Battle of the Books 2026-2027
4th Grade Book Summaries

Curse of the Arctic Star *by Carolyn Keene*

Nancy, Bess, and George are cruising dangerous waters on a tour of Alaska. Becca Wright, an old friend of Nancy's, is the Assistant Cruise Director of the Arctic Star, a posh new ship. But Becca needs Nancy's help when strange things keep happening aboard the opulent ocean liner. The swimming pool becomes a floating grave; a famous passenger is threatened; and even the seemingly innocent mini-golf course becomes a perilous playground. With the majestic and mysterious Alaskan scenery as a backdrop, Nancy and company have to find out who's trying to sabotage the maiden voyage and why.

Dogsledding and Extreme Sports *by Mary Pope Osborne & Natalie Pope Boyce*

When Jack and Annie came back from their adventure in Magic Tree House Merlin Mission #26: Balto of the Blue Dawn, they had lots of questions. How do sled dogs race for so long? When was the first Iditarod? What are some other extreme sports? Find out the answers to these questions and more as Jack and Annie track the facts about the Iditarod, open water swimming, the Ironman triathlon, free climbing, the X Games, and other ways people test their limits.

Dragon's Apprentice *by James Riley*

STOP. Don't read any further. There are magic spells in this book, and the Emperor has forbidden anyone from learning magic, because it's way too dangerous! If you try one of the spells, any number of terrible things might happen (or so the Emperor says).

Don't be like Ciara, a twelve-year-old girl living in the tiny village of Skael. When she used a spell from within this book, she ended up summoning a dragon. A DRAGON! Those things breathe fire! from their mouths! She's obviously doomed.

And don't listen if Ciara tells you that dragons won't hurt humans, and that they even once taught us magic, a thousand years ago. Definitely don't pay any attention to the fact that the dragon she summoned, Scorch, might be willing to help rescue Ciara's mother and free her village from the Emperor and his Warden, because it's all obviously a big lie.

The Library of Curiosities *by Jenny Lundquist*

After being expelled from boarding school—again—Rowan isn't sure what to expect upon arriving at Fitzgerald Manor. But it sure isn't this. The estate is opulent. Lush. Grand. Mind-boggling. And at the heart of it all is Cillian Fitzgerald, her enigmatic grandfather, and his pride and joy: the Library of Curiosities. Its collection contains a vast trove of magical objects from which lucky patrons can borrow to fix their everyday problems.

Except that library curiosities have started going missing, and suspicion is falling squarely on Rowan's shoulders. Cillian's dangerous archenemy, the vengeful and

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slippery Silverjack, now has Rowan in his sights, too.

To clear her name, to avoid capture, to locate the Everhart, Rowan will have to fight forces both within and outside of the library that threaten everything she's only just begun to hold dear.

Mr. Popper's Penguins
by Richard Atwater

Mr. Popper's Penguins is one of the handful of American books for children that has attained the status of a classic. A humble house painter is sent a male penguin by the great Admiral Drake and, thanks to the arrival of a female penguin, soon has twelve penguins living in his house. First published in 1938, Mr. Popper's Penguins has amused and enchanted generations of children and their parents.

The Water Horse *by Dick King-Smith*

When eight-year-old Kirstie finds a strange egg near her home, she has no idea what will come out. Part horse, part toad, part turtle, and part crocodile? Only Kirstie's grandfather knows what it is: a water horse! While it is certainly the oddest-looking creature Kirstie has ever seen, it is also the gentlest. But soon, the unusual pet gets bigger. And bigger. And BIGGER. Will Kirstie and her family be able to keep their new pet or will he have to make a splash in someone else's home?