

Summer Reading

June 2020

Dear Families,

Reading for enjoyment during the summer is one of life's little pleasures for most of us. Our wish for your children is that they too, look forward to reading those books that they just didn't have time for this past school year. We hope to instill in our students a lifelong reading habit of stacking their nightstands and e-readers with books they *want* to read.

When preparing our summer reading lists, our primary goal was to include titles that middle school readers would want to read over the summer. On each of the lists, you will find suggested titles, genres, and authors.

All students entering sixth, seventh and eighth grades are expected to read at least three books during the summer. However, there is no expectation that they write a response to what they have read. This will be an assignment they will have when they return to school in September. We do recommend that students use post-it notes or jot down notes in a response notebook as a way to record their thinking about what they have read.

The reading levels of the books on these lists may vary quite a bit because our readers also vary. If you feel that a book is not at an appropriate level for your child, please help them choose something else. You may want to have a mini-book club with your child so that you can have conversations around the same book throughout the summer. We are hoping that some students will choose to pair-up with friends to read along and discuss the same book.

As part of *Summer reading at New York Libraries* (<http://www.summerreadingnys.org/>), the State Education Department has a site with many resources families can utilize.

CommonLit.org is running a summer reading challenge for children in grades 3-12. Click on the link (<https://blog.commonlit.org/sign-up-your-child-for-commonlits-free-summer-reading-challenge-bbe5440a07d7>) and you will find all of the information needed to participate in this challenge.

Another option for children to continue learning over the summer is through the Middle School Choice Board. The choice board is essentially a grid with a range of activities that give students the opportunity to choose the activity they would like to do and to learn in a variety of ways. The board will represent content and strategies from the whole school year, and is designed to be self-paced. The activities will be fun, authentic and engaging for the students!

Here is to a wonderful summer awaiting us all...and to all those books waiting on our bedside tables or e-readers!

Best wishes,

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6th Grade Language and Literature

Rachael Lief, Denise Rivera, Jill Rosenblum
7th Grade Language and Literature

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Suggested Summer Reading for Sixth Grade

Summer 2020

Students are expected to read any three books this summer, although we hope you will choose to read all summer. Books may be chosen from the suggestions below, but are not limited to this list. *There is no expectation that you write a response to what you have read over the summer. This will be an assignment you will have when you return to school in September. We do recommend that you use post-it notes or jot down notes in a response notebook as a way to record your thinking about what you have read.*

SHORT STORY COLLECTION

Flying Lessons & Other Stories Edited by Ellen Oh

In a partnership with We Need Diverse Books, industry giants Kwame Alexander, Soman Chainani, Mat de la Pena, Tim Federle, Grace Lin, Meg Medina, Walter Dean Myers, Tim Tingle, Kelly J. Baptist, and Jacqueline Woodson have written a story collection that is humorous as it is heartfelt.

ADVENTURE

Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky by Kwame Mbalia

An epic adventure set in a richly imagined world populated with African American folk heroes and West African gods. This is the story of Tristan Strong who doesn't know if he can save the world.

The Serpent's Secret by Sayantani DasGupta

Up until her twelfth birthday, Kiranmala considered herself an extraordinary sixth-grader but then her parents disappear and a drooling rakkhosh demon shows up in her kitchen. Soon she is swept into another dimension. Series starter.

Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard Book One: The Sword of Summer by Rick Riordan

Magnus turns 16 and discovers he is a demi-god; his father is a Norse god. Now he must find his father's sword and do what he can to stop Ragnarok with the help of his new companions. Fun adventure in the same tone as Percy Jackson.

