

# EIGHTH GRADE

2021-2022 NONRELIGIOUS EDITION

TIMBERDOODLE'S  
CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

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# WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

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Congratulations on choosing to homeschool this year! Whether this is your first year as a teacher or your tenth, we're confident you'll find that there is very little that compares to watching your child's learning take off. In fact, teaching can be quite addictive, so be forewarned!

## On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

Preparing for your first school day is very easy. Peruse this guide, look over the typical schedule, browse the introductions in your books, and you will be ready to go.

## We Are Here to Help

We would love to assist you if questions come up, so please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions, comments, or concerns. Whether you contact us by phone, email, or live online chat, you will get a real person who is eager to serve you and your family.

## You Will Love This!

This year you and your student will learn more than you hoped while having a blast. Ready? Have an absolutely amazing year!

## Schedule Customizer

Your 2021-2022 Eighth-Grade Curriculum Kit includes access to our Schedule Customizer, where you can not only adjust the school weeks but also tweak the checklist to include exactly what you want on your schedule. To get started, just click the link in your access email and visit the scheduling website!

[www.TimberdoodleSchedules.com](http://www.TimberdoodleSchedules.com)

For more information on activating your scheduler, see the access code affixed to the back of this Handbook.

## Get Support

Are you looking for a place to hang out online with like-minded homeschoolers? Do you wonder how someone else handled a particular science kit? Or do you wish you could encourage someone who is just getting started this year? Join one or more of our online groups.

Timberdoodlers of all ages:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Timberdoodle/>

<https://mewe.com/join/timberdoodleshomeschoolcommunity>

Timberdoodlers with 5th- to 8th-grade students:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/UpperElementaryTimberdoodle>

Timberdoodlers using nonreligious kits:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SecularTimberdoodle>

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# Meet Your Handbook

WELCOME



# MEET YOUR HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO YOUR TEACHING TOOLBOX!

## Simple Is Better

We really believe that, so your guide is as simple as we could make it.

### 1. The Planning

First up are all the details on planning your year, including your annual planner and sample weekly checklists, the absolute backbones of Timberdoodle's curriculum kits. More on those in a moment.

### 2. Reading Challenge

Next up is the reading challenge, complete with book ideas to give you a head start.

### 3. Item-by-Item Details

We include short bios of each item in your kit, ideal for refreshing your memory on why each is included or to show off exactly what your eighth-grader will be covering this year. This is where we've tucked in our tips or tricks to make this year more awesome for all of you.

### 4. Teacher Resources

In this section you'll find our favorite articles and tidbits gathered over 35 years of homeschool experience.

### 5. Specific Details

Here you'll find your week-by-week schedule for *Mosdos* along with the nitty-gritty details and specific book ideas for your reading challenge this year.

## All the Details Included

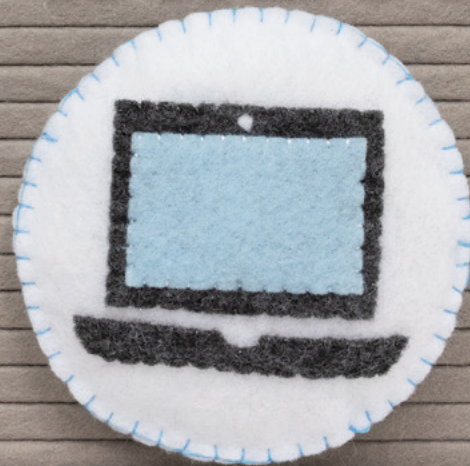
This Timberdoodle curriculum kit is available in three different standard levels: Basic, Complete, or Elite. This allows you to choose the assortment best suited to your child's interest level, your family's schedule, and your budget. In this guide, you'll find an overview and any tips for each of the items included in the Elite Curriculum Kit. If you purchased a Basic or Complete kit, or if you customized your kit, you chose not to receive every item, so you'll only need to familiarize yourself with the ones which were included in your kit.

## Don't Panic—You Didn't Order Too Much Stuff!

We know you. OK, maybe not you personally, but we have yet to meet a homeschooler who doesn't have other irons in the fire. From homesteading or running a business to swimming lessons or doctor appointments, your weeks are not dull. As you unpack your box, you may be asking yourself how you'll ever fit it all in. We'll go in-depth on schedules momentarily, but for now, know that most of the items in your kit feature short lessons, not all of them should be done every day, and your checklist is going to make this incredibly manageable. Really!



