2, MG, 360L)

3 **Smart Spending: The Teens' Guide to Cash, Credit, and Life's Costs** **myON NF**
Kara McGuire (1050L)

4 **Edgar Allan Poe: Fall of the House of Usher (Graphic Novel)** **myON SP**
Matthew K. Manning (2.2, MG, 530L)

5 **The Bloody, Rotten Roman Empire: The Disgusting Details About Life in Ancient Rome** **myON NF**
James A. Corrick (4.8, MG, 760L)

6 **Shakespeare: Julius Caesar (A Graphic Novel)** **myON SP**
Carl Bowen (3.3, MG, 480L)

7 **Lockdown** **myON**
Diane Tullson (3.6, UG, 550L)

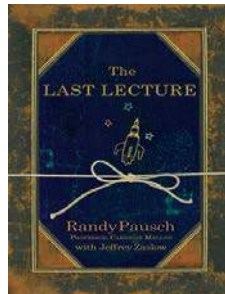
8 **Knifepoint** **myON**
Alex Van Tol (4.0, UG, 610L)

9 **Mary Shelley's Frankenstein (A Graphic Novel)** **myON**
Michael Burgan (3.0, MG, 510L)

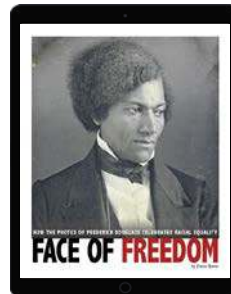
10 **The Thing in the Woods** **myON SP**
Steve Brezenoff (3.3, MG, 600L)

Nonfiction Picks

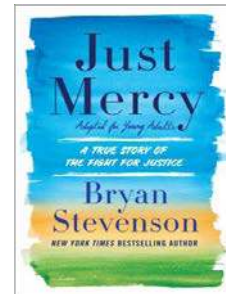
Featuring engaging, real-world topics, these nonfiction titles emerged as popular choices for Grade 12.



The Last Lecture **NF**
Randy Pausch
(6.3, UG)



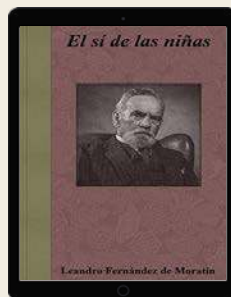
Face of Freedom: How the Photos of Frederick Douglass Celebrated Racial Equality **myON NF**
Emma Carlson Berne
(7.2, MG, 1040L)



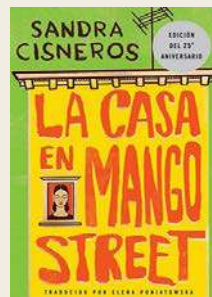
Just Mercy (Adapted for Young Adults): A True Story of the Fight for Justice **NF**
Bryan A. Stevenson
(7.5, UG, 1040L)

Selecciones en español

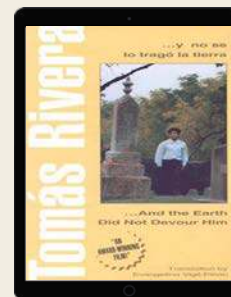
Spanish texts reflect readers' experiences, share stories across cultures, and introduce new characters and traditions to kids learning the language, like these popular selections for Grade 12.



El sí de las niñas **myON SP**
Leandro Fernández de Moratín



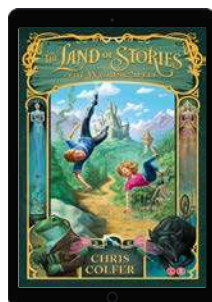
La casa en Mango Street **SP**
Sandra Cisneros
(4.5, UG, 890L)



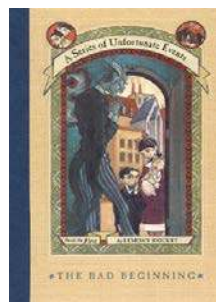
... y no se lo tragó la Tierra **myON SP**
Tomás Rivera
(4.8, UG)

Series Sets

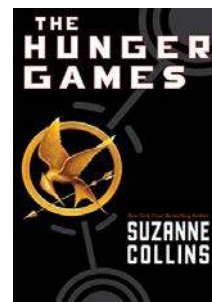
Book series naturally fuel reading momentum as kids follow favorite characters and topics from book to book. In these pairings, Grade 12 readers who enjoyed one popular series also gravitated toward the other.