Other Books in the Series: The Hammer of Thor, The Ship of the Dead

When the Sea Turned to Silver by Grace Lin

The Tiger Emperor is conscripting all the men of the mountain villages to build the Vast Wall surrounding the kingdom. But when they reach Pinmei's village, they also take her grandmother, the Storyteller. In order to save her, Pinmei and her friend Yishan embark on a voyage to find the Luminous Stone That Lights the Night - the only thing the Emperor will trade for a prisoner's freedom. Companion novel to *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* and *Starry River of the Sky*

FANTASY

The Jumbies by Tracey Baptiste

Corinne La Mer claims she isn't afraid of anything. Not scorpions, not the boys who tease her, and certainly not jumbies. They're just tricksters made up by parents to frighten their children. Then one night Corinne chases an agouti all the way into the forbidden forest, and shining yellow eyes follow her to the edge of the trees. They couldn't belong to a jumbie. Or could they?

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.

Wishtree by Katherine Applegate

"Trees do talk to some folks, the ones we know we can trust." An old red oak tree tells how he and his crow friend, Bongo, help their human neighbors get along after a threat against an immigrant family is carved into the tree's trunk.

The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhouse

Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest. They hope this sacrifice will keep her from terrorizing their town. But the witch in the Forest, Xan, is kind. She shares her home with a wise Swamp Monster and a Perfectly Tiny Dragon. Xan rescues the children and delivers them to welcoming families on the other side of the forest, nourishing the babies with starlight on the journey. One year, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, filling the ordinary child with extraordinary magic.

Miles Morales: Spider-Man (A Marvel Novel) by Jason Reynolds

Brooklyn Visions Academy student Miles Morales may not always want to be a super hero, but he must come to terms with his identity - and deal with a villainous teacher - as the new Spider Man.

Ghosts by Raina Telgemeier

Cat's family moves to foggy Northern California to help her little sister who has cystic fibrosis. The town has a huge Day of the Dead festival which at first frightens her, but she finds Maya needs this reunion of family members and their dead relatives. Graphic novel.

HISTORICAL FICTION

Sunny Side Up by Jennifer Holm

Sunny Lewin has been packed off to Florida to live with her grandfather for the summer. At first she thought Florida might be fun -- it *is* the home of Disney World, after all. But the place where Gramps lives is no amusement park. It's full of . . . old people. *Really* old people. But the question remains -- *why* is Sunny down in Florida in the first place? The answer lies in a family secret that won't be secret to Sunny much longer. . . Graphic novel.

Other Books in the Series: Swing it Sunny and Sunny Rolls the Dice

Beverly, Right Here by Kate DiCamillo

Beverly has run away from home and will find herself working at a restaurant bussing tables and driving an elderly woman to Bingo games. Beverly will also stay with Iola and their relationship will flourish. This is the final novel telling the story of the trilogy of three friends.

Companion Read to: Raymie Nightingale and Louisiana's Way Home

Finding Langston by Lesa Cline Ransome

It's 1946. Langston's mother has just died, and now they're leaving the rest of his family and friends. He misses everything--Grandma's Sunday suppers, the red dirt roads, and the magnolia trees his mother loved. But Langston's new home has one fantastic thing. Unlike the whites-only library in Alabama, the Chicago Public Library welcomes everyone. There, hiding out after school, Langston discovers another Langston--a poet whom he learns inspired his mother enough to name her only son after him.

The Night Diary by Veera Hiranandani

Shy twelve-year-old Nisha, forced to flee her home with her Hindu family during the 1947 partition of India, tries to find her voice and make sense of the world falling apart around her by writing to her deceased Muslim mother in the pages of her diary.

Betty Before X by Ilyasah Shabazz and Renee Watson

In Detroit, 1945, eleven-year-old Betty's house doesn't quite feel like home. She believes her mother loves her, but she can't shake the feeling that her mother doesn't want her. Church helps those worries fade, if only for a little while. The singing, the preaching, the speeches from guest activists along with her volunteering for the Housewives League, help shape the American civil rights icon we know as Dr. Betty Shabazz.

