

A recent request by a listserv member:

"I have a student reading at the 5th grade level who's looking for a great book series."

Suggestions were:

The Lemony Snicket - Series of Unfortunate Events books

Gary Paulsen - I absolutely love his writing.

Dive, Island, and Everest. Some of the vocabulary is a little higher, especially if you don't have any background knowledge for the subject, but they are good for higher readers. The books are by Gordon Korman! Great Canadian author-great story too. His newest one is now available from Scholastic.

How about the Eddie Dickens Trilogy? It's great for kids who love Lemony Snickett and Harry Potter.

Holes

The Golden Compass which high level. It is part of a trilogy.

The Hobbs books another adventure series with a little historical background

No More Dead Dogs

Gathering Blue after The Giver

Lowry books

Artemis Fowl

A Long Way From Chicago and A Year Down Yonder. They are easy to get into and have great characters!

Mildred Taylor's story of the Logan Family. We started with a small novel, Song of the Trees. Even though it is a small novel, the vocabulary development is phenomenal. This introduces the reader to the Logan family and then there are several other books about the family, some small and others regular novel size. For reluctant fourth and fifth grade students one might take them from Song of the Trees to The Friendship, or Mississippi Bridge or The Well. If you feel they are really hooked you make take them from Song of the Trees to Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry, Will the Circle be Unbroken, and then Road to Memphis. The story is a story about the strength of family enduring hardships. The setting of course is during the Depression, in years of segregation. The family owns their own land while all the other family's around share crop. Of course, the problem is to hold on to what they have in these years of prejudices and hardships. Kids who had never read a book from front to cover devoured these stories and always ready to have great conversations. Mildred Taylor has memoirs of her father. the story teller, in the forward of Roll of Thunder which explains where her motivation to write her family stories came from.

A new series that is similar to Harry Potter is Charlie Bone. The first is Midnight for Charlie Bone and the second is Charlie Bone and Twister, by Jenny Nimmo. I would highly recommend them. They are a bit more accessible than Harry Potter--shorter in length, faster moving, a little less details. The author's name is Gordon Korman and my sixth grade students love the series. Gorman wrote the Everest series. He also wrote a series entitled Island and a new series entitled Dive.

Dedicated a page on my website to "contemporary Authors" whose books always seem to be successful with adolescents. If you are interested, click on the web address below, and from the menu at the left choose "Contemporary Authors."

<http://www.myschoolonline.com/MA/MKelly>