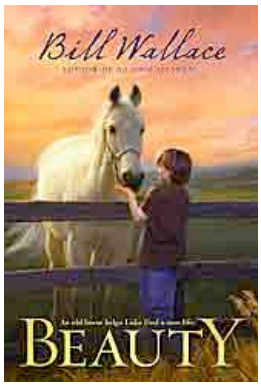
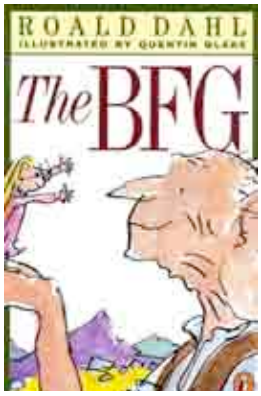
Summaries of the 2009-2010 OBOB Books (3-5 Division)



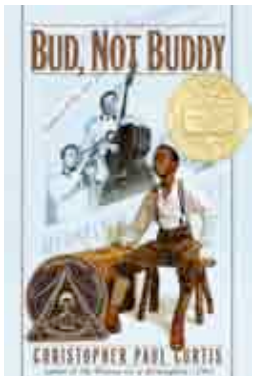
Beauty, by Bill Wallace
Realistic Fiction
660 lexile; 9 Reading Counts points

After his mother's divorce, 11 year-old Luke is upset that he must move with her to his grumpy grandfather's farm in Oklahoma. He is especially upset about leaving his friends. But on the farm he makes a new best friend—an old horse named Beauty—who helps him learn to love his new life. If you like horses, or animals in general, you will love this book!



The BFG, by Roald Dahl
Fantasy; Humor
720 lexile; 7 Reading Counts points

This is a book about giants and human beans. One night, during the witching hour, Sophie is kidsnatched by a giant. Lucky for her, she was snatched by a vegetarian "big, friendly, giant" (the BFG), and not by the Childchewer, the Fleshlumpeater, the Bonecrusher, or one of the other giants, who love to eat human beans (beings). The BFG takes Sophie to Giant Country, where she learns about whizzpoppers and snozzcumbers. When Sophie learns that the other giants are going to England to swollomp a few nice chiddlers, she convinces the BFG to get help from the queen.



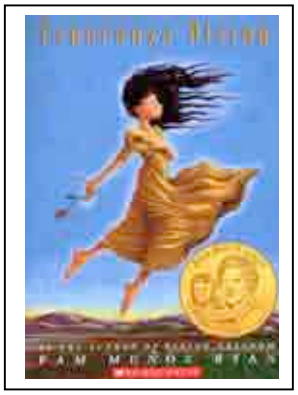
Bud, Not Buddy, by Christopher Paul Curtis
Historical Fiction
950 lexile; 12 Reading Counts points

Set in the Great Depression of the 1930s, this is the story of Bud (not Buddy), who becomes an orphan when his mother dies. When he is sent to live with a mean family, Bud escapes, with the goal of finding his father, a jazz musician. After some exciting adventures, Bud thinks he is on the right trail, thanks to the clues he carries around in his old suitcase.

Emmy and the Incredible Shrinking Rat,
by Lynne Jonell

Fantasy; Comedy
780 lexile; 14 Reading Counts points

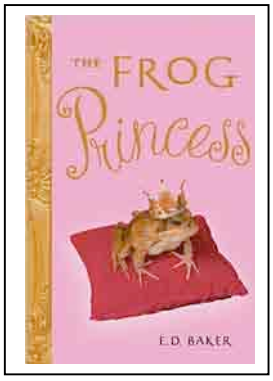
When Emmy's parents inherit a fortune, she discovers that everyone seems to ignore her. While Emmy's parents take off for exotic lands, she stays with an incredibly controlling nanny. No one at school seems to know she exists. Then she is bitten by the classroom rat and discovers that she can understand every word he says. So can Joe, one of the cool kids in her class who was also bitten. When Joe is bitten again, he shrinks to the size of an action figure. Meanwhile, Emmy discovers a terrible secret about the nanny. (from School Library Journal).