# Meet Your Online Scheduler



# MEET YOUR ONLINE SCHEDULER

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR PLANNER

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## Use the Customizer

On the following pages, you'll find sample weekly checklists for Basic, Complete, and Elite kits. Before you photocopy 36 of them, though, take a moment to check out the custom online schedule builder that came free with your kit. You can easily adjust the weeks and tweak the checklist to include exactly what you want. Plus, you'll be able to print your weekly checklists directly from the schedule builder!

[www.TimberdoodleSchedules.com](http://www.TimberdoodleSchedules.com)

## Activate Your Account

You'll need to activate your account for the online schedule builder to get started. Head over to [www.TimberdoodleSchedules.com](http://www.TimberdoodleSchedules.com) and create a login, and then click the "Redeem" button at the top of the page to input your activation code and start scheduling!

Your activation code is affixed to the back of this handbook for your convenience.

## What's Your Dream Schedule?

Now that you're ready, you'll want to know two things:

### 1. How Many Weeks Will You Do School?

A standard school year is 36 weeks plus breaks. Some families prefer to expedite and complete the entire year in fewer weeks—a great option to get this year's school done before a baby arrives, for instance. Or perhaps your family, like ours, prefers to school year-round and keep that brain sharp.

### 2. What Breaks Do You Want?

Thanksgiving, Christmas, winter break, spring break...you could also add weeks off for travel, visiting grandparents, or...

Typically you'll be adding full-week breaks, so unless you're traveling to Disneyland® for little Jotham's birthday, you don't need to add that to the calendar. For single-day breaks, you can easily shuffle the work to earlier or later in the same week and stay on schedule.





## Choose Your Items

Now just pop that data into the online scheduler and scroll down to see the items you might have in your kit. Unchecking the boxes for any items you don't have removes them from your list. You'll also see "Alternative Items" listed under each subject. This usually includes all of our most popular customizations for this grade so that you can simply check a box and switch the scheduler to an advanced level of math, for instance.

## Add Custom Courses

Your course list is limited only by your imagination. Perhaps your friend created a custom curriculum you want to include, your family band practices weekly, or you need to include ballet since that's P.E. this year. At the very bottom of the page you'll find a place to add as many courses as you'd like. Just walk through the prompts on-screen to get it all set up.

## Tweak It to Perfection

On the next screen, you'll have some fun options to make your schedule and checklist work for you.

# YOUR ANNUAL PLANNER

	CURRICULUM	LESSONS OR PAGES	= PER WEEK
Language Arts	Easy Grammar Ultimate	180 lessons	5 lessons
	Mosdos Gold	65 subsections	2 subsections
	Write Your Own Scripts	28 chapters	1 chapter
	Shakespeare Graphic Novel	191 pages	5-6 pages
	Word Roots, Level 2	48 lessons/reviews	1-2 portions
Math	Math-U-See	30 lessons	1 lesson
	Extreme Dot-to-Dot National Parks	32 puzzles	1 puzzle
Thinking Skills	Building Thinking Skills, Level 2	200 pages	6 pages
	Advanced Logic	60 challenges	1-2 challenges
	Book	various	once a week
History & Social Studies	U.S. History Detective	100 pages	3 pages
	World History Detective	100 pages	3 pages
Science	Hands-On Physical Science	100 pages	3-4 lessons
STEM	Introduction to Robotics	100 pages	1-2 lessons a week
	Hands-on Science with Arduino	100 pages	1 lesson a week
Art	A Year in My Life	100 pages	1 page
	Project Book	100 pages	20 minutes
Etc.	Test Prep	100 pages	once a school year

See your handbook  
for the  
complete chart.

