Timberwolf Book Recommendations

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For their first star, Timberwolves are asked to make a list of books then tell a story to their six or pack. Here are some age-appropriate suggestions.

Books About Surviving in the Outdoors

Alone in the Woods by Rebecca Behrens

Jocelyn and Alex have always been best friends...until they aren't. Jocelyn's not sure what happened, but she hopes the annual joint-family vacation in the isolated north woods will be the perfect spot to rekindle their friendship. But Alex still isn't herself when they get to the cabin. And Jocelyn reaches a breaking point during a rafting trip that goes horribly wrong. When the girls' tube tears it leaves them stranded and alone. And before they know it, the two are hopelessly lost.

The Call of the Wild by Jack London

Classic 1903 novel set in the Yukon during the 1890s Klondike Gold Rush—a period in which strong sled dogs were in high demand.

The Disaster Days by Rebecca Behrens

Hannah Steele loves living on Pelling, a tiny island near Seattle. She's always felt totally safe there. So when she's asked to babysit after school one day, it's no big deal. Zoe and Oscar are her next-door neighbors, and Hannah just took a babysitting class, which she's pretty sure makes her an expert. She isn't even worried that she left her inhaler at home. Then the shaking begins. The terrifying earthquake only lasts four minutes, but it changes everything—damaging the house, knocking out the power, and making cell service nonexistent. Even worse, the ferry and the bridge connecting the kids to help—and their parents—are both blocked, which means they're stranded alone. And Hannah's in charge as things go from bad to worse.

Distress Signal by Mary E. Lambert

In this edge-of-your-seat survival story, four classmates are stranded in a desert wilderness after a flash flood separates them from the rest of their grade. Can they make it to safety?

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen

Thirteen-year-old Brian Robeson, haunted by his secret knowledge of his mother's infidelity, is traveling by single-engine plane to visit his father for the first time since the divorce. When the plane crashes, killing the pilot, the sole survivor is Brian. He is alone in the Canadian wilderness with nothing but his clothing, a tattered windbreaker, and the hatchet his mother had given him as a present.

Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell

Island of the Blue Dolphins tells the story of a 12-year-old girl named Karana stranded alone for years on an island off the California coast. It is based on the true story of Juana Maria, a Nicoleño Native American left alone for 18 years on San Nicolas Island during the 19th century.

Lost on a Mountain in Maine by Donn Fendler

Twelve-year-old Donn Fendler steps away from his Boy Scout troop for only a minute, but in the foggy mountains of Maine, a minute is all it takes. After hours of trying to find his way back, a nervous and tired Donn falls down an embankment, making it impossible for him to be found. One sleepless night goes by, followed by a second . . . and before Donn knows it, almost two weeks have passed, leaving him starving, scared, and delirious.

My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George

Sam Gribley is terribly unhappy living in New York City with his family, so he runs away to the Catskill Mountains to live in the woods—all by himself. With only a penknife, a ball of cord, forty dollars, and some flint and steel, he intends to survive on his own. Sam learns about courage, danger, and independence during his year in the wilderness, a year that changes his life forever.

Nature Girl by Jane Kelley

Eleven-year-old Megan is stuck in the wilds of Vermont for the summer with no TV, no Internet, no cell phone, and worst of all, no best friend. So when Megan gets lost on the Appalachian Trail with only her little dog, Arp, for company, she decides she might as well hike all the way to Massachusetts where her best friend, Lucy, is spending her summer. Life on the trail isn't easy, and Megan faces everything from wild animals and raging rivers to tofu jerky and life without bathrooms. Most of all, though, Megan gets to know herself—both who she's been in the past and who she wants to be in the future—and the journey goes from a spur-of-the-moment lark to a quest to prove herself to Lucy, her family, and the world!

A Week in the Woods by Andrew Clements

The fifth-grade Week in the Woods is a beloved tradition of Hardy Elementary, where Mark Chelmsley (the Fourth) is pretty much killing time before his parents send him off to an exclusive prep school. But then Mark realizes the Week might be a chance to prove to Mr. Maxwell that he's not just another of the slacker rich kids the teacher can't stand. But it may be too late for Mark to change Mr. Maxwell's opinion of him. On the first day of the Week, the tension between teacher and student explodes, and in a reckless moment, Mark puts not only himself, but also Mr. Maxwell, in grave danger. Can two such strong adversaries work together to save their lives?

