

**Manhattan Beach Unified School District**  
**2019 Summer Pleasure Reading**  
**Pleasure reading recommended by MBUSD Library Resource Specialists**  
**For Students Entering Grades 4 and 5**

**Picture Books**

***Giraffe Problems***, by Jory John (2018)

Edward the giraffe has a hard time understanding why his neck is so bendy and long. Just as he's given up on successfully hiding his ridiculous neck, a turtle comes along who helps Edward appreciate having such a long neck.

***The Garden of Abdul Gasazi***, by Chris Van Allsburg (1979)

A runaway dog leads a young boy into a garden owned by a retired magician. Readers will ponder if the story revolves around magic or coincidence.

**Chapter Books**

***The Someday Birds***, by Sally J. Pla (2018)

Charlie likes his routines: eating chicken nuggets, keeping his hands very clean, and cataloging the birds he sees. When his journalist father is moved from California to Virginia for treatment of a war-related injury, Charlie finds himself outside his comfort zone on a cross-country trip in a rickety RV with his teenage sister and rowdy twin brothers.

***Front Desk***, by Kelly Yang (2018)

Recent immigrants from China, Mia Tang's parents are desperate for an income and so take a job managing a rundown Southern California motel, owned by the difficult Mr. Yao. While her parents clean the rooms, Mia runs the front desk and attends to the guests, including other recent immigrants who briefly stay without paying. Mia faces many challenges, some quite harsh, with courage, hard work, and resourcefulness.

***Out of My Mind***, by Sharon Draper (2010)

A novel that parents and children will enjoy reading together. Melody Brooks is an eleven-year-old who has cerebral palsy. She cannot speak, until she receives a speech device that allows her to reveal how very intelligent she is. This huge change in Melody's life is still not enough to change some people's prejudices against her.

***The Poet's Dog***, by Patricia MacLachlan (2016)

A charming little tale about children, lost during a snowstorm, who are taken in by a poet's dog. A slim book about love, loss, and moving forward together.

***The Doughnut Fix***, by Jessie Janowitz (2018)

Fans of the *Lemonade War* will enjoy this humorous and heartwarming story about a boy named Tristan and his family, who move to a different town where Tristan has a hard time adjusting. Baking is the one thing that makes Tristan feel special, so he takes on the challenge of recreating the town's legendary chocolate creme doughnuts.

***Winnie's Great War***, by Lindsay Mattick and Josh Greenhut (2018)

An imagining of the real journey undertaken by an extraordinary bear, from her early days in the Canadian forest to her travels with the Veterinary Corps across the country and overseas, all the way to the London Zoo, where she met Christopher Robin Milne and inspired the creation of Winnie-the-Pooh.

***Adventures of a Girl Called Bicycle***, by Christina Uss (2018)

To avoid attending a summer camp for social skills, twelve-year-old Bicycle sets off from Washington, D.C., on a bicycle trip to San Francisco, where she hopes to meet the famous cyclist who is her idol. On the journey she meets bike-hating dogs, a bike-loving horse, bike-crushing pigs, and her first friend--the ghost of a Civil War--era boy.

### **Chapter Books in a Series**

***The Last***, by Katherine Applegate (2018)

Byx, believing that she may be the last member of her doglike species, sets off on a quest to find others like herself. She bonds with human and animal companions along the way, and together they discover a serious threat to their survival. The first volume in the *Endling* series.

### **Nonfiction**

***Thirty Minutes Over Oregon: A Japanese Pilot's World War II Story***, by Marc Tyler Nobleman (2018)

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. To retaliate, the U.S. bombed Tokyo from the sky. In response, Japan set out to prove that continental America--though far from all World War II combat--could also be bombed. This is the story of what happened next, how the terrible seed of war that was sown eventually grew into a tree of compassion and reconciliation.

***The Girl Who Drew Butterflies***, by Joyce Sidman (2018)

This winner of the 2019 Sibert Medal for the most distinguished informational book for children explores the extraordinary life and scientific discoveries of Maria Merian, who figured out the truth about metamorphosis and documented the science behind the mystery. With no formal training or university education, Maria took on the roles of artist, adventurer, and scientist in 17th-century Europe--when women were rarely allowed responsibilities outside the home, and unusual interests led to accusations of witchcraft.

***The Vast Wonder of the World: Biologist Ernest Everett Just***, by Mélina Mangal (2018)

Ernest Everett Just was not like other scientists of his time. He saw the whole where others saw only parts; he noticed details others failed to see; he persisted in his research despite the limitations imposed on him as an African American. His keen observations of sea creatures revealed insights about egg cells and the origins of life.

## **Poetry**

***Love That Dog***, by Sharon Creech (2001)

Accomplishing so much with so little, this is a powerful story told in the form of a free-verse journal by a boy full of emotion and intelligence about himself and his dog. At the back of the book are the eight well-known poems referenced in the story.

## **California Young Reader Medal (CYRM) Nominees, 2019-2020**

***The Detective's Assistant***, by Kate Hannigan (2016)

Nell Warne, an eleven-year-old orphan, is taken in by her Aunt Kate, who turns out to be a Pinkerton Agency detective. Set in Chicago just before the Civil War, this historical fiction is based on real-life Kate Warne, America's first female professional sleuth.

***The Losers Club***, by Andrew Clements (2017)

Sixth-grader Alec creates a club just for himself--a club for reading. He calls it the Losers Club to make sure no one else joins, but others do, including Alec's former friend turned bully and the girl Alec just might be starting to like.

***The War I Finally Won***, by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley (2017)

As World War II continues, Ada, Jamie, and Susan are living in a cottage with Lady Thornton and her daughter, Maggie. Tensions rise when Ruth, a German Jewish girl, comes to stay, but the life-and-death issues of war ultimately foster understanding.