The Land of Stories Series **myON SP**
Chris Colfer
(5.0–6.1, MG, 720L–860L)



A Series of Unfortunate Events Series **SP**
Lemony Snicket
(6.2–7.4, MG, 980L–1370L)



Hunger Games Series **SP**
Suzanne Collins
(5.3–6.1, MG+, 800L–860L)



Harry Potter Series **SP**
J.K. Rowling
(3.9–8.8, MG/MG+, 500L–1280L)



Custom Reports

Use *What Kids Are Reading* data to customize booklists for individual students or groups, filtered by state, grade, reading level, and more.

About the Report

Reading can look like a pretty passive activity. A reader *just* sitting there, maybe even in a cozy spot, *just* turning pages in a book. Reading, however, is a fully immersive and active pursuit. The magic that happens when kids read is immeasurable. When kids engage with books, they are transported to unfamiliar landscapes and exposed to fresh ideas. They meet new people and are presented with unique challenges. Through reading, kids learn to gather information, to think critically, to develop empathy, and to feed their imaginations.

Kids need to practice reading, like they do the drums, or the high jump. They must build stamina for reading like any other activity, so that they can tackle the texts they encounter in the future, in later schooling, the workforce, and their broader lives.

Our goal in publishing the *What Kids Are Reading* report each year is to promote reading inspiration and engagement—to serve as a trusted guide to the books we know kids are reading, from beginning to end. We know kids are reading these books because they pass comprehension quizzes about them in Accelerated Reader and interact with them deeply on myON.

Many experts are concerned, with good reason, that long-form reading is in jeopardy. Literacy scores are down, reading for pleasure is down, and phones in kids' hands are ubiquitous.¹ Given massive competition for kids' attention, from social media and other distractions, how do we ensure kids spend purposeful time seeking out digital books to read on their devices, or set aside their electronics to pick up and read a print book?

This report is a good place to start, as it offers a bona fide compilation of what kids' peers are reading at each grade level. The lists provide reading options for kids in Grades K–12 and, new this year, highlight what *Growing Readers*

Kids must build stamina for reading like any other activity, so that they can tackle the texts they encounter in the future.

are reading—kids who started the year with low reading achievement but finished with exceptionally high growth. We also present insights into the reading habits of the millions of kids using our programs in two Research Spotlights.

Let's keep doing all we can to inspire the kids in our care to rekindle a joy for reading and see it as a viable alternative to screens and scrolling. Boost reading momentum in the classroom and at home with conversations about captivating book series, peer-approved picks, real-world connections, fresh new finds, and more, all of which can be found on the pages of this report.

¹ NAEP Report Card: Reading (2024): https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reports/reading/2024/g4_8/;

"Reading for Fun in the U.S. Has Fallen by 40%" (The Guardian, 2025):

<https://www.schwartzreport.net/2025/08/21/deeply-concerning-reading-for-fun-in-the-us-has-fallen-by-40-new-study-says/>;

"Addictive Use of Digital Devices in Young Children" (PLOS ONE, 2021): <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0253058>;

"Problematic Smartphone Use Among High School Students" (JSARD, 2023): <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1409078.pdf>

What's Inside

Tiffany P. Hogan, PhD, CCC-SLP, a Professor at MGH Institute of Health Professions and Research Associate at Harvard Medical School, penned the Introduction to the report, sharing her expertise in language and reading assessment and interventions, as well as implementation of evidence-based practices in schools.

Two trusted Renaissance sources provide the data for the *What Kids Are Reading* report: **Accelerated Reader**, which tracks kids' reading comprehension of nearly any available book, and **myON**, which delivers titles directly to readers via a massive digital reading platform. Together, these programs personalize reading practice for students by providing easy access to books and sharing actionable reading data with educators.

No other study captures student reading behavior on this scale. *What Kids Are Reading: 2026 Edition*, shares reading data for 4.7 million kids who read 161 million books at 19,962 schools during the 2024–2025 school year.

