

Summer Reading Suggestions for Rising 2nd grade students

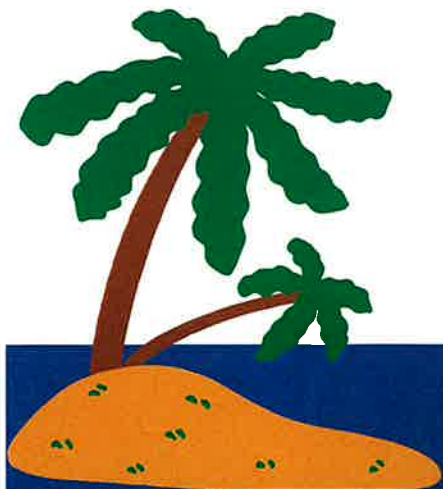
Dear Parents,

Summer is a great time for your children to recharge. They have worked hard during the school year and need this time to just be kids. Aside from taking the time to enjoy their summer, it is important to keep the "summer slide" from creeping in. Please help prevent that slide by creating a nice balance of active fun and reading time. Reading can open up a whole new world for them. Reading is the foundation for all learning, and it can lead to opening their creativity, imagination, and help build their oral language and writing skills.

I would like the students to read, Orris and Timble, *The Beginning*, by Kate DiCamillo. I will be rereading the selection to the class at the beginning of the year, so please don't fret if you are unable to find a copy. I have also included a list of the Sunshine State Reader Books that are being recommended for the 2026-2027 academic year. The lists include a range of reading levels. Please use your own judgement regarding which books are appropriate to your child's current reading ability. This is just a list of reference, not required summer reading. Enjoy the summer, and I can't wait to see you in the fall!

Blessings,

Mrs. Brant
2nd grade





FAME

Florida Association for Media in Education



2026-2027 SSYRA 3-5



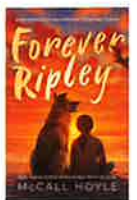
The Bug Bandits by Jenni L. Walsh

Liberty Jacobs feels right at home at the Insectarium her father runs. When she hears it might close, she comes up with an idea to help save it. But that idea is put on hold when she learns someone is planning to rob it to steal the rarest creatures. Getting inspiration from the movie Home Alone and the natural defenses insects use, Liberty and her friends set out to stop the bug bandits.



Curveball by Pablo Cartaya

Can a knee injury turn her whole life around when life throws a curveball at Elena Rueda. Even though she may be able to return to the sport eventually, Elena finds joy in activities that don't have winners like joining her brother, Benji, in live action role playing. Friendship and fun become number one in this character driven graphic novel.



Forever Ripley by McCall Hoyle

Join Ripley the German Shepard as she takes readers on a journey fulfilling her handler's Max last wishes, "take care of my girls". Ripley has guarded Charlie, the girl she loves more than peanut butter, but now her time is running short. A sweet reminder that friendships and making memories can help us through even the hardest times.



Growing Home by Beth Ferry

Jillian and her family live at Number 3 Ramshorn Drive along with their only pet, Toasty, the goldfish. Toasty lives in an octagonal tank and doesn't understand why Jillian is so obsessed with an Ivy plant. The tank has been in their family for generations but it holds a secret. This magical tank helps bring together our cast of characters and helps us learn the true meaning of friendship.



The House at the Edge of Magic by Amy Sparkes

Nine is an orphan who has been forced into a life of pickpocketing. Her world changes when she steals a small, house-shaped ornament from a lady at the market. When nine knocks on the door of the ornament, it grows into a large house full of magic, mysteries, and a curse that only she can break. Can Nine save this house from the curse before the clock strikes 15 and time runs out?



J vs. K by Kwame Alexander and Jerry Craft

Rival 5th grade students J and K enter their school's annual Creative Storytelling Competition, and are both determined to win. J is a talented artist who prides himself in telling stories without words, while K is a writer known as "The Word Wizard". An epic rivalry ensues! If they want a chance at winning the coveted award. They might even have to work with their greatest enemies- each other!



