

5th + 6th Grade Summer Reading

2021-2022

Dear Parents,

This year, the rising 5th and 6th graders will be working on a summer reading assignment. Students should read at least two grade-level appropriate books during the summer. The books should be chosen from the list below.

Both books should be read by the first day of school. Please ensure that the books have not been read in a previous grade.

There will be an assessment on each book during the first week of school as well as in-depth discussion of literary elements. In addition, students will be working on an in-school project. Please send your child with copies of both books since they will need them for completion of the project.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Have a great summer!

Mrs. Stamatio

All book summaries were taken from Goodreads.com

***At the Bottom of the World* by Bill Nye and Gregory Mone**

In the series opener, Jack and the Geniuses: At The Bottom of The World, readers meet Jack and his foster siblings, Ava and Matt, who are orphans. But they're not your typical kind of orphans—they're geniuses. Well, Ava and Matt are, which sometimes makes life difficult for 12-year-old Jack. Ava speaks multiple languages and builds robots for fun, and Matt is into astronomy and a whiz at math. As for Jack, it's hard to stand out when he's surrounded by geniuses all the time. When the kids try to spy on Dr. Hank Witherspoon, one of the world's leading scientists, they end up working for him in his incredible laboratory. Soon, Hank and the kids travel to Antarctica for a prestigious science competition, but they find that all is not as it seems: A fellow scientist has gone missing, and so has any trace of her research. Could someone be trying to use her findings to win the contest? It's up to Jack, Ava, and Matt to find the missing scientist and discover who's behind it all—before it's too late.

***Found (The Missing #1)* by Margaret Peterson Haddix**

Thirteen-year-old Jonah has always known that he was adopted, and he's never thought it was any big deal. Then he and a new friend, Chip, who's also adopted, begin receiving mysterious letters. The first one says, "You are one of the missing." The second one says, "Beware! They're coming back to get you." Jonah, Chip, and Jonah's sister, Katherine, are plunged into a mystery that involves the FBI, a vast smuggling operation, an airplane that appeared out of nowhere – and people who seem to appear and disappear at will. The kids discover they are caught in a battle between two opposing forces that want very different things for Jonah and Chip's lives. Do Jonah and Chip have any choice in the matter? And what should they choose when both alternatives are horrifying?

New Kid by Jerry Craft

Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds—and not really fitting into either one. Can Jordan learn to navigate his new school culture while keeping his neighborhood friends and staying true to himself?

The Fourteenth Goldfish by Jennifer L. Holm

Galileo. Newton. Salk. Oppenheimer. Science can change the world . . . but can it go too far? Eleven-year-old Ellie has never liked change. She misses fifth grade. She misses her old best friend. She even misses her dearly departed goldfish. Then one day a strange boy shows up. He's bossy. He's cranky. And weirdly enough . . . he looks a lot like Ellie's grandfather, a scientist who's always been slightly obsessed with immortality. Could this pimply boy really be Grandpa Melvin? Has he finally found the secret to eternal youth?

The Old Willis Place by Mary Downing Hahn

Diana and her little brother Georgie have been living in the woods behind the old Willis place, a decaying Victorian mansion, for what already seems like forever. They aren't allowed to leave the property or show themselves to anyone. But when a new caretaker comes to live there with his young daughter, Lissa, Diana is tempted to break the mysterious rules they live by and reveal herself so she can finally have a friend. Somehow, Diana must get Lissa's help if she and Georgie ever hope to release themselves from the secret that has bound them to the old Willis place for so long.

From the Desk of Zoe Washington by Janae Marks

Zoe Washington isn't sure what to write. What does a girl say to the father she's never met, hadn't heard from until his letter arrived on her twelfth birthday, and who's been in prison for a terrible crime? A crime he says he never committed. Could Marcus really be innocent? Zoe is determined to uncover the truth. Even if it means hiding his letters and her investigation from the rest of her family. Everyone else thinks Zoe's worrying about doing a good job at her bakery internship and proving to her parents that she's worthy of auditioning for Food Network's Kids Bake Challenge. But with bakery confections on one part of her mind, and Marcus's conviction weighing heavily on the other, this is one recipe Zoe doesn't know how to balance. The only thing she knows to be true: Everyone lies.

Rain Reign by Ann M. Martin

Rose Howard has Asperger's syndrome, and an obsession with homonyms (even her name is a homonym). She gave her dog Rain a name with two homonyms (Reign, Rein), which, according to Rose's rules of homonyms, is very special. Rain was a lost dog Rose's father brought home. Rose and Rain are practically inseparable. And they are often home alone, as Rose's father spends most evenings at a bar, and doesn't have much patience for his special-needs daughter. Just as a storm hits town, Rain goes missing. Rose's father shouldn't have let Rain out. Now Rose has to find her dog, even if it means leaving her routines and safe places to search. Rose will find Rain, but so will Rain's original owners.