Front Desk by Kelly Yang

Mia Tang lives in a motel, not a big house. Every day, while her immigrant parents clean the rooms, ten-year-old Mia manages the front desk of the Calivista Motel and tends to its guests. Her parents help hide immigrants. And if the mean motel owner, Mr Yao, finds out they've been letting them stay in the empty rooms for free, the Tangs will be doomed. Will she be able to hold on to her job, help the immigrants and guests, escape Mr. Yao, and go for her dreams of being a writer?

Rebound by Kwame Alexander

Prequel to *The Crossover*. In the summer of 1988, twelve-year-old Chuck Bell is sent to stay with his grandparents, where he discovers jazz and basketball and learns more about his family's past.

One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams-Garcia

In the summer of 1968, after traveling from Brooklyn to Oakland, California, to spend a month with the mother they barely know, eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sister arrive to a cold welcome as they discover that their mother, a dedicated poet and printer, is resentful of the intrusion of their visit and wants them to attend a nearby Black Panther summer camp.

Other Books in the Series: *P.S. Be Eleven*

H O R R O R

The Charmed Children of Rookskill Castle by Janet Fox

During WWII, to escape the London Blitz, Katherine and her siblings are sent to a crumbling Scottish estate that's been turned into a boarding house where mysterious things are happening.

Guys Read: Terrifying Tales by Jon Scieszka

Ten stories by a variety of well known scary story writers.

M Y S T E R Y

The Parker Inheritance by Varian Johnson

The letter waits in a book, in a box, in an attic, in an old house in Lambert, South Carolina. It's waiting for Candace Miller. When Candace finds the letter that sent her grandmother on a treasure hunt that led to her grandmother's firing as city manager, Candace finds herself caught up in a mystery and, with the help of her new friend and fellow book-worm Brandon, she sets out to find the treasure, exonerate her grandmother, and expose and injustice once committed against an African American family in Lambert.

Curiosity House: The Shrunken Head by Lauren Oliver and H.C. Chester

This book is about, among other things: the strongest boy in the world, a talking cockatoo, a faulty mind reader, a beautiful bearded lady and a nervous magician, an old museum, and a shrunken head.

Other Books in the Series: *The Screaming Statue*, *The Fearsome Firebird*

Book Scavenger by Jennifer Chambliss Bertman

Twelve year old Emily plays a game where books are hidden in cities all of the country and clues to find them are revealed online through puzzles. Emily thinks she has found a book starting a brand new game, but there are others who want to take it from her.

Theodore Boone: The Accomplice by John Grisham

Theo has been worried about his good friend Woody Lambert. Woody is struggling at school and making bad choices. But when Woody is arrested-an unwitting accomplice to armed robbery-Theo knows he is innocent. Racing against the clock while Woody sits in jail, Theo will do everything in his power to help his friend and save Woody from an unforgiving system where justice is not always equal for all.

Other Books in the Series: Kid Lawyer, The Abduction, The Accused, The Activist, The Fugitive, The Scandal

Tombquest Book 5: The Final Kingdom by Michael Northrop

Get ready for the battle that will shake the world -- and the afterworld. In the epic conclusion to Alex and Ren's quest, they must face off against the Death Walkers, The Order, and an army raised from the dead. Can Alex put an end to the chaos and send these evil spirits back where they belong -- without putting an end to his own life?

Other Books in the Series: Book of the Dead, Amulet Keepers, Valley of Kings, The Stone Warriors

Sting: A Loot Novel by Jude Watson

A cursed sapphire, a botched heist... Twins, March and Jules are in the sights of the FBI and Interpol and a gang of international jewel thieves.

Other Books in the Series: Loot: How to Steal a Fortune

REALISTIC FICTION

Pay Attention Carter Jones by Gary D. Schmidt

Carter Jones is astonished early one morning when he finds a real English butler, bowler hat and all, on the doorstep-one who stays to help the Jones family, which is a little bit broken. In addition to figuring out middle school, Carter has to adjust to the unwelcome presence of this new know-it-all adult in his life and navigate the butler's notions of decorum.