# WEEKLY CHECKLIST

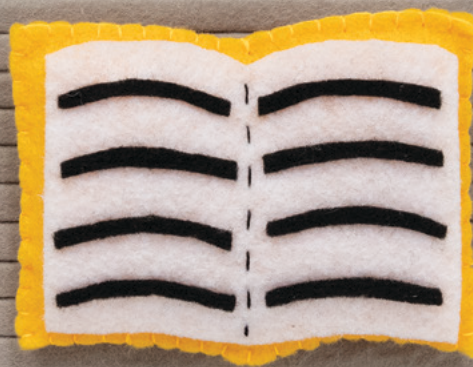
## ELITE

			▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Language Arts	Easy Grammar Ultimate	5 lessons								
	Mosdos Gold	2 subsections								
	Write Your Own Scripts	1 chapter								
	Shakespeare Graphic Novel	5-6 pages								
	Word Roots, Level 2	1-2 portions								
Math	Math-U-See	1 lesson (usually 3 parts)								
	Extreme Dot-to-Dot: National Parks	1 puzzle								
Thinking Skills	Building Thinking Skills: Figure	Example								
	Advanced Figure	1-2 challenges								
	Book	100+ pages								
History & Social Studies	U.S. History: Introduction	1-2 lessons								
Science	Science: Physical Science	1-2 lessons								
STEM	Introduction to Robotics	1-2 lessons of work								
	Engineering: Build a Bridge	100+ pages of work								
Art	A Year in the Life	1 lesson								
	Project: Day	20-30 minutes								

See your handbook  
for the  
complete chart.



# The Reading Challenge





# THE READING CHALLENGE

WITH A HISTORY AND LITERATURE FOCUS (7TH-12TH GRADE)

The Reading Challenge for kids will get you and your child reading a broader variety of books this year while covering essential history and literature topics.

If you've used the Timberdoodle reading challenge before, you'll notice a new feature this year. Rather than independent topics, your reading challenge now loops through 18 themed topics up to 4 times. Each loop will add breadth to your child's reading and includes a new subcategory to explore if no ideas present themselves.

## Reading Solo and Together

At this grade level, your student will read most of these books independently. However, we highly recommend keeping a read-aloud time too. Many experts recommend parents continue reading to their children well past the time their children become accomplished readers. We agree!

## How It Works

You'll find four versions of this year's reading challenge, ranging from 1 book every two weeks to three books a week. Choose a reading goal early in the year and set your pace accordingly, keeping in mind what is realistic for your family. Here are the options:

**The Light Reader** plan has 18 books, which sets a pace of 1 book every two weeks. This includes 1 loop through each major category. The majority of families can and should do at least this much.

**The Avid Reader** plan adds another 18 books, which increases the pace to 1 book per week. If you choose this option you'll be completing two loops through the main topics this year. This is doable for most families.



PHOTO: THE H. FAMILY OF CALIFORNIA

**The Committed Reader** plan adds 18 more books, bringing the total to 54, or 1.5 books every school week. This faster pace is manageable for most students and is suitable for enthusiastic readers with time in their schedules. This will take you through the main loop 3 times, offering your student a chance to try several options in each.

**The Obsessed Reader** plan adds a final 18 books, bringing the total to 72, or 2 books every school week. We highly recommend this challenge, which completes the loop 4 times. However, it may be too intense for families with already-packed schedules!

## Getting Started

Begin with the Light plan, which includes suggestions for 18 books. Choose those books and read them in any order, logging each one as you complete it. Next, advance to the Avid plan, choosing another 18 books to read in any order. Then it's time to move to the Committed plan with 18 more books, again reading them in any order. The Obsessed plan adds the final 18 books to your challenge.

When possible, choose a different subcategory than you did the first time. (E.g., if you're currently choosing a Life Skills book, and your student chose one on survival last time, suggest that he try one on etiquette, child care, or cooking on your second loop.) We've offered suggestions for each loop in case your child is drawing a blank, but feel free to choose any book under that main subheading.

If you want to finish your books in a calendar year rather than in a typical school year, the timeline shifts a bit, so be sure to set your goal at the beginning of the year and pace yourself accordingly.

Here's the pace for a 36-week schedule:

- ▶ **Light Reader: One book every two weeks.**
- ▶ **Avid Reader: One book per week.**
- ▶ **Committed Reader: One and a half books every week.**
- ▶ **Obsessed Reader: Two books every week.**

## But I Don't Have Any Idea Which Books to Choose!

We have your back! At the end of this handbook you'll find hundreds of book titles you'll love reading this year, along with all of our best tips and tricks.