We explore this wealth of reading data in two ways: (1) popular book lists for Grades K–12—organized by grade range, by grade level, and for Growing Readers²—and (2) two Research Spotlights. In *How Kids Are Reading* (p. 20), we examine post-pandemic trends and find that, after a disruption in reading during the pandemic, reading levels in most grades are trending upward, among other key findings. Encouraged by this progress, we also analyze data for the students whose reading scores rallied over the course of the school year, resulting in *Insights on Growing Readers* (p. 46).

² Growing Readers scored below the 25th percentile on the Star Reading assessment in fall but ended with high fall-to-spring growth with a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) of 75 or above. SGPs range from 1–99, with interpretations like Percentile Rank scores (and 50 as the national average): <https://docs.renaissance.com/R57137>.

The Lists

The book lists in the report are organized into four grade groupings: K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12. Each section opens with grade-range book information and follows with lists for individual grades.

By grade range, we begin with an AI round-up of the topics most searched for by kids and their caregivers. Next, a map of **Signature Books, State by State** displays one book per state whose reading popularity there was in greatest contrast to its ranking nationwide, and a list of four **Fresh Finds in Fall** that kids first quizzed on in Fall 2025.

Also by grade range, lists for Growing Readers share this group's **Top Titles, Hot Topics, Highly Rated** reads, titles that were **Most Read To/With** them, books on **Shared Connections**, and **Notable Nonfiction**.

Each section closes with grade-specific book lists: **Top Print** titles from Accelerated Reader, displayed by book series to allow as many unique titles as possible, **Popular Digital** books from myON, **Nonfiction Picks, Selecciones en español**, and **Series Sets**, which highlight book series frequently read by kids who also read a series from the Top Print list.

No other study captures student reading behavior on this scale.

161 MILLION BOOKS

4.7 MILLION KIDS

19,962 US SCHOOLS

Matching Books to Kids

All book listings include readability information if available, including ATOS level, Interest level, Lexile® measure, and tags indicating whether a book is on myON, nonfiction, or available to quiz on in Spanish in Accelerated Reader.

When choosing a book to read, it is important to consider factors like content, structure, and a reader’s motivation and level of background knowledge, as well as a book’s text complexity and content. The ATOS Readability Formula and the Lexile® Framework for Reading are two ways to estimate text complexity for books and other reading materials. Both ATOS and Lexile measures put readers and texts on the same scale to assist in matching kids with text at individualized difficulty levels.

ATOS considers three key predictors of text difficulty: (1) average sentence length, (2) average word length, and (3) average word-difficulty level, and reports reading levels on a grade-level scale (e.g., an ATOS of 5.4 indicates text a typically performing fifth grader could likely read and

understand by about mid-school year). To find ATOS levels for virtually any book, visit www.arbookfind.com, or analyze other text at www.renaissance.com/resources/atos-analyzer/.

For additional readability information, we pair ATOS levels with Interest levels from publisher recommendations about the sophistication and maturity level of a text’s content, ideas, and themes: LG (lower grades, K–3), MG (middle grades, 4–8), MG+ (middle grades plus, 6 and up), and UG (upper grades, 9–12), though whether a text is appropriate for a reader is a local decision best made by students, educators, and caregivers.

The Lexile® Text Analyzer evaluates a book’s reading level by measuring text characteristics, like sentence length and word difficulty, to determine its Lexile text measure—which can range from below 0L for beginning readers to above 1600L for advanced texts. MetaMetrics® Inc. provided the Lexile text measures in this report.

About Accelerated Reader

Accelerated Reader helps teachers access data-based insights into student reading practice, manage personalized goal setting, and connect to a worldwide community of support (see www.renaissance.com/products/accelerated-reader/).

The program: Teachers set personalized reading goals for each student, using key factors for success: quantity (reading time), quality (reading comprehension), and difficulty (text complexity). Kids select books to read and take a comprehension quiz after finishing each one. Immediate feedback is shared with the student and teacher, including comprehension level and number of words read. With over 225,000 quizzes and counting, Accelerated Reader offers vast reading options and personalized suggestions. Find any book with an available quiz at www.arbookfind.com.

The data: We studied Accelerated Reader records for 4.7 million K–12 students at 19,962 schools, across all 50 states plus DC, who read 161 million books during the 2024–2025 school year (see table). *Note*, although large and diverse, this convenience sample does not represent all K–12 students at US schools.

