

VA Reads Elementary Chapter Book Selections for 2025-2026

- *Born Naughty: My Childhood in China* by Jin Wang with Tony Johnston. Illustrated by Anisi Baigude. Anne Schwartz Books (9780593563618). Jin Wang was born in a remote province of Mongolia in the late 1980s, and *Born Naughty* is a delightful 'slice of life' reflection of her childhood and adventures with her family.
- *Buffalo Dreamer* by Violet Duncan. Nancy Paulsen Books (9780593624814). On her annual trip to her family home on the reservation in Alberta, Canada, Summer begins having almost too-real dreams of herself running from a residential school in the area. She soon discovers this same school is where her grandpa suffered immensely as a child, and through her dreams, she learns to connect to her family and her tribe's history in a way she never has before.
- *The Chainbreakers* by Julian Randall. Henry, Holt & Co (9781250882028). Violet Moon wants to be a Reaper, just like her father—rescuing souls that have been lost deep in the Atlantic Ocean. When her father is kidnapped by the Children of the Shark, Violet decides to embark on a rescue mission—even if nobody else will help her.
- *Finn and Ezra's Bar Mitzvah Time Loop* by Joshua S Levy. Quill Tree Books (9780063248243). Finn and Ezra don't know each other—until they get stuck in a loop, celebrating their bar mitzvahs and living the same Friday, Saturday and Sunday over and over and over again... until they can find a way, together, to break the loop.
- *Gamerville* by Johnnie Christmas. HarperAlley (9780063056831). In this graphic novel, Max's dreams come true when he qualifies for the Gamerville video game championship but his dreams are dashed when his parents send him to a Camp Reset, screen-free summer camp instead.
- *Ghosts, Toast, and Other Hazards* by Susan Tan. Roaring Book Press (9781250797001). After moving to a new town, 12-year-old Mo Lin must learn to face her past trauma and her anxiety. Along the way, Mo and her new friend Nathaniel try to solve a mystery involving the ghost of a circus elephant that seems to be haunting Mo's dreams.
- *Kwame Crashes the Underworld* by Craig Kofi Farmer. Roaring Book Press (9781250900265). Kwame Powell is grieving the death of his grandmother when a magical whirlpool transports him to Asamando, the Ghanaian underworld. There, Kwame learns to accept his cultural heritage and his supernatural connection to Asase Yaa, Mother Earth, while also escaping from the underworld and its dangers.
- *Meet Me on Mercer Street* by Booki Vivat. Scholastic Press (97813388625150). Kacie loves to observe her neighborhood, sketchbook in hand. When her best friend moves away unexpectedly, Kacie realizes her neighborhood is changing in ways she didn't notice before, and she is determined to figure out what is happening.
- *Safe Harbor* by Padma Venkatraman. Nancy Paulsen Books (9780593112502). This novel in verse tells the story of Geetha, who moves from India to Rhode Island with her mother after her parents divorce. While Geetha struggles to adjust to her new country, home, and school, she forms a connection with an injured seal who she helps to rescue.
- *A Strange Thing Happened At Cherry Hall* by Jasmine Warga. Harper Collins (9780062956705). When a painting is stolen from the museum where his mother works as the cleaning crew supervisor, Rami sets out to solve the mystery, with the help of a mysterious floating girl, a new friend, and a turtle who may be the only witness to the theft.