If you want more ideas, we highly recommend your local librarian, the Read-Aloud Revival podcast, and the Timberdoodle Facebook groups as excellent starting points. It's also a wonderful idea to peek at the additional reading ideas in your history or science textbooks –

PHOTO: THE MELENDEZ FAMILY OF HONDURAS



particularly if your child was fascinated by a recent topic or figure.

## Will This Be Expensive?

It doesn't need to be. You can read library books and e-books, buy used, borrow from friends, and scour your family bookshelves. Don't forget that many libraries have free e-books and audiobooks. It doesn't get much more convenient than that!

**Let's read! Pick your plan, choose some books with your child, and get started!**



# Mathematics



# MATHEMATICS

## A FUNDAMENTAL SKILL

Much like reading, mathematics is a skill best taught methodically. This doesn't mean that you need to slow down an eager learner, but it does mean that you'll want to avoid long gaps in your instruction. Monday Math Day doesn't work quite as well as Friday Art Day!

One *Math-U-See* lesson is designed to consist of several parts:

- A video lesson
- Worksheet A, teaching this lesson's concept
- Worksheet B, teaching this lesson's concept, in case your student needs a bit more practice
- Worksheet C, still teaching this lesson's concept, in case your student needs even more practice
- Worksheet D, review work
- Worksheet E, more review work
- Worksheet F, still more review work, for the student who thrives on repetition
- Worksheet G, optional application and enrichment section. While it is considered "honors" material, we suggest you do this if you can tackle it without stressing your child!

This means that many families do the video lesson, 2-4 worksheets a week, and that's it. (A, D, G, and as many additional practice pages as your child finds helpful this week.) So don't overwhelm your child with loads of work, but do assign enough for him to master the material. As with the rest of homeschooling, play around with the assignments until you find the perfect fit for your child.





# MATH-U-SEE

BASIC // COMPLETE // ELITE

If you are looking for a curriculum that ensures you will be able to fully understand each mathematical concept before moving on to another one, you have found it. For more than 20 years, *Math-U-See*'s renowned mastery-based, student-paced program has been the answer for countless families. If your child regularly feels overwhelmed when mathematical topics are introduced, you need Math-U-See's systematic, precept-upon-precept program.

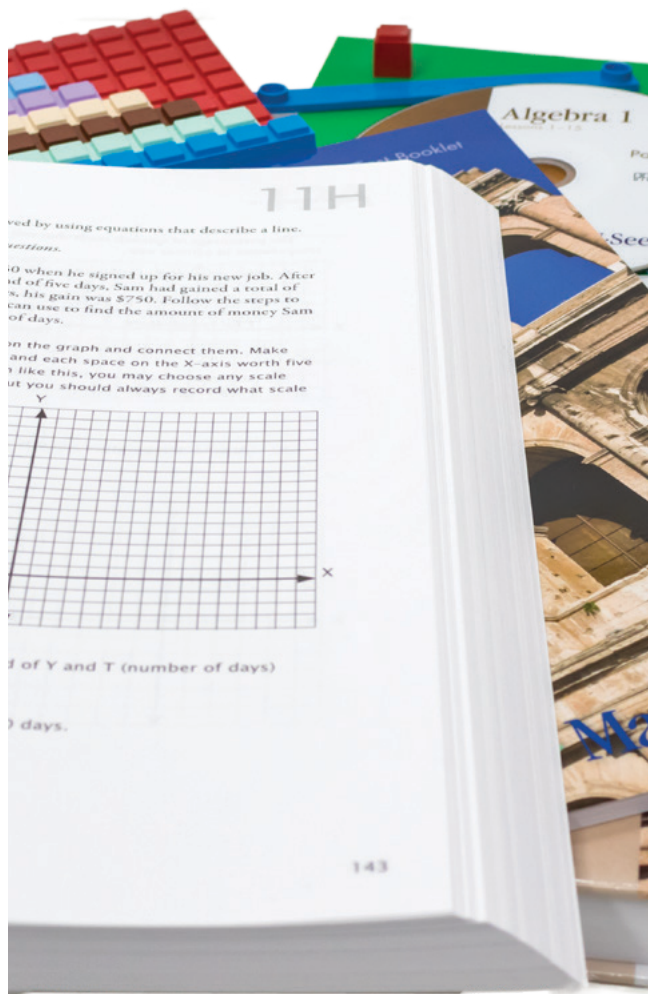
With simple, uncluttered pages, *Math-U-See* is mastery-oriented, clear, to the point, and effective. In *Math-U-See*, new ideas are introduced step by step in a logical order, while concepts that have been mastered are reviewed periodically.