The Last Resort by Erin Entrada Kelly

Lila's summer goal to stop being so "dramatic" gets interrupted when her estranged Grandpa Clem dies. On the way to Grandpa Clem's creepy Victorian Inn, Lila has a near death experience and now she can see ghosts. Things get more bizarre when Grandpa Clem's ghost reveals his death did not come naturally. Can Lila convince her brother and a new friend that she is NOT being dramatic when she says she needs to save the world from vengeful evil spirits?



The Lion of Lark-Hayes Manor by Aubrey Hartman

Poppy Woodcock believes in magic. When her family moves to renovate an old abandoned manor she ends up feeling invisible. That all changes when she encounters a magical water nymph and makes a deal, trading her favorite book for a flying lion cub. But the nymph tricked her and now **all** her beloved books are disappearing, taking their magic with them. Now Poppy must find a way to fix everything, protect the things she loves, and learn to be brave.



Misfit Mansion by Kay Davault

Wanting to belong, Iris longs for a family. Unfortunately, the former paranormal investigator, Mr. Holloway, has her and her friends trapped in a “foster home of horrors” and refuses to release them! Luckily a human boy, Mathias, comes to the rescue and helps to set them free. But is Mathias really who he seems to be and what is the dark secret Mr. Holloway has locked in the basement?



Punycorn by Andi Watson

When the horrid Sir Ogre unleashes his evil army on the kingdom of Carbuncle, who will come to their rescue? The Chosen Ones, an elite troop of heroic unicorns, are out of town, so it is up to Punycorn to step in. The clumsiest and puniest of all unicorns, along with a fireless dragon, a dung beetle, and a magic sword with a secret will have to save the day!



Queen of the Sea by Reese Eschmann

All Aboard! Caitlin is about to set sail for six weeks on The Wandering Princess when her dad takes a job on the cruise ship. Join her, her brother, and her pet bearded dragon on the adventure of a lifetime on the biggest ship she’s ever seen. But will it all be smooth sailing on this unexpected journey?



Reasons to Look at the Night Sky by Danielle Daniel

Eleven-year old Luna wants to be an astronaut and is finally being allowed to apply for NASA space camp. She plans to use a much anticipated project from school to help her clinch her spot, but is thrown for a loop when a substitute teacher is there who blends art with science. Luna’s world is turned upside down, and her hopes and dreams seem to be drifting off to outer space.



The Sherlock Society by James Ponti

Alex and Zoe Sherlock live in Miami and have decided to start a detective agency to earn money. Joined by their friends Lina and Yadi, they use their grandfather’s old cold case files to get their start. They decide on a case that leads them to the middle of the Everglades in search of Al Capone’s buried treasure. Can the Sherlock Society solve finally solve the mystery and recover the treasure?



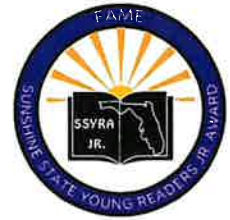
Swimming with Spies by Chrystyna Lucyk-Berger

Based on the true events of the 2014 annexation of Crimea, Sofiya and her family run a dolphinarium and train dolphins to be used in therapy. As the conflict escalates, the Russian military seizes the facility to train the dolphins for war. Sofiya will do anything to save pod. Will she and her friends be able to devise a plan to rescue and move the dolphins to a safe location in Odesa?



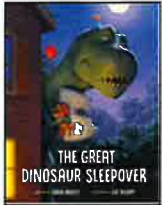
Wrath of the Rain God by Karla Arenas Valenti

Twins Martín and Emma cannot agree on much except they are not looking forward to leaving their friends and family in their home town of Cuernavaca, Mexico to go to Chicago for their dad to take his dream job. Magical gifts from their Abuela turn the move into a wild trip filled with dangerous otherworld adventures where they try to save a village from an angry rain god.



