

Determination

Character... It starts with me!

ROBIN'S READING LIST

Vs. Faintheartedness

I WILL:

- Set goals.
- Make sure your goals are right.
- Ignore distractions.
- Do not be discouraged by others.
- Face problems head on.

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Purposing to accomplish right goals at the right time, regardless of the opposition

Pre – Grade 3:

Ice by Arthur Geisert

This is a wordless tale that depicts a community of pigs that suffer from the heat and go in search of ice, despite the odds against them.

Winners Never Quit by Mia Hamm

More than anyone, soccer superstar Mia Hamm knows the value of teamwork and perseverance. She shares this lesson in this motivational story that shows that being a team player is more important than winning or losing a game.

Operation Redwood by S. Terrell French

In northern California, Julian Carter-Li and his friends fight to save a grove of redwoods from an investment company that plans to cut them down.

No Castles Here by A.C.E. Bauer

Eleven-year-old Augie Boretski dreams of escaping his run-down Camden, New Jersey, neighborhood, but things start to turn around with help from a Big Brother, a music teacher, and a mysterious bookstore owner, so when his school is in trouble, he pulls the community together to save it.

Kickers: Fake Out by Rich Wallace

Nine-year-old Ben and other members of the Bobcats co-ed soccer team improve their skills and begin to win, especially after Ben learns the importance of concentration from his older brother and finally masters the fake out.

Franklin and the Contest by Sharon Jennings

Franklin wants to enter a contest. Trouble is, he has to find something he can do for five hours without stopping! Bear, Rabbit and Beaver have no trouble finding activities to occupy them, but Franklin's at a loss. He tries jumping up and down, standing on his head and eating fly soup, but can't keep going long enough. Finally, Franklin thinks for five hours. And he wins the contest!!

Grades 4 – 8:

When the Soldiers Were Gone by Vera W. Propp

Eight-year-old Henk is stunned when he discovers that the family he has been living with are not his blood relatives. After being reunited with his biological parents, who are Jewish, Henk learns that his name is really Benjamin Van Sorg and that he was sent to live with a

Robin's Reading List

Christian family during the war. As he slowly adjusts to his new life and identity, memories from his early childhood gradually return, including the yellow star on his coat and a frightening encounter with a Nazi soldier. At the end of the book, when he and his parents return to their house, the place seems familiar and welcoming, and he finally feels that he is home. Propp creates and sustains a mood that coincides with the readjustment phase that takes place after a trauma. Problems are faced head on and the characters give a powerful example of not giving up.

Long Short Story by Siobhan Parkinson

Long Short Story is a tale about two children with no good choices in front of them. As a narrator, 14-year-old Jonathan turns out to be highly unreliable. As the brother of 8-year-old Julie, however, he is consistently dependable. After their alcoholic mother punches Julie in the face, Jonathan creates a pack of lies about illness, fearful that if Julie goes to school, she will be taken away, too. Jonathon is determined not to let that happen.

Days pass with no measurable improvement to Julie's bruise. It's possible the cheekbone is broken. Her initial suggestion – "Why don't we run away?" becomes, seemingly, the only option. An underfinanced, not-well-thought-out plan to find the father who abandoned them ends with the pair in police custody.

At that point, everything changes. The second half of the story will have readers second-guessing the facts Jonathan laid out in the first – he even attempts to have another narrator tell the rest of the tale. Jonathon wants to set the right goals for his sister and himself...and while things may not always go as planned...he faces problems head on and tries not getting discouraged along the way.



When Life Gives You O.J. by Erica S. Perl

In the just-before-she-turns-eleven summer, Zelly Fried's facing lots of changes:

the family has moved to Vermont from Brooklyn; her grandfather – Ace – is living with them after the death of Bubbles, Zelly's beloved grandma; her best friend Allie is off to sleep-away camp; and a new friendship begins with the even-newer-to-the-neighborhood kid, Jeremy. But one thing's been the same for Zelly: for always – she wants a dog of her own. More than anything!

Of all people, Ace has a plan. It's a crazy plan, but Ace convinces Zelly that it might work. In order to prove to her parents that she will be a responsible dog-owner, Zelly's going to take care of a practice dog – an orange-juice container on a leash.

Schlepping an orange juice jug noisily through the streets of her town – three times a day! – is embarrassing enough. Add to that she misses her friend, her brother embarrasses her and she is dealing w/ a class bully. Things get worse when Allie finally comes home filled with camp stories and friendships that leave Zelly out. More than ever, Zelly feels she'll never belong, but she fights the distractions/oppositions to try to get what she wants...a dog. You'll have to read the book to see if she gets one!

Wonder by R.J. Palacio

Get ready to read a powerful book! August Pullman, now 10, was born with a deformed face. He lives in Manhattan, where's it's hard to hide, so even though he's been homeschooled, he's felt the stares, heard the whispers, and walked away when the boldest jerks called him Freak or Freddy Krueger. Since birth, he's had 27 surgeries, but his face still looks like it has "been melted, like the drippings on a candle."