*Math-U-See* is laid out with step-by-step procedures for introducing, practicing, mastering, and reviewing concepts. How do you know when your child has mastered a concept? Not just when he gets the answers right, but when he can teach the concept back, especially if he is able to do so with a word problem. *Math-U-See* will show you how. While *Math-U-See* requires some parental involvement, by this grade your child will be able to work more independently. The instruction manual can be read by your child, and of course he will want to watch the DVD presentation before beginning each lesson. The instruction manual also includes complete answers with step-by-step solutions for all the exercises and tests, and there is extra instruction for the enrichment problems.

Math-U-See's teacher guide and supplemental DVD will teach more than just how to solve a math problem. They will also show why the problem is solved in this manner and when to apply the concept. On the DVDs, each lesson is demonstrated with kind-hearted enthusiasm. DVDs can be played on a DVD player or computer; however, Windows 10 users will need to download a separate video player.

You will want to decide as you start the year whether your student will be completing the optional "Application and Enrichment" section of each lesson—sometimes considered the honors portion. If these challenges overwhelm your student, you should skip them or offer generous assistance. Otherwise, embrace them for the opportunity to help your child learn more skills and train his brain to think logically.

It's also worth mentioning that likely your child will not need to complete every one of the workbook pages. At the risk of oversimplifying, the practice worksheets (A, B, C) are to be used with the manipulatives until your child reaches an "aha!" moment and grasps the lesson. (This happens often on A or B.) He may then move to the review pages (D, E, F) and should at least complete worksheet D in its entirety. If he's breezing through the pages, you have several great options, including having him complete every other problem, or skip E, F, or both.



(You do want to be sure he's not rusty on any of those problems before skipping, though—many students will do best completing all or most of the worksheets D, E, and F.) Worksheet G is the application/enrichment/extra-credit page. It's OK to skip but valuable to complete.

### Scheduling

You have 30 lessons to complete, so we suggest planning on 1 lesson per week, including the DVD, the textbook/workbook portions, and any relevant tests.

However, as Mr. Demme points out, some lessons will take longer than others to achieve mastery. If you find your student stuck on a lesson, feel free to allow it to take an extra week. Just don't do that more than 6 times this year!

# EXTREME DOT-TO-DOT

BASIC // COMPLETE // ELITE

Kick-start your student's mental focus with an amazing *Extreme Dot-to-Dot* book. Unlike conventional dot-to-dot puzzles that reveal too much of the picture and ruin the mystery, *Extreme Dot-to-Dot: National Parks*' puzzles are intricate and challenging. When your student looks at a page, he will have no idea what the end result will be!

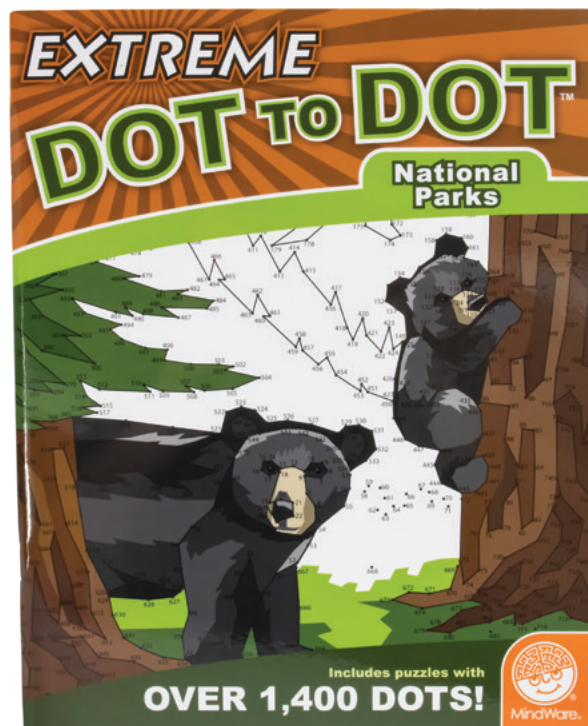
Mapping and concentration are just two of the educational benefits to solving these dot-to-dot puzzles. Your student's left brain and right brain will be exercised as he works to complete puzzles containing 510-1,600+ dots. Some puzzles even cover a two-page spread—definitely not for the faint-hearted.