The Sunshine State Young Readers Award Junior Books 2026-2027

Picture Books:



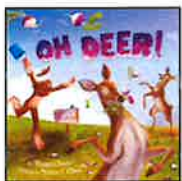
The Great Dinosaur Sleepover written by Linda Bailey and illustrated by Joe Bluhm
Jake loves dinosaurs, so with his birthday coming up, he knows just what kind of party he wants - a dinosaur sleepover! Dino games, dino balloons, dino cake. Dino everything! But when the big day arrives, his friends all come down with the flu, and the party seems to be on the edge of extinction. Then, in the middle of the night, Jake hears a strange noise and goes to investigate. To his surprise, he finds some prehistoric party guests right there in his living room! They've invited themselves in to make sure Jake has a birthday he'll never forget - just don't tell the T-Rex!



Bored Panda written by Mike Bender and illustrated by Chuck Dillon
For Panda, there is NOTHING worse than being bored. It's just so...boring. But what's a tech-loving panda to do when there's no electricity? Skeptical that the great outdoors will cure his boredom, Panda nonetheless sets out on a day full of surprises. They might even turn out to be *fun* surprises!



There's Something Odd About the Babysitter written by Elayne Crain and illustrated by John Ledda
Freddie has had many *many* babysitters over the years. And he's never liked a single one. So when a new one shows up, he's sure he's in for a boring night. Yet the babysitter seems nervous. Their table manners are appalling. And dinner is garbage. . . literally. But after Freddie decides to team up with the babysitter to turn the evening around, what started out as boring becomes a night he won't forget.



Oh Deer written by Phaea Crede and illustrated by Erica J. Chen
For Jasper, life as a sasquatch isn't too bad. He has a nice house in the woods where he lives alone. Just the way he likes it. Being around other animals can be a little stressful. So Jasper keeps to himself, and life is good, even if some days are a bit lonely. To keep himself busy, Jasper decides to grow a turnip garden. It's hard work but it's very satisfying. But one morning, just as the turnips are almost ready for harvest . . . disaster! Hungry deer have swooped in to eat Jasper's garden! Clever Jasper comes up with a way to thwart these turnip thieves. But as it turns out, the deer are even more clever. Though Jasper tries more and more ways to keep his veggies safe, nothing seems to work. Then the situation changes, and someone special needs some help. Maybe a little company isn't such a bad thing.



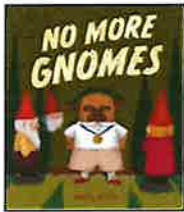
The Bakery Dragon written and illustrated by Devin Elle Kurtz
The heroic tale of a tiny dragon with a heart of gold and a taste for treats! A scrumptious picture book for fans of funny fairytales and fantastic beasts. Ember has always been different from the other dragons. His fearsome roar sounds more like a polite sneeze, and when he breathes fire, the villagers just pat his head and say *awwww*. Ember fears he'll never collect a respectable hoard of gold until a chance encounter with a baker causes his fortunes to turn (and his stomach to grumble). As the little dragon soon discovers, the gold you make is *way* better than the gold you steal-and gold that is shared? That's best of all.



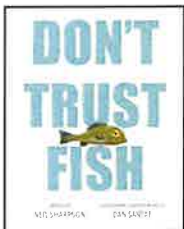
Zombie and Brain Are Friends written by Stephanie V. W. Lucianovic and illustrated by Laan Cham
Zeb comes from a family of farmers-zombie farmers. Each week they pickle, bake, fry, and sell their grain-fed, free-range brains to be enjoyed by the masses. Zeb understands that brains are food, not pets...until one day he comes across the tiniest, pinkest, squishiest brain he ever did see! Can he convince his parents that his brainy bestie is better off as a member of the family than family dinner?



Vampire Jam Sandwich written by Casey Lyall and illustrated by Nici Grehory
You may not have heard of the Vampire Jam Sandwich. But it's time you learned the truth. Once upon a time, a vampire (maybe his name is Terrence) took a bite of a jam sandwich (maybe he thought the jam was... something else). And you know what happens when a vampire bites you... That's right. The jam sandwich has become... A VAMPIRE JAM SANDWICH. Terrifying, stalking the streets at night, sneaking into people's homes in an endless search for MORE JAM!