All of the Above by Shelley Pearsall

Based on a true story, All of the Above is the delightful and suspenseful story of four inner city students and their quest to build the world's largest tetrahedron. Weaving together the different personal stories of the kids, their teacher, and the community that surrounds them, award-winning author Shelley Pearsall has written a vividly engaging story about math, life and good-tasting barbecue. Filled with unexpected humor, poignant characters and quiet brilliance, All of the Above is a surprising gem.

***Shouting at the Rain* by Lynda Mullaly Hunt**

Delsie loves tracking the weather--lately, though, it seems the squalls are in her own life. She's always lived with her kindhearted Grammy, but now she's looking at their life with new eyes and wishing she could have a "regular family." Delsie observes other changes in the air, too--the most painful being a friend who's outgrown her. Luckily, she has neighbors with strong shoulders to support her, and Ronan, a new friend who is caring and courageous but also troubled by the losses he's endured. As Ronan and Delsie traipse around Cape Cod on their adventures, they both learn what it means to be angry versus sad, broken versus whole, and abandoned versus loved. And that, together, they can weather any storm. .

***Merci Suárez Changes Gears* by Meg Medina**

Merci Suarez knew that sixth grade would be different, but she had no idea just how different. For starters, Merci has never been like the other kids at her private school in Florida, because she and her older brother, Roli, are scholarship students. They don't have a big house or a fancy boat, and they have to do extra community service to make up for their free tuition. So when bossy Edna Santos sets her sights on the new boy who happens to be Merci's school-assigned Sunshine Buddy, Merci becomes the target of Edna's jealousy. Things aren't going well at home, either: Merci's grandfather and most trusted ally, Lolo, has been acting strangely lately — forgetting important things, falling from his bike, and getting angry over nothing. No one in her family will tell Merci what's going on, so she's left to her own worries, while also feeling all on her own at school.

***The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander**

"With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. Cuz tonight I'm delivering," announces dread-locked, 12-year old Josh Bell. He and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse, in this fast and furious middle grade novel of family and brotherhood. Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story's heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family.

***A Snicker of Magic* by Natalie Lloyd**

Midnight Gulch used to be a magical place, a town where people could sing up thunderstorms and dance up sunflowers. But that was long ago, before a curse drove the magic away. Twelve-year-old Felicity knows all about things like that; her nomadic mother is cursed with a wandering heart. But when she arrives in Midnight Gulch, Felicity thinks her luck's about to change. A "word collector," Felicity sees words everywhere---shining above strangers, tucked into church eaves, and tangled up her dog's floppy ears---but Midnight Gulch is the first place she's ever seen the word "home." And then there's Jonah, a mysterious, spiky-haired do-gooder who shimmers with words Felicity's never seen before, words that make Felicity's heart beat a little faster. Felicity wants to stay in Midnight Gulch more than anything, but first, she'll need to figure out how to bring back the magic, breaking the spell that's been cast over the town . . . and her mother's broken heart.

***Undeclared* by Steve Shein**

Jim Thorpe: super athlete, Olympic gold medalist, Native American. Pop Warner: indomitable coach, football mastermind, Ivy League grad. Before these men became legends, they met in 1907 at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, where they forged one of the winningest teams in the history of America's favorite sport. Called "the team that invented football," Carlisle's innovative squad challenged the greatest, most elite teams—Harvard, Yale, Army—audaciously vowing to take their place among the nation's football powers. This is an astonishing underdog sports story—and more. It's an unflinching look at the U.S. government's violent persecution of Native Americans and the school that was designed to erase Indian cultures. It's the story of a group of young men who came together at that school, the overwhelming obstacles they faced both on and off the field, and their absolute refusal to accept defeat.

The Wednesday Wars by Gary D. Schmidt

Meet Holling Hoodhood, a seventh-grader at Camillo Junior High, who must spend Wednesday afternoons with his teacher, Mrs. Baker, while the rest of the class has religious instruction. Mrs. Baker doesn't like Holling—he's sure of it. Why else would she make him read the plays of William Shakespeare outside class? But everyone has bigger things to worry about, like Vietnam. His father wants Holling and his sister to be on their best behavior: the success of his business depends on it. But how can Holling stay out of trouble when he has so much to contend with? A bully demanding cream puffs; angry rats; and a baseball hero signing autographs the very same night Holling has to appear in a play in yellow tights! As fate sneaks up on him again and again, Holling finds Motivation—the Big M—in the most unexpected places and musters up the courage to embrace his destiny, in spite of himself.

Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson

Twelve-year-old Astrid has always done everything with her best friend Nicole. So when Astrid signs up for roller derby camp, she assumes Nicole will too. But Nicole signs up for dance camp with a new friend instead, and so begins the toughest summer of Astrid's life. There are bumps and bruises as Astrid learns who she is without Nicole...and what it takes to be a strong, tough roller girl.

The Screaming Staircase by Jonathan Stroud

When the dead come back to haunt the living, Lockwood & Co. step in . . . For more than fifty years, the country has been affected by a horrifying epidemic of ghosts. A number of Psychic Investigations Agencies have sprung up to destroy the dangerous apparitions. Lucy Carlyle, a talented young agent, arrives in London hoping for a notable career. Instead she finds herself joining the smallest, most ramshackle agency in the city, run by the charismatic Anthony Lockwood. When one of their cases goes horribly wrong, Lockwood & Co. have one last chance of redemption. Unfortunately this involves spending the night in one of the most haunted houses in England, and trying to escape alive.

The Brooklyn Nine by Alan Gratz

1845: Felix Schneider, an immigrant from Germany, cheers the New York Knickerbockers as they play Three-Out, All-Out.

1908: Walter Snider, batboy for the Brooklyn Superbas, arranges a team tryout for a black pitcher by pretending he is Cuban.

1945: Kat Snider of Brooklyn plays for the Grand Rapids Chicks in the All-American Girls Baseball League.

1981: Michael Flint finds himself pitching a perfect game during the Little League season at Prospect Park.

And there are five more Schneiders to meet. In nine innings, this novel tells the stories of nine successive Schneider kids and their connection to Brooklyn and baseball. As in all family histories and all baseball games, there is glory and heartache, triumph and sacrifice. And it ain't over till it's over.

Counting by 7s by Holly Goldberg Sloan

Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions, who finds it comforting to count by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life...until now. Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. The triumph of this book is that it is not a tragedy. This extraordinarily odd, but extraordinarily endearing, girl manages to push through her grief. Her journey to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read.

***The Alchemyst* by Michael Scott**

Nicholas Flamel was born in Paris on 28 September 1330. Nearly seven hundred years later, he is acknowledged as the greatest Alchemyst of his day. It is said that he discovered the secret of eternal life. The records show that he died in 1418. But his tomb is empty and Nicholas Flamel lives. The secret of eternal life is hidden within the book he protects—the Book of Abraham the Mage. It's the most powerful book that has ever existed. In the wrong hands, it will destroy the world. And that's exactly what Dr. John Dee plans to do when he steals it. Humankind won't know what's happening until it's too late. And if the prophecy is right, Sophie and Josh Newman are the only ones with the power to save the world as we know it. Sometimes legends are true. And Sophie and Josh Newman are about to find themselves in the middle of the greatest legend of all time.

***One for the Murphys* by Lynda Mullaly Hunt**

Twelve-year-old Carley Connors can take a lot. Growing up in Las Vegas with her fun-loving mother, she's learned to be tough. But she never expected a betrayal that would land her in foster care. When she's placed with the Murphys, a lively family with three boys, she's blindsided. Do happy families really exist? Carley knows she could never belong in their world, so she keeps her distance. It's easy to stay suspicious of Daniel, the brother who is almost her age and is resentful she's there. But Mrs. Murphy makes her feel heard and seen for the first time, and the two younger boys seem determined to work their way into her heart. Before she knows it, Carley is protected the boys from a neighbourhood bully and even teaching Daniel how to play basketball. Then just when she's feeling like she could truly be one of the Murphys, news from her mother shakes her world.

***Schooled* by Gordon Korman**

Homeschooled by his hippie grandmother, Capricorn (Cap) Anderson has never watched television, tasted a pizza, or even heard of a wedgie. But when his grandmother lands in the hospital, Cap is forced to move in with a school counselor and attend the local middle school. While Cap knows a lot about tie-dyeing and Zen Buddhism, no education could prepare him for the politics of public school. basketball. Then just when she's feeling like she could truly be one of the Murphys, news from her mother shakes her world.

***Beyond the Bright Sea* by Lauren Wolk**

Twelve-year-old Crow has lived her entire life on a tiny, isolated piece of the starkly beautiful Elizabeth Islands in Massachusetts. Abandoned and set adrift on a small boat when she was just hours old, Crow's only companions are Osh, the man who rescued and raised her, and Miss Maggie, their fierce and affectionate neighbor across the sandbar. Crow has always been curious about the world around her, but it isn't until the night a mysterious fire appears across the water that the unspoken question of her own history forms in her heart. Soon, a chain of events is triggered, leading Crow down a path of discovery and danger.