

# High Interest / Low Reading Level Book List

***Hi Interest / Low Reading Level Books (Hi-Lo Books) encourage reading for the reluctant reader. Books are written at lower reading levels, but appeal to the reader's interest level even though that might not match their grade level. Students, especially in middle school and high school, who are reading below grade level are more likely to want to read a book if it is not only at their reading level but also at their interest level.***

Reading and Interest Level notations taken from *The Elementary School Library Collection (21st Ed.)* and the Logan (Utah) Library web site at <http://library.loganutah.org/books/children/reluctant.cfm>.

RL = Reading Level (By Grade Level)

IL = Interest Level (By Grade Level)

Avi. [The Barn.](#)

RL = 3 / IL = 5-12

To fulfill their dying father's last request, Ben and his siblings build a barn in the Oregon Territory.

Blume, Judy. [Superfudge.](#)

RL = 2 / IL = 2-4

The highs and lows of Peter's life with his brother Fudge. Sequel to [Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing.](#)

Blume, Judy. [Tales Of a Fourth Grade Nothing.](#)

RL = 3 / IL = 3-5

Peter finds his demanding two-year-old brother an every increasing problem.

Bunting, Eve. [Cheyenne Again.](#)

RL = 2 / IL = 3-5

In the late 1880's, a Cheyenne boy named Young Bull runs away from a white man's boarding school.

Byars, Betsy. [The Pinballs.](#)

RL = 3 / IL = 5-6

Three lonely foster children are tired of being bounced from home to home like pinballs.

Catling, Patrick S. [The Chocolate Touch.](#)

RL = 2-3 / IL = 2-5

A boy acquires a magical gift that turns everything his lips touch to chocolate.

Cleary, Beverly. [Socks.](#)

RL = 2 / IL = 3-5

Hilarious episodes in the life of the Brickers' pampered cat.

Conford, Ellen. [The Frog Princess Of Pelham.](#)

RL = 3 / IL = 4-12

Danny's kiss turns Chandler into a frog, and his attempts to change her back land them on a TV talk show.

Cutler, Jane. [Spaceman.](#)

RL = 2 / IL = 4-12

Gary, who is failing and has trouble getting along with other students, tries to adjust to his learning disability.

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Fleischman, Sid. [The Whipping Boy](#).

RL = 3 / IL = 3-5

A bratty prince and his whipping boy accidentally trade places after becoming involved with dangerous outlaws.

Hatrack, Gloria. [Masks](#).

RL = 3 / IL = 6-12

When his brother is paralyzed by a rare disease, Pete uses tribal animal masks to communicate with Will.

King-Smith, Dick. [A Mouse Called Wolf](#).

RL = 3 / IL = 3-5

A mouse with an unusual name shares his musical gift with a widowed concert pianist.

King-Smith, Dick. [Mr. Potter's Pet](#).

RL = 2 / IL = 3-5

Mr. Potter's boring life changes considerably after buying an unusual mynah bird.

Napoli, Donna J. [The Prince of the Pond](#).

RL = 3 / IL = 3-12

Turned into a frog, a prince makes the best of his life and instills a new kind of thinking into his frog family.

Orgel, Doris. [Don't Call Me Slob-O](#).

RL = 2 / IL = 3-5

Shrimp must decide whether to befriend a new boy in his neighborhood, who is a Croatian American.

Partridge, Elizabeth. [Clara and the Hoodoo Man](#).

RL = 3 / IL = 5-12

When her sister is near death, Clara risks seeking the help of the herbal healer her mother calls a hoodoo man.

Polacco, Patricia. [Pink and Say](#).

RL = 2 / IL = 4-6

Say describes his meeting with Pinkus, a black soldier, during the Civil War, and their capture by Rebels.

Richemont, Enid. [The Magic Skateboard](#).

RL = 3 / IL = 3-5

Danny's skateboard is transformed into a kind of flying carpet that allows him to visit any place he imagines.

Ryan, Mary E. [The Trouble With Perfect](#).

RL = 3 / IL = 6-12

Kyle, who is hopeless in math, is tempted to cheat to please his demanding, heavily drinking father.

Schechter, Ellen. [The Big Idea](#)

RL = 2 / IL = 3-5

Luz is determined to turn a run-down vacant lot into a garden, but she must convince her neighbors to help.

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Scieszka, Jon. [The Time Warp Trio](#) series.

RL = 3 / IL = 3-6

Three boys find themselves taking hilarious trips through time due to the gift of a mysterious book.

Spinelli, Jerry. [Crash](#).

RL = 3 / IL = 5-12

"Crash" reconsiders his tough, aggressive behavior after befriendng a Quaker boy.