*Extreme Dot-to-Dot: National Parks* contains 32 puzzles ranging from the volcanos of Haleakala National Park to the black bears of Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

A handy key in the back identifies each scene and provides interesting details and facts.

## Scheduling

No scheduling is required on this one, but if you feel more comfortable knowing that nothing will get missed, then plan to allow 1 per week, and you'll finish in 32 weeks.





# Book Suggestions





# THE LIGHT READER

THE CHALLENGE	THE BOOK YOU CHOSE	DATE COMPLETED
1.1. A Book Set in a Different Place on the Globe <i>North or South America</i>		
1.2 A Biography <i>World leader</i>		
1.3 A Novel <i>Classic novel</i>		
1.4 A Book about Literature/Language Arts <i>Shakespeare</i>		
1.5 Inspirational <i>A Book with "Inspirational" on the Cover</i>		
1.6 A Book about Culture <i>Family</i>		
1.7 A book about life skills <i>Survival</i>		
1.8 A Book about Life Experiences <i>Current Issues</i>		
1.9 History <i>Ancient Civilizations</i>		
1.10 A Book about a Famous War <i>The American or French Revolution</i>		
1.11 A Book about Social Studies <i>Archaeology</i>		
1.12 A Book about Science <i>Astronomy</i>		
1.13 A STEM-Related Book <i>General Science</i>		
1.14 A Book about Health <i>Human Anatomy or Human Development</i>		
1.15 A Book about Nature <i>Animals or Birds</i>		
1.16 A Book about the Arts <i>Fiction about Art or Music</i>		
1.17 Just for Fun <i>A Graphic Novel</i>		
1.18 You Choose <i>A Book with a Beautiful Cover</i>		

So you love the idea of the reading challenge, but you'd like some specific book titles to get you started? You've come to the right place!

### Customize This!

You'll find ideas here for each challenge, but don't forget that you're not bound to our list. When you're asked to read "a book set in a different place on the globe," for example, we'd suggest perusing the ideas that follow, of course. But once you do that, don't hesitate to use that as a jumping-off spot rather than a final destination.

Perhaps the list will remind you that your student has always wanted to read more about Japan, where his cousin lives. Or maybe you'll recall the name of an international explorer that captivated him as a young child—you've always meant to go back and explore his life from a more mature perspective.

There are literally hundreds of book options available to you, some of which may be even better for your family. Use these pages as starter ideas and not as your final list.

### Will I See the Same Books Over and Over?

No, not on this list! However, this particular reading challenge is geared for grades 7-12, so you will see this exact list in all those grades.

# 985 BOOK SUGGESTIONS

Many books could easily fit into more than one category, but we only put each in one place on your list for your convenience. (Books that are part of a series are the one exception, as you may find an individual title in one spot and the whole series referenced elsewhere.) So if you're finding that you want to read more than one book from a particular challenge, the odds are good that skimming the list will give you another challenge to list it under. For instance, *Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage* by Alfred Lansing, listed under challenge 1 (a book about a different part of the globe), would also fit really well under challenge 2 (a biography), challenge 9 (a book about history), and perhaps even challenge 11 (social studies). Shuffle things as you like!

### A Variety of Reading Levels

These books are selected more for interest than for reading level. Reading is way more important than reading at a specific level, so don't worry if some titles seem a bit easy. Since this challenge is geared for grades 7-12, you'll likely encounter some particularly challenging books added for the 12th-graders. If they are too challenging for your student, skip to something easier. You're looking to expand your student's reading, not make it a drudgery.