No More Gnomes written and illustrated by Beth Mills
Herbert is the politest kid in town. He even has a medal to prove it! But his good manners are put to the test when his afterschool nanny, Ms. Goat, brings home a VERY RUDE garden gnome. Herbert tries to be polite about the inconsiderate imp. But then Ms. Goat gets another gnome . . . and another . . . and another! This is too much for Herbert. He can handle NO MORE GNOMES! But how can he tell that to Ms. Goat without being immensely, impossibly, inexcusably impolite?

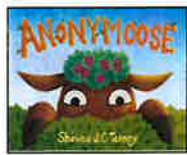


Don't Trust Fish written by Neil Sharpson and illustrated by Dan Santat

Why, dear reader, must you NEVER EVER trust fish?

- 1) They spend all their time in the water where we can't see them.
- 2) Some are as big as a bus--that is *not* okay.
- 3) We don't know what they're teaching in their "schools."
- 4) They are likely plotting our doom.

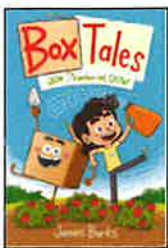
This nature-guide-gone-wrong is a hilarious, off-the-rails exploration of the seemingly innocent animals that live in the water.



Anonymoose written and illustrated by Shawna J. C. Tenney

Ana Moose feels most comfortable when she is hiding. Hiding is much more fun than knowing what to say or being picked last for the team. She enjoys being "Anonymoose"! Until one day, when she sees her classmate Peter building a fort. A fort could be a very good place to hide! But also, Ana starts to feel a connection with Peter. Will Anonymoose have enough courage to come out of hiding to make a friend?

Independent Readers:



Box Tales: Grow Strawberries Grow! written and illustrated by James Burks

Beatrix and Box want to eat a million strawberries! But their only way to do it is to grow their own strawberry garden! But well, how do you plant a garden? Do fruits grow in the ground? Is there a Pickle Tree? Or a Blueberry Muffin Bush? Where are the magic beans? And what do you talk to your plants about if you want them to grow big and strong? The two friends plant. They water. They wait... and they wait... and they wait some more. They had no idea it takes this long for plants to grow. Who has the patience to wait this long? And who or what is nibbling on the leaves? Beatrix and Box's frustrations are growing faster than their garden. Will Beatrix and Box run out of patience and quit before their garden bears fruit, or will they feast on the goodies they grow?



Fairy Scout Friends: No Rain, No Rainbows written and illustrated by Hannah Fay

Rain is not your typical peaches-and-lollipops kind of fairy. She would choose muddy rainstorms over sunshine any day, hands down. Another thing she dislikes? Working in a group. So when her brand-new club is tasked with building a fairy house together, Rain decides she'd rather do her own thing. Because teamwork is never worth the trouble...right?



The Faraway Forest: Wally's Route written by Debbie Fong and colors by Kayla Catanzaro

Wally, the Faraway Forest's mail carrier, always tries his best. In addition to delivering packages of every shape and size, he and Bo, his best friend, also deliver kindness and a helping hand along the way. But can they win over their grumpiest neighbor, the cantankerous Mr. Stembill? Wally and Bo are definitely going to try!



Katrina Hyena, Stand Up Comedian written by Sophie Kohn and illustrated by Aparna Varma

When the spotted hyenas in Katrina's clan laugh, it's meant as a warning to alert the clan that danger is near. But that's not why Katrina laughs. Katrina laughs because she thinks the world is just *sooooo* funny! This causes great frustration with the other hyenas. Every single time Katrina starts laughing, they think she's in danger and rush to help her. What if Gary the Lion is on the prowl?! Katrina, whose dream is to be a stand-up comedian, thinks her stressed-out clan worries too much about Gary, so she decides to help them relax by putting on a comedy show.



Max, a Little Axolotl written and illustrated by Joey Spiotto

It's Max's first day at Coral Elementary school. The school is filled with marine animals, like dolphins, crabs, and octopus. But none of the other students have ever seen an axolotl before... and they have SO MANY QUESTIONS. Where did Max live before? Is it true he can regrow any of his limbs? What happened to his old friends? This is too much attention for Max! *Hiccup!* Uh-oh... Max gets the hiccups when he's nervous. Can this little axolotl adjust to his new underwater school or will the pressure just be too much?