Warner, Sally. [Dog Years](#).

RL = 3 / IL = 4-6

After his father is imprisoned, Case switches to a new school.

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Compiled by Sarah S. Wright for MCPL Children's Services (6/99).

## [2. High Interest\(Grades 3-12\) /Low Vocabulary \(Grades 2-5\) Books](#)

The books listed below are from the following series: *Orca Currents*, *Orca Soundings*, *New Series Canada*, *HIP Junior*, *Deer Lake*, *Stone Arch* and *Keystone Books*.

### **Grade 2 reading level with higher interest level.**

Brown, Liz. **Misty Knows**.

Reading level: 2.7, Interest level: grades 3-7

Someone is putting poison in the feed at Shady Acres farm. Jen and Keisha have an idea who's behind it, but first they need some proof.

Denman, K.L. **Battle of the Bands**.

Reading level: 2.9, Interest level: grades 7+

When a competitor's guitar is trashed right before a battle of the bands contest, The Lunar Ticks are the prime suspects.

Gaetz, Dayle Campbell. **Spoiled Rotten**.

Reading level: 2.8, Interest level: grades 5-9

Jessica must trek through bear country to save her stepsister.

Goobie, Beth. **Sticks and Stones**.

Reading level: 2.6, Interest level: grades 7+

No one expects Jujube to fight back when her reputation takes a beating.

Grant, Vicki. **Pigboy**.

Reading level: 2.0, Interest level: grades 5-9

A school field trip to a remote heritage farm turns dangerous when Dan discovers the bus driver and teacher have been bound and gagged.

Jennings, Sharon. **Bats Past Midnight**.

Reading level: 2.5, Interest level: grades 3-6

Sam and Simon (the "Bat gang") wonder about a fancy car that hangs around their school late at night. When they try to find out more, they end up in trouble at school, at home and with the police.

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Spafford-Fitz, Karen. **Dog Walker.**

Reading level: 2.6, Interest level: grades 5-9

Turk's money making scheme gets out of control.

## **Grade 3 reading level with higher interest levels.**

Bell, William. **Death Wind.**

Reading level: 3.2, Interest level: 7+

Allie is caught up in a tornado that threatens to destroy everything.

Brown, Liz. **The Bully.**

Reading level: 3.2, Interest level: grades 4-9

A teenage girl struggles against lies and rumours spreads by a female bully at her school.

Calder, K.E. **The Secret of the Bailey Bay Inn.**

Reading level: 3, Interest level: grades 4-6

Weird things are happening at the old boarded up Bailey Bay Inn. Will learns the truth about

Jamison, Lauri. **Running for Dave.**

Reading level: 3.2, Interest level: grades 6-10

When a track star gets cancer, his best friend finds new meaning for his own life.

Kropp, Paul. **Avalanche.**

Reading level: 3.4, Interest level: grades 5-10

A group of teens is trapped by an avalanche in British Columbia – not all of them survive.

Kyi, Tanya. **Truth.**

Reading level: 3.2, Interest level: grades 7+

When a neighbour is brutally murdered during a high-school house party, no one will go to the police.

As a reporter for the school TV show, Jen decides to try and uncover the truth.

Paton, Doug. **Terror 9/11.**

Reading level: 3.5, Interest level: grades 5-10

A teenage boy and his sister survive the collapse of the World Trade Center.

Zucker, Jonny. **The Bombed House.**

Reading level: 3.2, Interest level: grades 5-9

During World War II Ned and Harry Jennings find something very strange at 46 Willow Street.

The only problem is that no one believes what they have discovered.

## **Grade 4 reading level with higher interest level.**

Brown, Liz. **Dark Ryder.**

Reading level: 4.0, Interest level: grades 4-9.

A teenage girl must train and ride a wild horse in order to keep him.

Butcher, Kristin. **Chat Room.**

Reading level: 4.0, Interest level: grades 5-9

When Linda, a normally shy girl, participates in her high school's chat room, she becomes quite popular online. She is certain that life is for the better, until a secret admirer enters the scene.

# High Interest / Low Reading Level Book List

Butcher, Kristin. **The Hemingway Tradition.**

Reading level: 4.0, Interest level: grades 7+

Shaw is trying to outrun his father's ghost.

Choyce, Lesley. **Thunderbowl.**

Reading level: 4.0, Interest level: grades 7+

Jeremy wants to make it in the music business. Does he have what it takes?

Kropp, Paul. **Caught in the Blizzard.**

Reading level: 4.0, Interest level: grades 5-12.

Three teenagers in the Arctic deal with rivalry and crime, then must survive a winter storm.