Esperanza Rising, by Pam Munoz Ryan

Historical Fiction
750 lexile; 11 Reading Counts points

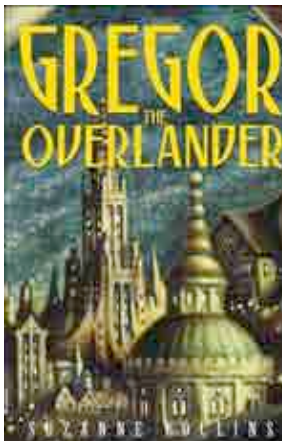
Esperanza is a rich girl, who lives on her father's ranch in Mexico in the 1930s. But when her father is killed, she must escape with her mother. They go to California, where they settle in Mexican farm labor camps. They follow the crops to make a living, and Esperanza is forced to create a new life in a new country.



The Frog Princess, by E.D. Baker

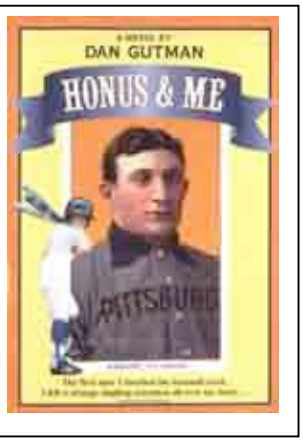
Fiction; Folk and Fairy Tales
710 lexile; 12 Reading Counts points

Once upon a time, 14-year-old Princess Esmeralda meets a talking frog in a swamp. The frog begs her to give him a kiss so that he will turn back into Prince Eadric, his identity before an evil witch turned him into an amphibian. However, when the princess kisses him, she, too, is transformed into a frog, and the two leap off in search of the spell-casting witch to ask her to reverse the spell. This book, the first in a series, will soon be turned into an animated Disney movie, "The Princess and the Frog".



Gregor the Overlander, by **Suzanne Collins**
Fantasy; Action/Adventure
630 lexile; 14 Reading Counts points

When 11-year-old Gregor follows his two year old sister, Boots, through a grate in the laundry room of their New York apartment building, he hurtles into the dark Underland beneath the city. There, humans live uneasily beside giant spiders, bats, cockroaches, and rats—but the fragile peace is about to fall apart. Gregor just wants to find his way home. But when he discovers that a strange prophecy foretells a role for him in Underland's future, he realizes that it might be the only way to solve the biggest mystery of his life. This is the first book in the exciting series "The Underland Chronicles". (from the back cover).

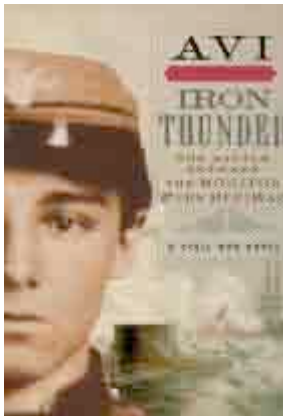


Honus and Me, by Dan Gutman
Science Fiction; Time Travel
690 lexile; 5 Reading Counts points

Joe Stoshack and his mom aren't rich, so when Joe finds a valuable baseball card in an old lady's attic, he thinks he's got it made. Joe is an avid baseball card collector so he knows that the Honus Wagner card is baseball's rarest find. What he doesn't know is that the card has properties that allow both Joe and Honus Wagner to travel through time. Joe even gets to play in the 1909 World Series! (from Booklist).