A Good Kind of Trouble by Lisa Moore Ramee

Shayla is a twelve-year-old girl allergic to trouble. All she wants to do is follow the rules. But in junior high, it's like all the rules have changed.

Stargazing by Jen Wang

Moon is everything Christine isn't. She's confident, impulsive, artistic,,and though they both grew up in the same Chinese American suburb, Moon is somehow unlike anyone Christine has ever known. But after Moon moves in next door, these unlikely friends are soon best friends. Moon even tells Christine her deepest secret: that she has visions, sometimes of celestial beings that speak to her from the stars. Graphic novel.

New Kid by Jerry Craft

Seventh grade Jordan Banks stars in an honest graphic novel about starting over at a new school where diversity is low and the struggle to fit in is real.

Look Both Way: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks by Jason Reynolds

This story is going to begin like all the best stories. With a school bus falling from the sky, But no one saw it happen. They were all too busy.

The Bridge Home by Padma Venkatraman

Four determined homeless children make a life for themselves in Chennai, India.

I Can Make This Promise by Christine Day

All her life, Edie has known that her mom was adopted by a white couple. So, no matter how curious she might be about her Native American heritage, Edie is sure her family doesn't have any answers. Until the day when she and her friends discover a box hidden in the attic—a box full of letters signed "Love, Edith," and photos of a woman who looks just like her.

The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl by Stacy McAunulty

A lightning strike made Lucy a math genius, but after years of homeschooling, her grandmother enrolls her in middle school and she learns that life is more than numbers.

Other Words For Home by Jasmine Warga

Written in free verse we travel with Jude and her mother as they leave Syria and travel to Cincinnati to live with her uncle. Jude's emotions go up and down as she learns a new language, experiences Islamophobia, and new family dynamics.

Amal Unbound by Aisha Saeed

Life is quiet and ordinary in Amal's Pakistani village, but she had no complaints, and besides, she is busy pursuing her dream of becoming a teacher one day. Her dreams are temporarily dashed when - as the eldest daughter - she must stay home from school to take care of her siblings. Amal is upset, but she doesn't lose hope and finds ways to continue learning, until the unimaginable happens.

Three Things About Luck by Cynthia Kadohata

Summer knows that *kouun* means "good luck" in Japanese, and this year her family has none of it. Just when she thinks nothing else can possibly go wrong, an emergency whisks her parents away to Japan--right before harvest season. Summer and her little brother are left in the care of their grandparents -- Obaachan and Jiichan -- who come out of retirement in order to harvest wheat and help pay the bills.

Blended by Sharon M Draper

Eleven-year-old Isabella's parents are divorced, so she has to switch lives every week. Being split between Mom and Dad is more than switching houses, switching nicknames, switching backpacks: it's also about switching identities. Her dad is black and her mom is white. What does it mean to be half white and half black? To belong to half mom and half dad? And if you are only seen as half of this and half of that, how can you ever feel whole?

Merci Suarez Changes Gears by Meg Medina

Merci Suarez knows 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. Also, things are not going well at home: 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.

Amina's Voice by Hena Khan

A Pakistani-American Muslim girl struggles to stay true to her family's vibrant culture while simultaneously blending in at school after tragedy strikes her community.

All's Faire in Middle School by Victoria Jamieson

Homeschooled by Renaissance Fair enthusiasts, eleven-year-old Imogene has a hard time fitting in when her wish to enroll in public school is granted. Graphic novel.

The Best Man by Richard Peck

Archer Magill has three grown-up role models: his grandpa, his dad and his Uncle Paul. These are the three he wants to be. Then he finds a fourth - Mr. McLeod, a teacher. In fact, the first male teacher in the history of his school.

The Crossover by Kwame Alexander

Told in verse. Twins and star basketball players, Josh and Jordan, must deal with basketball season, girls and the failing health of their father, a former ball player. Written in verse.