McClintock, Norah. **Tell.**

Reading level: 4.0, Interest level: grades 7+

How much does David know about his stepfather's death?

Paton, Doug. **Our Plane is Down.**

Reading level: 4.0, Interest level: grades 4-10

A small plane goes down in the bush, hours from anywhere. A teenage brother and sister must fight to rescue the pilot and survive themselves.

Polak, Monique. **No More Pranks.**

Reading level: 4.0, Interest level: grades 7+

Pete has to pull the most important prank of his life to bring about justice.

**Grade 5 reading level with high interest level**

Fast, A.D. **Beating Up Daniel.**

Reading level: 5.0, Interest level: grades 7+

Justin feels like he is part of the cool school group when he becomes friends with the older boys at Bayview High. When these new friends plan on a beating, Justin has to make a decision about where he really stands.

Fast, A.D. **Dangerous Rivals.**

Reading level: 5.0, Interest level: grades 7+

The Bayview High crew has a shot at a medal at the biggest rowing event of the year. When a rivalry with another high school gets out of control with gunshots and police, the kids at Bayview must choose if winning is the most important thing.

Levigne, H.A. **Dear Liz.**

Reading level: 5.0, Interest level: grades 7+

When Liz Gordon agreed to write a column for the Bayview High newspaper, she didn't expect romance with a secret admirer. Life gets confusing and complicated when Liz tries to find out who he is.

Sotzek, H.G. **The Edge.**

Reading level: 5.0, Interest level: grades 7+

Ethan Munroe didn't think he would ever have a problem saying no to drugs. Soon Ethan feels too pressured to refuse, trouble starts to follow him everywhere, and he finds himself pushed towards the edge.

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One may also consider the Choose Your Own Adventure series for those struggling with reading. The series is written approximately at a grade 4 to 5 level, with an interest level from grades 4-8 and can be found in the

J Paperback area of your library.

Using comics and graphic novels also encourages reluctant readers. These can be found in either the J or YA 741.5 area of your library.

# High Interest / Low Reading Level Book List

## Hi-Lo Books for High School Students

There are 24 titles in the HIP Senior series with interest levels that span grades 6 to 12, depending on the title. Reading levels run from grade 2.8 (Lexile 430) to grade 4 (Lexile 700). All the books feature high-action stories, often with contemporary teenage problems at the core. Each book has been [tested](#) with groups of students in different classrooms across North America. Reading levels are consistent throughout the book - so a student who can read the first page can read every page in the story. There is a separate teacher's guide for each book full of pre-teaching ideas, discussion points, and after-reading activities. Books are available through <http://www.hip-books.com/>.

**Against all Odds** by Paul Kropp.

Three teenagers are trapped by a flash flood in the sewers beneath Edmonton. One of them can't swim. And their survival depends on a special education student and a stroke of good luck.

Reading level: 3.4 Lexile 610 HL

Interest level: grades 6-10

**Avalanche** by Paul Kropp.

A school group goes off for a winter camping trip in British Columbia. When an avalanche hits, two of the students die instantly and one is buried under the snow - alive. **Based on a true story.** For a four-star review of this novel, [click here](#).

Reading level: 3.4 Lexile 570 HL

Interest level: grades 5-10

**The Bully** by Liz Brown.

A teenage girl struggles against lies and rumours spread by a female bully at her school. She tries to confront the bully, but ultimately needs help from a teacher to stop the torment. For an online review of this novel, [click here](#).

Reading level: 3.2 Lexile 520 HL

Interest level: grades 4-9

**Caught in a Blizzard** by Paul Kropp.

Three teen-agers in the Arctic deal with rivalry and crime. Then a winter storm - a pikiq - traps all three of them overnight in a snow shelter. There is self-revelation and, finally, justice.

Reading level: 4.0 Lexile 590 HL

Interest level: grades 5-12

**Dark Ryder** by Liz Brown.

A teenage girl rescues a wild horse, but she must train and ride Dark Ryder to have any hope of keeping him for her own.

Reading level: 4.0 Lexile 710 HL

Interest level: grades 4-9

**Ghost House** by Paul Kropp.

# High Interest / Low Reading Level Book List

Three boys spend a night in a haunted house, and the ghosts turn out to be very real. Every cliché you can imagine ... and they all make for a very scary book. *HIP's single bestselling novel*. For a rave review of this book, [click here](#).

Reading level: 3.2 Lexile 590 HL  
Interest level: grades 4-10

**Hacker** by Alex Kropp.

A computer whiz and a football player fight computer crime at their school. Part mystery, part computer wizardry, the story has a great deal of action and excitement. For an online review, [click here](#).