Now his parents have decided (not without reservations) that it's time for Auggie to meet the wider world, enrolling him in a private school for fifth grade. Auggie may have lost the genetic lottery, but one thing he has going for him is the adults in his life. His parents' unconditional love is a thing to behold. Additionally, Auggie's principal, the unfortunately-named Mr. Tushman, has Auggie's back, and his English teacher, Mr. Browne.

Robin's Reading List



Kids, however, are kids. Though Auggie mostly succeeds at Beecher Prep, there are a few bad apples. In short chapters, Palacio skillfully sketches the ups and downs of his year, told not only from Auggie's perspective, but from the viewpoint of others who intersect his life: his sister, Via, two school friends, Summer and Jack, even Via's new boyfriend, Justin, who, in truth, has very little involvement in Auggie's life. Auggie's increasing presence in the world doesn't only test his courage and determination; it also impacts everyone he comes in contact

with.

Ruby Holler by Sharon Creech

Having suffered through a string of appalling foster homes 13-year-old orphan Dallas and his twin sister, Florida, have pretty much given up on ever finding a happy home. So when an eccentric older couple enters their lives, providing such adventures as a river expedition, a treasure hunt (of sorts), and a whole lot of remarkable meals: "beat-the-blues broccoli," "anti-cranky crumpets," and "getting-used-to-kids- again stew," the twins take a while to warm up. Their goal is to stay together no matter what and despite the problems and distractions, they learn to trust Tiller and Sairy. In the end they accomplish what they set out to do...to find a place where they can be a family.

Grades 9 – 12:

Soul Surfer by Bethany Hamilton

Soul Surfer: A True Story of Faith, Family, and Fighting to Get Back on the Board is Bethany Hamilton's story. Fourteen year old competitive surfer Bethany Hamilton thought her life was over when she lost her arm in a shark attack. Yet, despite this obstacle she found the determination to continue surfing in her own creative style and proved to herself that the World Surfing Championships were still within reach. In this true account, Bethany tells the story of her life before and after the accident, while inspiring readers to overcome obstacles by finding an inner passion and determination. This book is a wonderful story of faith, family, and courage.

The Bite of the Mango by Miratu Kamara

Brutally attacked by rebel soldiers who cut off both her hands, twelve year old Miratu Kamara from Sierra Leone miraculously survived and found her way to a refugee camp. When journalists arrived in her country to document the atrocities of war, Miratu was rescued. Her story, *The Bite of the Mango* of survival as a victim of civil war to becoming a UNICEF Special Representative is an inspiring story of courage and triumph.

Winterdance by Gary Paulsen

The Alaskan Iditarod is one of the world's most punishing endurance contests...a 1150 mile winter sled-dog race that requires human competitors and their dogs to face frigid temperatures, "winds beyond belief, roaring waters and deadly dreams." This survival adventure will keep you on the edge of your seat, shocked and impressed with all that this "absurd undertaking" requires.

Feel The Music: A Rock and Roll Story of Determination by Stephen Richard Hoffman

Adam Jensen hasn't been clinically diagnosed; the mental health institute has no official term for it. But Adam isn't normal. He has an uncontrollable obsession; one thought consumes his every waking moment; it possesses the depths of his soul: Music. Rock music. Rock and roll. Adam and his band, Blue Denim, have

Robin's Reading List

dedicated their lives to making rock music rich in style and substance. When they discover a chance to tour with their favorite Top-40 band, they commit to beat rival band Rebel at the Battle of the Bands competition. To their astonishment, Blue Denim's drummer joins Rebel. When Blue Denim agrees to add a female vocalist, classy and vocally-gifted Angel Irving auditions. However, Adam conceals a secret infatuation for Angel, and alone he must fight conflicting emotions that put Angel and his band's music at odds. Without winning the Battle of the Bands, Blue Denim risks forfeiting their hard-fought musical dreams forever. With so much at stake, Blue Denim must triumph over their surmounting challenges so that everyone can . . . Feel the Music!

The 9/11 Report: A Graphic Adaptation by Sid Jacobson

On December 5, 2005, the 9/11 Commission issued its final report card on the government's fulfillment of the recommendations issued in July 2004: one A, twelve Bs, nine Cs, twelve Ds, three Fs, and four incompletes. Here is stunning evidence that Sid Jacobson and Ernie Colón, with more than sixty years of experience in the comic-book industry between them, were right: far, far too few Americans have read, grasped, and demanded action on the Commission's investigation into the events of that tragic day and the lessons America must learn.

Using every skill and storytelling method Jacobson and Colón have learned over the decades, they have produced the most accessible version of the 9/11 Report. Jacobson's text frequently follows word for word the original report, faithfully captures its investigative thoroughness, and covers its entire scope, even including the Commission's final report card. Colón's stunning artwork powerfully conveys the facts, insights, and urgency of the original. Published on the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the United States, an event that has left no aspect of American foreign or domestic policy untouched, *The 9/11 Report* puts at every American's fingertips the most defining event of the century.



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