The Wild Robot by Peter Brown

Though Roz, a robot, is initially viewed with suspicion when she finds herself on an isolated island, she soon becomes part of the natural order, parenting an orphaned gosling and providing shelter for the animals. But is there really a place for her within this ecosystem?

Wilder Boys by Brandon Wallace

Two brothers need all their wilderness skills to survive when they set off into the woods of Wyoming in search of their absent father.

Books About Animals

Pax by Sara Pennypacker

Pax and Peter have been inseparable ever since Peter rescued him as a kit. But one day, the unimaginable happens: Peter's dad enlists in the military and makes him return the fox to the wild. At his grandfather's house, three hundred miles away from home, Peter knows he isn't where he should be—with Pax. He strikes out on his own despite the encroaching war, spurred by love, loyalty, and grief, to be reunited with his fox. Meanwhile Pax, steadfastly waiting for his boy, embarks on adventures and discoveries of his own.

Rascal by Sterling North

Rascal is only a baby when young Sterling brings him home. He and the mischievous raccoon are best friends for a perfect year of adventure—until the spring day when everything suddenly changes.

A Wolf Called Wander by Rosanne Parry

Swift, a young wolf cub, lives with his pack in the mountains learning to hunt, competing with his brothers and sisters for hierarchy, and watching over a new litter of cubs. Then a rival pack attacks, and Swift and his family scatter. Alone and scared, Swift must flee and find a new home. His journey takes him a remarkable one thousand miles across the Pacific Northwest. The trip is full of peril, and Swift encounters forest fires, hunters, highways, and hunger before he finds his new home.

Books About Family & Growing Up

The Birchbark House by Louise Erdrich

Omakayas and her family live on the land her people call the Island of the Golden-Breasted Woodpecker. Although the “chimookoman,” white people, encroach more and more on their land, life continues much as it always has: every summer they build a new birchbark house; every fall they go to ricing camp to harvest and feast; they move to the cedar log house before the first snows arrive, and celebrate the end of the long, cold winters at maple-sugaring camp. In between, Omakayas fights with her annoying little brother, Pinch; plays with the adorable baby, Neewo; and tries to be grown-up like her big sister, Angeline. But the satisfying rhythms of their life are shattered when a visitor comes to their lodge one winter night, bringing with him an invisible enemy that will change things forever– but that will eventually lead Omakayas to discover her calling.

The Bridge Home by Padma Venkatraman

Life is harsh in Chennai's teeming streets, so when runaway sisters Viji and Rukku arrive, their prospects look grim. Very quickly, eleven-year-old Viji discovers how vulnerable they are in this uncaring, dangerous world. Fortunately, the girls find shelter–and friendship–on an abandoned bridge. With two homeless boys, Muthi and Arul, the group forms a family of sorts. And while making a living scavenging the city's trash heaps is the pits, the kids find plenty to laugh about and take pride in too. After all, they are now the bosses of themselves and no longer dependent on untrustworthy adults. But when illness

strikes, Viji must decide whether to risk seeking help from strangers or to keep holding on to their fragile, hard-fought freedom.

Caterpillar Summer by Gillian McDunn

Rising sixth-grader Caterpillar has a lot on her mind. She has a younger brother on the autism spectrum, her father died recently, and her mother's artistic temperament is leaving Cat with a lot of responsibility at a young age. Cat is excited to go to Atlanta for the summer so that she can spend time with her best friend and just enjoy being a kid. All this changes when her best friend has a family emergency that takes him to India. Cat finds herself on a small island in North Carolina with grandparents she's never met and she doesn't know the real reason her mom has kept her away from her grandparents. Over the course of the summer, Cat learns to love her mothers's parents. She also learns to let go of some of her feelings of always needing to be there for her brother by allowing others to help.

Hello Universe by Erin Entrada Kelly

The universe comes together unexpectedly when a unique set of circumstances cause four tweens to cross paths. Central to the story is Virgil, an 11-year-old Filipino American whose grandmother, Lola, helps him to come out of his shell and face the world. When Virgil and his pet guinea pig, Gulliver, end up trapped in a well in the woods at the hands of a bully, Chet, it is up to the stars to align before it's too late.

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