PHOTO: THE BLADEN FAMILY OF ALABAMA



# A BOOK SET IN A DIFFERENT PLACE ON THE GLOBE

## CHALLENGE 1 ON EACH LOOP

### Africa

*A Girl Named Disaster* by Nancy Farmer  
*A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park  
*Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton  
*DK Eyewitness: Africa*  
*Favorite African Folktales* by Nelson Mandela  
*Gorilla Doctors: Saving Endangered Great Apes* by Pamela S. Turner  
*Journey to Jo'Burg* by Beverly Naidoo  
*Listening for Lions* by Gloria Whelan  
*Mansa Musa: The Lion of Mali* by Khephra Burns  
*Nzinga: Warrior Queen of Matamba, Angola, Africa, 1595* by Patricia McKissack (Royal Diaries)  
*Saba: Under the Hyena's Foot* by Jane Kurtz  
*The Baboon King* by Anton Quintana  
*The Queen of Katwe: One Girl's Triumphant Path to Becoming a Chess Champion* by Tim Crothers  
*The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba  
*Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe

### Antarctica

*DK Eyewitness: Arctic and Antarctic*  
*Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage* by Alfred Lansing  
*Swimming to Antarctica* by Lynne Cox  
*We Were There with Byrd at the South Pole* by Charles S. Strong

### Asia

*A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park  
*DK Eyewitness: China*  
*DK Eyewitness: India*  
*Dragon's Gate* by Laurence Yep  
*Every Falling Star: The True Story of How I Survived and Escaped North Korea* by Sungju Lee  
*Homeless Bird* by Gloria Whelan  
*Lost Horizon* by James Hilton  
*Rebels of the Heavenly Kingdom* by Katherine Paterson  
*Spring Pearl: The Last Flower* by Laurence Yep  
*The Man Who Changed China: The Story of Sun Yat-sen* by Pearl S. Buck  
*The Samurai* by Shusaku Endo  
*The Worst-Case Scenario Ultimate Adventure: Everest* by Bill Doyle and David Borgenicht  
*Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze* by Elizabeth Foreman Lewis

### Australia

*Adventures of a Young Sailor* series by Paul Dowswell  
*Ash Road* by Ivan Southall  
*Jamberoo Road* by Eleanor Spence  
*The Switherby Pilgrims* by Eleanor Spence  
*Tomorrow, When the War Began* by John Marsden

### Europe

(Many more books about Europe are included in the World War II listing under Famous Wars.)

*David Copperfield* and others by Charles Dickens  
*DK History of Britain and Ireland*  
*DK Eyewitness: Russia*  
*Sense and Sensibility* and others by Jane Austen  
*The Star of Kazan* by Eva Ibbotson  
*When the Dikes Broke* by Alta Halverson Seymour

# SCIENCE

CHALLENGE 12 ON EACH LOOP

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## Astronomy

*Apollo 13* by James Lovell  
*DK Big Ideas: The Astronomy Book*  
*DK Smithsonian: Space!*  
*DK Smithsonian: The Planets*  
*Don't Know Much about the Universe* by Kenneth C. Davis  
*Failure Is Not an Option* by Gene Kranz  
*Moon Shot* by Jay Barbree  
*Reaching for the Moon* by Katherine Johnson  
*Rocket Men* by Robert Kurson  
*The Right Stuff* by Tom Wolfe

## Biographies: Aviators and Astronauts

*DK Biography: Amelia Earhart* by Tanya Lee Stone  
*First Man: The Life of Neil A. Armstrong* by James R. Hansen  
*Sally Ride: America's First Woman in Space* by Lynn Sherr  
*The Wright Brothers* by David McCullough

## Biology

*Barron's E-Z Biology* by Gabrielle I. Edwards  
*Biology for Dummies* by Rene Fester Kratz  
*DK Smithsonian: Super Simple Biology*  
*Everything You Need to Ace Biology in One Big Fat Notebook*  
*The Cartoon Guide to Biology* by Larry Gonick and Dave Wessner

## Chemistry

*Barron's E-Z Chemistry* by Joseph Mascetta  
*Chemistry for Dummies* by John T. Moore  
*DK Smithsonian: Super Simple Chemistry*  
*Everything You Need to Ace Chemistry in One Big Fat Notebook*  
*Painless Chemistry* by Loris Chen  
*The Cartoon Guide to Chemistry* by Larry Gonick and Craig Criddle

## Physics

*Barron's E-Z Physics* by Robert L. Lehrman  
*DK Big Ideas: The Physics Book*  
*DK Smithsonian: Super Simple Physics*  
*Physics I for Dummies* by Steven Holzner  
*The Cartoon Guide to Physics* by Larry Gonick and Art Huffman