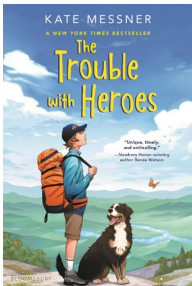




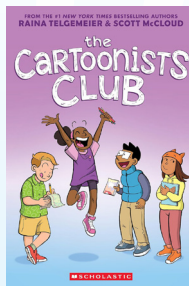
10 amazing reads in 2025



BEST ADVENTURE STORY **The Trouble with Heroes**

By *Kate Messner* (Bloomsbury)

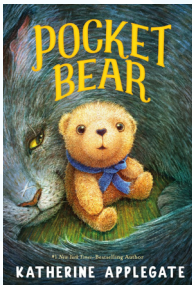
Packed with emotion, this story is about a boy's quest to climb 46 peaks in New York's Adirondack Mountains. When he begins, he's defiant and grieving the loss of his father, a hero firefighter. As he conquers each peak with a dog that belongs to a famous local hiker, his anger starts to fade. *Ages 8 and up*



BEST FOR COMIC FANS **The Cartoonists Club**

By *Raina Telgemeier and Scott McCloud* (Graphix)

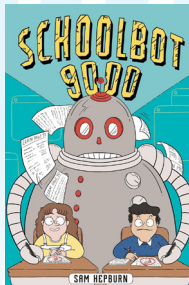
This graphic novel excels at being two books in one—a fun story about a group of kids starting a comic club at school and a how-to guide for readers who want to create their own comics. The storylines converge at a convention, where the club members are selling mini-comics they made. *Ages 8–12*



BEST ANIMAL STORY **Pocket Bear**

By *Katherine Applegate*, illustrated by *Charles Santoso* (Feiwel & Friends)

In this historically inspired tale, a cat rescues what may be one of the world's first stuffed bears from the trash. When an evil collector arrives and senses the bear's value, the cat, as well as Pocket Bear, another character, hatch a plan to outsmart him. *Ages 8–12*



BEST NEW GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES **SchoolBot 9000**

By *Sam Hepburn* (Dial Books)

In this thought-provoking tale that explores the pros and cons of AI, a boy who bemoans the use of robots at home is now faced with having one in school. Many of his fears come to fruition when the robot, which was supposed to support his human teachers, starts to take over the classroom. *Ages 8–12*



BEST GHOST STORY **Free Piano (Not Haunted)**

By *Whitney Gardner*

(Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers)

After a girl brings home an abandoned keyboard, she finds out that the ghost of a 1980s pop star lives inside it. The friendly spirit seems to be the perfect collaborator to boost the views of her music videos. This original story strikes the right chord. *Ages 8–12*



BEST FOR CREATIVE STORYTELLING **The Incredibly Human Henson Blayze**

By *Derrick Barnes* (Viking)

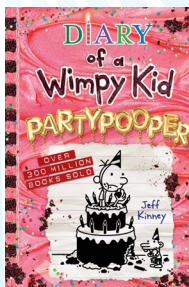
This gripping story stars Henson, a Black high school football player who is a local hero in his mostly white town. But when he leaves a game at halftime to go to the hospital to see a friend who's been hurt in an unjust act, many people are upset with him. This prompts Henson to grapple with his future. *Ages 10 and up*



BEST NEW FANTASY SERIES **Dragonborn**

By *Struan Murray* (Penguin Random House)

At this novel's start, a girl who is frustrated by her mom's overprotectiveness spits fire and learns she has dragon blood! She finds refuge in a hidden realm of mythical creatures. Through exhilarating battles and stunning twists, this debut of a new series tackles its heroine's emotions in a terrific way. *Ages 8–12*



BEST FOR LAUGHS **Partypooper**

By *Jeff Kinney* (Amulet Books)

The 20th book in the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series is one of the funniest yet. Greg thinks his family is planning a surprise birthday party for him, but it turns out they forgot his birthday. When they try to hold a make-up celebration, absurd and hilarious misunderstandings ensue in true Wimpy Kid fashion. *Ages 8 and up*



BEST FOR SPORTS FANS **Inside the Park**

By *Andrea Williams* (HarperCollins)

It's the baseball version of *Home Alone*! A boy and a dog accidentally get locked inside a minor league stadium at night. They are enjoying unlimited access in the ballpark, until they realize that villains are also in the stadium. The bad guys want to sabotage the championship game. Can they be stopped? *Ages 8–12*



BEST MYSTERY **City Spies: London Calling**

By *James Ponti* (Aladdin)

The sixth book in the *City Spies* series delivers its most heart-pumping adventure yet. The spy kids split up to tackle two missions: the disappearance of a team member's sister in Turkey and a plan to sabotage a wedding in London. As the plots come together, you may find the pages turning themselves! *Ages 8–12*