SCIENCE FICTION

Sal and Gabi Break the Universe by Carlos Hernandez

Sal is the new kid in school and he will use magic to help with his encounters with the school bully. Sal also has the ability to open portals to other worlds.

The Wild Robot Escapes by Peter Brown

The sequel to *The Wild Robot*, Robot Roz has to navigate around the challenges of the civilized world as she tries to find her way to Brightbill and the wild island.

Masterminds: Payback by Gordon Korman

The thrilling finale of the Masterminds trilogy. After a serious betrayal from one of their former friends, the clones of Project Osiris are on the run again. Now separated into pairs, Eli and Tori and Amber and Malik are fighting to survive in the real world.

Other Books in the Series: Masterminds, Criminal Destiny

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

Born to Fly by Steve Sheinkin

Just nine years after American women finally got the right to vote, a group of trailblazers soared to new heights in the 1929 Air Derby, first women's air race across the U.S.

A Place to Land by Barry Wittenstein

Martine Luther King, Jr. was once asked if the hardest part of preaching was knowing where to begin. No, he said. The hardest part is knowing where to end. "It's terrible to be circling up there without a place to land." Finding his place to land was what Martin Luther King, Jr. struggled with, alongside advisors and fellow speech writers, in the Willard Hotel the night before the March on Washington, where he gave his historical "I Have a Dream" speech. But those famous words were never intended to be heard that day, not even written down for that day, not even once.

The Roots of Rap: 16 Bars on the 4 Pillars of Hip-Hop by Carole Boston

Weatherford

The roots of rap and the history of hip-hop have origins that precede DJ Kool Herc and Grandmaster Flash. Kids will learn about how it evolved from folktales, spirituals, and poetry to showmanship of James Brown, to the culture of graffiti art and break dancing that formed around the art form and gave birth to musical artists we know today.

Hector: A Boy, a Protest, and the Photograph That Changed Apartheid by Adrienne Wright

On June 16, 1976, Hector Pieterse, an ordinary boy, lost his life after getting caught up in what was supposed to be a peaceful protest. Black South African students were marching against a new law requiring that they be taught half of their subjects in Afrikaans, the language of the White government. The story's events unfold from the perspectives of Hector, his sister, and the photographer who captured their photo in the chaos.

The Undefeated by Kwame Alexander

Originally performed for ESPN's *The Undefeated*, this poem is a love letter to black life in the United States.

Becoming RBG: Ruth Bader Ginsburg's Journey to Justice by Debbie Levy

Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is a modern feminist icon—a leader in the fight for equal treatment of girls and women in society and the workplace. She blazed trails to the peaks of the male-centric worlds of education and law, where women had rarely risen before. *Graphic novel.*

This Promise of Change: One Girl's Story in the Fight for School Equality by Jo Ann Allen Boyce

In 1956, one year before federal troops escorted the Little Rock 9 into Central High School, fourteen-year-old Jo Ann Allen was one of the twelve African American students who broke the color barrier and integrated Clinton High School in Tennessee. This is the story of her four months thrust into the national spotlight and as a trailblazer of history.

Itch!: Everything You Didn't Want to Know About What Makes You Scratch by Anita Sanchez

You can feel it coming on - that terrible, tortuous ITCH. As irritating as an itch is, it is also your body's way of sending you a message you can't miss, like you've brushed up against poison ivy or lice have taken up residence in your hair. Take a closer look at what makes people itch.

Superlative Bird by Leslie Bullon

Ever wonder which bird has the loudest voice? Which one builds the biggest nest or has the most feathers? Get to know all about the best and brightest - and smelliest!

Super Woman: Six Scientists Who Changed the World by Laurie Lawlor

A brief biography of six women who have changed the world.

I Remember: Poems and Pictures of Heritage by Lee Bennett Hopkins (editor)

From the joyous to the poignant, poems by award-winning, diverse poets are paired with images by celebrated illustrators from similar backgrounds to pay homage to what is both unique and universal about growing up in the United States.