

Archer's Quest

By Linda Sue Park

AR book level: 4.6

Synopsis: While doing his homework one grey February afternoon, Kevin is caught off guard when an arrow whizzing through the air takes his baseball hat right off his head! As he helps this gruff intruder find his way home he learns much about himself, his family's heritage and an appreciation of history.

Clementine

By Sara Pennypacker

AR book level: 4.5

Synopsis: Eight-year-old Clementine describes the hilarious antics of her daily life in her own unique voice. This light-hearted story includes worthwhile themes: thinking through the consequences of your actions, taking responsibility for mistakes, trying to make things right when you have wronged or upset someone, and loving someone for who they are, no matter their quirks or eccentricities.

Drita My Homegirl

By Jenny Lombard

AR book level: 3.9

Synopsis: When ten-year old Drita and her family arrive as refugees from war-torn Kosovo, she is teased by the popular and sassy class clown Maxie. The two girls form an unlikely friendship as Maxie completes her punishment, a social studies report on Drita and Kosovo.

Free Baseball

By Sue Corbett

AR book level: 4.3

Synopsis: Felix knows very little about his father, and what he knows is that his father is a baseball legend in Cuba. Tired of not knowing more Felix finds himself as a stowaway on a visiting Florida baseball team's bus hoping to get some answers!

Julia's Kitchen

By Brenda A. Ferber

AR book level: 3.9

Synopsis: While Cara spends the night with her best friend, Marlee, her own home catches fire, killing her mother, Julia, her younger sister, Janie, and devastates her father who was unable to save them. A loving family, kind friends and the rituals of the Jewish faith are not strong enough to rebuild the bonds between father and daughter. It seems hopeless that Cara and her father will ever become a family again until he discovers her secret kitchen.

Larger-Than-Life Lara

By Dandi Daley Mackall

AR book level: 4.9

Synopsis: Fourth-grader Laney has always been the one picked on until obese Lara joins their class. Laney sees the changes Lara makes in all their lives even while being bullied. Laney gives an inside look using writing techniques she has learned from her teacher.

Phineas L. MacGuire ERUPTS! : The First Experiment

By Frances O’Roark Dowell

AR book level: 5.0

Synopsis: Phineas L. MacGuire (aka Mac) is a scientist in the fourth grade. Science is the mainstay of his being. Now that the fourth grade science fair is around the corner, how will Mac deal with being paired with the new kid in class since his best friend and scientific partner moved away the second week of school? You’ll find more than one eruption as you read about friends, experiments, and even a couple of super heroes.

Punished!

By David Lubar

AR book level: 3.6

Synopsis: Caught running in the library Logan is now punished with solving word problems (puns, oxymorons, anagrams) on a time limit. His friends and family start to catch on to his need for solving problems quick and want to know what he is doing but he cannot tell anyone. Will he solve all word problems in time to be normal again?

The Road to Paris

By Nikki Grimes

AR book level: 4.3

Synopsis: Due to their mother’s need to console herself when she does not have a partner in marriage and in many different marriages, Paris Richmond and her older brother Malcolm have become part of the foster care system. Desperation with their abusive treatment leads them to run away. Not even grandmother is a safe haven. For Paris, however, hope and trust are found with the Lincoln family in Ossining, New York. That is, until her birth mother calls with the news that she has married again and is eager to have a family --- again.

Toys Go Out: Being the Adventures of a Knowledge Stingray, a Toughy Little Buffalo, and Someone Called Plastic

By Emily Jenkins

AR book level: 4.0

Synopsis: The adventures of StingRay, Lumphy, and Plastic. Three best friend toys relate their visits to school, ocean, the washing machine and other places.

General Review:

Have you ever wondered what your pets do when you are away? What about your toys? In *Toys Go Out*, you get a look at three toys lives as they go on six adventures. Through these six adventures, children will be able to relate what the toys are going through to their own lives. Lumphy (a buffalo) is afraid of bathing, StingRay (a stingray) is a know-it-all and Plastic (a rubber ball) goes through an identity crisis. For beginning chapter book readers and for those who, like the Little Girl, have had an inanimate object for a best friend. Jenkins blends humor with insight while Zelinsky’s illustrations add to the details of the book.

WINGS

By William Loizeaux

AR book level: 5.1

Synopsis: In the summer of 1960, a fatherless, ten year old boy named Nick rescues a baby mocking bird. He and his friend, Mate, nurture the bird to health and develop a special bond with the bird which they name Marcy. That summer takes on a magical quality which changes and expands as the bird and the lives of those who are involved in its care develop relationships. The story is full of the joy and wonder of Marcy and her physical feats and loyalty but the reality of change and independence is present also.