Igraine the Brave, by Cornelia Funke
Fantasy
900 Lexile; 10 Reading Counts points

Everyone at Castle Pimpernel is looking forward to Igraine's birthday. But when her magical present goes wrong and her parents turn themselves into pigs, it's up to Igraine to put things right – even if that means facing giants, three-headed dragons and a particularly Spiky Knight. (Chicken House)

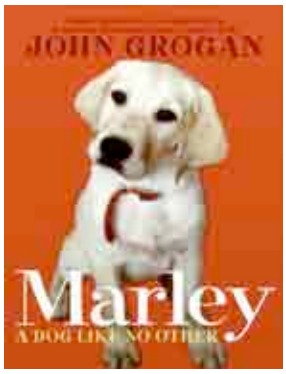


Iron Thunder: The Battle Between the Monitor and the Merrimac, by Avi
Historical Fiction
620 lexile; 8 Reading Counts points

The year is 1862. The country is in the midst of a civil war. When his father is killed, 13-year-old Tom must go to work when his father is killed in battle. He finds a job building one of the world's first ironclad boats, the Monitor. When the Monitor goes to battle against another ironclad ship, the Merrimac, Tom is onboard to give a first-hand account of the action.

Leonardo da Vinci: A Non-Fiction Companion to "Monday with a Mad Genius", by Mary Pope Osborne

As stated in the title, this is a non-fiction companion book to a Magic Tree House book. How did Leonardo da Vinci become interested in flight? What are some of his most famous paintings? Do his scientific ideas measure up to what we know today? Find out the answers to these questions and more in this Magic Tree House Research Guide. (Barnes and Noble)



Marley: A Dog Like No Other, by John Grogan
Non-fiction; Biography
760 lexile; 11 Reading Counts points

This is the true story of a puppy named Marley. Marley is an oversized, energetic, and very lovable yellow labrador retriever. Despite going to obedience school, Marley has some bad habits, such as flinging drool and eating everything he sees, but he is a central part of the family. Very funny!

Mysterious Benedict Society, by Trenton Lee Stewart

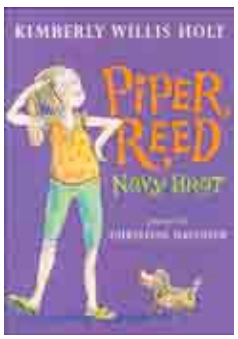
Mystery; Fantasy
840 lexile; 26 points

When an ad reading "Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?" appears in a local paper, it's hard for many children to resist. But only four (two boys and two girls) out of dozens pass the rigorous mind-bending tests that prove they are special and talented enough to undertake a mysterious mission at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules. The kids learn that the school is actually a training-ground created by a criminal mastermind to take over the world. (from Publishers Weekly).

No Talking, by Andrew Clements

Realistic Fiction
820 lexile; 7 Reading Counts points

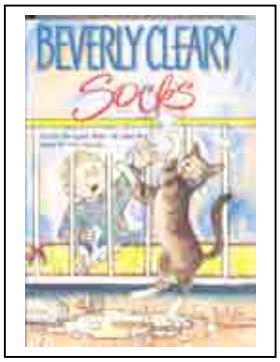
The fifth-graders at Laketon Elementary are so talkative that their teachers have named them "the Unshushables". Then Dave, one of the noisiest boys, challenges Lynsey, a chatterbox girl, to a no-talking contest. The rules for the contest include only three word answers to teachers' questions. The teachers and principal are at first surprised, then concerned, as the contest shifts from boys vs. girls to students vs. teachers.



Piper Reed, Navy Brat, by Kimberly Willis Holt

Realistic Fiction
610 lexile; 6 Reading Counts points

This is a lively family story (the first in a series) that draws on the author's experiences of growing up as a Navy brat. For nine-year-old Piper, it is sometimes hard being the middle kid, especially now that the family is once again going to a new base. When they get to Pensacola, Florida, the first day of school is "not everyone's, just ours." It doesn't help that Piper is dyslexic. But she copes in class, and she creates a club to make friends. (from Booklist).



Socks, by Beverly Cleary
Realistic Fiction; Comedy
890 lexile; 5 Reading Counts points

This is the story of a kitten named Socks, who is adopted by a young, childless couple named the Brickers. It is told from the kitten's point of view. When the Brickers have a new baby, Socks becomes jealous and must learn to adjust.