Students, Books, Words, and Average ATOS by Grade

Accelerated Reader database, 2024–2025 school year

Grade	Students	Books read	Average books read per student	Average words read per student	Average ATOS
K	124,815	2,740,685	22	7,118	1.4
1	498,753	20,943,951	42	23,392	1.7
2	721,599	38,581,248	53	72,323	2.4
3	827,589	38,456,311	46	155,228	3.0
4	796,723	28,572,799	36	247,752	3.4
5	751,093	19,684,916	26	307,448	3.7
6	425,160	6,709,907	16	338,477	4.1
7	269,035	2,820,673	10	325,728	4.4
8	236,009	2,041,788	9	315,554	4.6
9	35,172	199,589	6	228,691	4.6
10	27,939	126,230	5	242,559	5.1
11	19,935	87,300	4	245,686	5.2
12	15,051	61,186	4	234,115	5.3
K–12	4,748,873	161,026,583			

About myON

myON is a student-centered, personalized literacy platform offering unlimited access to thousands of enhanced digital books and authentic, age-appropriate reporting on timely topics and events via myON News (see www.renaissance.com/products/myon/).

The program: Students are matched to books by reading level, grade-appropriateness, and interests. Teachers assign or encourage kids to self-select reading materials from up to 18,000 digital books for Grades pre-K–12, including multiple formats (like graphic novels and picture books), various reading levels (including HiLo and advanced materials), popular fiction and series, nonfiction and curriculum-aligned topics, and Spanish language texts. Using robust interactive literacy tools, students interact deeply with texts, even recording themselves reading aloud, while teachers monitor engagement, growth, and success. Helpful reports for educators and the Student Profile snapshot for students and caregivers provide individual reading activity.

The data: We examined the 106,525,668 times kids opened books on myON during the 2024–2025 school year, combined with the 545,888,348 minutes they spent reading on the program (equivalent to more than 1,040 years of nonstop reading).

Students and Minutes Read

myON database, 2024–2025 school year

Grade	Students	Total minutes read
K	81,620	16,169,905
1	185,311	65,415,093
2	241,866	104,033,578
3	269,621	119,303,705
4	259,899	105,847,980
5	240,478	80,371,571
6	123,135	30,827,743
7	69,802	12,370,490
8	53,712	8,946,373
9	8,919	911,367
10	5,602	702,790
11	3,652	448,029
12	2,977	539,724
K–12	1,546,594	545,888,348



Keep Kids Reading

By publishing *What Kids Are Reading* annually, we strive to inspire all students, whether avid readers or resistant or reluctant to get started, to read more. This report highlights the extensive data that our Renaissance programs provide, with the goal of serving as a source of reading motivation and momentum.

As you guide students to books to spark or sustain their interest, be sure to involve them in this process. Choice is motivating, particularly for kids, and may lead them to engage more deeply with what they are reading and gravitate toward reading even more.

Publisher Partners

A shared commitment to readers

More than 150 publishers, imprints, brands, and divisions regularly provide titles to Renaissance to produce Accelerated Reader Reading Practice Quizzes. Our enduring partnerships have supported a shared mission: helping students discover books that ignite curiosity and strengthen reading confidence, building on a legacy of impact that spans 40 years.

How we work together

The partnerships we maintain with our publishing community are essential to the success of Accelerated Reader. These collaborations give us timely access to a wide range of titles, insights into upcoming releases, and a deeper understanding of each publisher's program. This allows our team to create accurate, high-quality quizzes that reflect the spirit of every book.

Bringing books to life for students

By working closely with our publishers, we keep our content current, diverse, and aligned with the titles students are excited to read. This creates reading practice that feels authentic and meaningful, supporting growth while nurturing a lifelong love of reading.

A few of our publishing friends

We work especially closely with this tight-knit group of publishers to deliver a universe of rich, engaging books that help students discover the joy of reading every day:





RECLAIM READING

Accelerate every
student's unique
journey

When you pair effective instruction with purposeful practice, all students can become successful readers. Reclaim reading with research-based solutions proven to drive literacy gains.

Learn more at
renaissance.com/literacy.

Renaissance
See Every Student.