Reading level: 3.6 Lexile 590 HL  
Interest level: grades 6-10

**Hitting the Road** by Paul Kropp.

A young teen and his best friend run away from home, only to find that the road is none too friendly. Many adventures, including jumping off a moving train.

Reading level: 3.2 Lexile 680 HL  
Interest level: grades 6-12

**Juvie** by Paul Kropp.

A gripping story of the harsh life inside a juvenile detention centre. There is a hostage-taking and a jailbreak. *The reading level is very low, but this book is not recommended for younger readers.*

Reading level: 2.8 Lexile 500 HL  
Interest level: grades 6-12+

**The Kid is Lost** by Paul Kropp.

A teenage boy is just babysitting when the child goes missing. After calling the police, he ends up leading to a search with ATVs through a deadly swamp.

Reading level: 3.6 Lexile 650 HL  
Interest level: Grades 6- 10

**My Broken Family** by Paul Kropp.

A girl carries a great deal of resentment after her parents divorce. But as time passes, she learns that the divorce is not quite as terrible as she had thought ... and that it's time for her to get on with her own life.

Reading level: 3.8 Lexile 630 HL  
Interest level: grades 5-10

**One Crazy Night** by Paul Kropp.



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A teenage boy working at a gas-station/deli in a small town has an amazing night. He has to deal with a raging storm, a pregnant woman giving birth, a robber who bursts into tears and ... worst of all, the meanest grade 5 teacher ever!

Reading level: 3.8 Lexile 590 HL  
Interest level: grades 6-10

**Our Plane is Down!** by Doug Paton.

A small plane goes down in the bush, hours from anywhere. A teenage brother and sister must fight to rescue the pilot and survive themselves. *A great alternative book to Gary Paulsen's Hatchet for struggling readers.*

Reading level: 4.0 Lexile 660 HL  
Interest level: grades 4-10

**Playing Chicken** by Paul Kropp.

Drinking, driving and drugs lead to tragedy when a group of teenage boys try to outrun a train.

Reading level: 3.6 Lexile 600 HL  
Interest level: 6-12

For an on-line review of this book, [click here](#).

**Running for Dave** by Lori Jamison. When a track star gets cancer, his best friend finds the tragedy brings new meaning for his own life.

Reading level: 3.2 Lexile 560 HL  
Interest level: grades 6-10

**Scarface** by Paul Kropp.

A recent immigrant is forced to join the school's breakfast club, and then has to go skiing with the entire group. Lost on a mountainside, Tranh learns that the rich boy who picks on him has his own set of problems.

Reading level: 3.5 Lexile 550 HL  
Interest level: grades 5-10

**Shola's Game** by Shawn Durkin.

A recent immigrant from Nigeria must deal with bullies at his school. He finds that the best approach is to learn a new sport - hockey - and eventually that helps him fit in.

Reading level: 3.4 Lexile 710 HL  
Interest level: grades 4-10

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**Show Off** by Paul Kropp.

A teenage girl rejects the crazy vandalism of her friends after volunteering in a hospital. Her relationship to the gang leaves her hanging - literally - from a water tower in the center town.

Reading level: 3.8 Lexile 710 HL

Interest level: grades 5-10

**Stealing Home** by Shawn Durkin. Josh is trying to fit in with the guys, trying to make his way in a new school. Baseball is the one thing he does really well. But his best friend on the school team is leading him into dangerous territory. Ultimately Josh must make a difficult moral choice - acceptance or honesty.

[For a 4-star online review, click here.](#) Reading level: 3.8 Lexile 520 HL

Interest level: grades 4-10

**Street Scene** by Paul Kropp.

A group of black teens defend themselves against harassment from a white gang. Everything seemed to be cool, but then one of the teenagers gets hold of a gun. **A HIP bestseller.**

Reading level: 4.0 Lexile 630 HL

Interest level: grades 6-12

**Student Narc** by Paul Kropp.

A student goes undercover to bust a drug gang and avenge his best friend's death. When he's discovered, his life is endangered by the drug dealers.

Reading level: 3.8 Lexile 680 HL

Interest level: grades 5-10

**Tag Team** by Paul Kropp.

A short high school student goes out for his school's wrestling team and finds that size doesn't matter.

Reading level: 3.5 Lexile 640 HL

Interest level: grades 4-10

**Terror 9/11** by Doug Paton.

A teenage boy and his sister are trapped by the collapse of the World Trade Center. They have to struggle down a hundred flights of stairs and out onto the streets of Manhattan just to survive.

Reading level: 3.5 Lexile 610 HL

Interest level: grades 5-10

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More titles also available through Scholastic's 180 Program:

<http://read180.scholastic.com/about/components/stagec/student-paperbacks>