**5th Grade Historical Fiction Novels**

**Bread and Roses, Too** by Katherine Paterson (Houghton Mifflin, 2006).
Life in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1912 wasn't easy. ... Born to Italian immigrants, Rosa's parents and older sister work in the mills. After her father died in a mill accident, Rosa's mother took in a family of boarders. Even though they needed the money, Rosa's feisty mother insisted that 12-year-old Rosa attend school rather than work in the mill. ... With her unfailing empathy for the young, Paterson combines the thoughts and feelings of a timid child who is torn between the admonitions of an admired teacher who talks against an unfolding mill strike and her earthy Italian mother who, along with Rosa's older sister, participates wholeheartedly in the strike. ... Once again, Paterson displays her gift for bringing the hard past to life for present-day readers. 288 pages. [© Parents' Choice](http://www.greatschools.org/cgi-bin/showarticle/678/#pchoice)



**The Cay** by Theodore Taylor (Yearling, 2002).
Set during World War II in the Dutch West Indies, this is a story about true friendship, survival and overcoming racism. This enduring tale strikes many of the same chords today as it did in 1969, the year it was first published. 144 pages.

[Krisha Roach](http://www.greatschools.org/cgi-bin/showarticle/678/#krisha)



**Island of the Blue Dolphins** by Scott O'Dell (Yearling, 1971).
The Newbery Medal winner for 1961, this book could be seen as a precursor to Gary Paulsen's Hatchet (see below). Karana is a 12-year-old Native American who refuses to abandon her 6-year-old brother when her island, Ghalas-at (off the Southern California coast) is evacuated. Shortly thereafter, he tragically dies after being attacked by wild dogs, and Karana begins her solitary wait for a ship to come for her. She waits 18 years. Karana survives by foraging, fishing in the ocean, defending herself from wild dogs and elephant seals, and hiding from the Aleut tribe. Told from her point of view, we share the details of her day-to-day life, watch the days turn into years, and wait for the ship to carry her off her lonely island. O'Dell based this novel on an actual historical figure, known as The Lost Woman of San Nicolas, who lived on the island from 1835-1853. 192 pages.

**The Mystery of Rascal Pratt** by Robbie Scott and Gary Cianciarulo (Perfect Paperback, 2007).
This is great historical fiction for children. The story takes place in 1866 at the tip of the Marin Headlands in Northern California. Shipwrecks, pirate adventure, bigotry, friendships, local flavor — this book has it all to hold the attention of the tween crowd. The protagonists are Emma, Sue and Harris (all 12 years old) and Rascal Pratt, a self-proclaimed pirate who is older than he looks. Achilles, Sue's grandfather, a blind, Native American ranch worker, asks Rascal to find the long-lost treasure of Sir Francis Drake, so that he can buy his freedom from the ranch. The action takes place at a lighthouse and the nearby shoreline and ocean. Because of the wonderful period detail found here, this book is a perfect tie-in for "Talk Like a Pirate Day" on September 19! 207 pages. [Pauline Harris](http://www.greatschools.org/cgi-bin/showarticle/678/#harris)



**Number the Stars** by Lois Lowry (Houghton Mifflin Children's Books, 1989).
A brave Danish girl helps smuggle her Jewish friends to safety. Lowry's sense of timing and choice of details put readers in the middle of the story. A riveting read, but your kids may have questions afterward. 137 pages.
Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: 9-12, Read Aloud: 9+, Read Alone: 10+.

**On the Wings of Heroes** by Richard Peck (Dial Books, 2007).
This book is a funny, poignant book about life on the home front during World War II. There is some violence: a father is knocked out with a wrench, a girl's hand is caught in a rat trap, and an old lady likes to tell tales of gruesome injuries. Families can talk about the differences between life then and now. What aspects of Davy's life sound similar to your own? Which are completely different? Does it sound like it was fun to grow up then? Is it more fun now? What else have you seen and read about World War II? 148 pages.
Publisher's Recommended Reading Level: 9-12, Read Aloud: 9+, Read Alone: 10+.

**Deborah Sampson - The Secret Solider**

The story of a woman who wants to be a soldier and hides that she is a woman to become a soldier to protect her country. (American Rev.)

**Pink and Say** by Patricia Pollaco

This book that deals with the issues behind the Civil War

**The Fighting Ground** by Avi
Thirteen-year-old Jonathan goes off to fight in the Revolutionary War and discovers the real war is being    fought within himself.   157pgs.

**Johnny Tremain** by Esther Forbes
After injuring his hand, a silversmith’s apprentice in Boston becomes a messenger for the Sons of Liberty in the days before the American Revolution.   256pgs.

**The Riddle of Penncroft Farm** by Dorothea Jensen
Lars Olafson’s move to a farm near Valley Forge brings him a friendship with the ghost of an 18th century ancestor, who recounts for him his adventures in that part of Pennsylvania during the American Revolution.    180pgs.

**Dangerous Crossing:The Revolutionary Voyage of John Quincy Adams** by Stephen Krensky
During the winter of 1778, John Quincy Adams and his son Johnny make a difficult voyage to France to enlist support for the struggling American cause.   Unpaged.

**The Keeping Room** by Anna Myers
With his father off leading the rebels, British troops take over 13-year-old Joseph Kershaw’s home and he is torn between his hatred of them and his respect for a young captain who looks out for the family.     135pgs.

**Revolutionary War on Wednesday** by Mary Pope Osborne
Using their magic tree house, Jack and Annie travel back in time to help General Washington cross the Delaware River.  69pgs. (Look for other titles in the Magic Tree House series.)

**Guns for General Washington** by Seymour Reit
Frustrated by life under siege in Washington’s army, 19-  year-old Will Knox and his brother Colonel Henry Knox undertake the task of moving 183 cannons from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston in the dead of winter.    98 pgs.

**Hannah’s Helping Hands** by Jean Van Leeuwen
In 1779, in Fairfield, Connecticut, Hannah and her family try to maintain a sense of normalcy as the Revolutionary War rages around them, threatening to destroy their way of life.    88 pgs.  (Look  for other titles in the Pioneer Daughters series.)

**George Washington’s Socks** by Elvira Woodruff

In the midst of a backyard campout, 10-year-old Matt and four other children find themselves transported back into the time of George Washington and the American Revolution, where they begin to live out American history first-hand and learn the true nature of war.   166 pgs.

**Extras:**

Sign of the Beaver, , Across Five Aprils, Freedom Train, Freedom Crossing, Phoebe the Spy, The Little House books, The Witch of Blackbird Pond, Caddie Woodlawn, and My Brother Sam is Dead

**Here are some with overarching ideas for a quarter:**

Immigration ~ The Witch of 4th Street
Westward Expansion ~ Mr. Tucket
Civil Rights ~ Maniac Magee
Underground Railroad ~ Come Morning