Summer 2018-2019 Book list: 5th grade

1. **El Deafo (252 pages) By: Cece Bell (graphic novel)—Autobiography (with a twist)**

-Themes of: Acceptance, Friendship, and not judging a book by its cover.

Summary: **A 2015 Newbery Honor Book**Going to school and making new friends can be tough. But going to school and making new friends while wearing a bulky hearing aid strapped to your chest? That requires superpowers! In this funny, poignant graphic novel memoir, author/illustrator Cece Bell chronicles her hearing loss at a young age and her subsequent experiences with the Phonic Ear, a very powerful—and very awkward—hearing aid.

The Phonic Ear gives Cece the ability to hear—sometimes things she shouldn’t—but also isolates her from her classmates. She really just wants to fit in and find a true friend, someone who appreciates her as she is. After some trouble, she is finally able to harness the power of the Phonic Ear and become “El Deafo, Listener for All.” And more importantly, declare a place for herself in the world and find the friend she’s longed for.

1. **The Jumbies (240 pages) By: Tracy Baptiste (folklore)**

-Themes of: Fairness, Justice, and Retribution (with Caribbean/Haitian roots)

Summary: A middle grade twist on a traditional Haitian folklore. Corinne and her father don’t believe in jumbies, malevolent creatures that come out of the island’s dark woods to prey on people. Then one day a strangely beautiful lady names Severine walks into Corinne’s house and takes over, her Papa begins acting weird, and evil creatures attack the village. Corinne and her friends approach the white witch for help but she can’t assist because it would affect the ancient balance between creatures and humans. However, the white witch does tell Corinne that she has a special power that can help.

1. **Sputnik’s Guide to Life on Earth (352 pages) By: Frank Cottrell-Boyce (adventure)**

-Themes of: Home, Family, Friendship, and Human Rights.

Summary: Prez knows that the best way to keep track of things is to make a list. That's important when you have a grandfather who is constantly forgetting. And it's even more important when your grandfather can't care for you anymore and you have to go live with a foster family out in the country.

Prez is still learning to fit in at his new home when he answers the door to meet Sputnik—a kid who is more than a little strange. First, he can hear what Prez is thinking. Second, he looks like a dog to everyone except Prez. Third, he can manipulate the laws of space and time. Sputnik, it turns out is an alien, and he's got a mission that requires Prez's help: the Earth has been marked for destruction, and the only way they can stop it is to come up with ten reasons why the planet should be saved.

Thus begins one of the most fun and eventful summers of Prez's life, as he and Sputnik set out on a journey to compile the most important list Prez has ever made—and discover just what makes our world so remarkable.

1. **Wishtree (224 pages) By: Katherine Applegate (fantasy)**

-Themes of: Friendship, Acceptance, Nature, Anti-Bigotry

Summary: Red is an oak tree who is many rings old. Red is the neighborhood “wishtree”---people write their wishes on pieces of cloth and tie them to Red’s branches. Along with her crow friend Bongo and other animals who seek refuge in Red’s hollows, this “wishtree” watches over the neighborhood.

You might say Red has seen it all. Until a new family moves in. Not everyone is welcoming, and Red’s experience as a wishtree are more important than ever.

Funny, deep, warm, and nuanced, this is Katherine Applegate at her very best---writing from the heart, and from a completely unexpected point of view.

1. **A Night Divided (313 pages) By: Jennifer A. Nielsen (historical fiction)**

-Themes of: Courage, Family, Love, and Perseverance.

Summary: From NYT bestselling author Jennifer A. Nielsen comes a stunning thriller about a girl who must escape to freedom after the Berlin Wall divides her family between east and west.

With the rise of the Berlin Wall, twelve-year-old Gerta finds her family suddenly divided. She, her mother, and her brother Fritz live on the eastern side, controlled by the Soviets. Her father and middle brother, who had gone west in search of work, cannot return home. Gerta knows it is dangerous to watch the wall, to think forbidden thoughts of freedom, yet she can't help herself. She sees the East German soldiers with their guns trained on their own citizens; she, her family, her neighbors and friends are prisoners in their own city.

But one day, while on her way to school, Gerta spots her father on a viewing platform on the western side, pantomiming a peculiar dance. Then, when she receives a mysterious drawing, Gerta puts two and two together and concludes that her father wants Gerta and Fritz to tunnel beneath the wall, out of East Berlin. However, if they are caught, the consequences will be deadly. No one can be trusted. Will Gerta and her family find their way to freedom?