



SIXTH GRADE

Entering 6th Grade Core Summer Reading Book

ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO READ THIS BOOK

Gantos, Jack. **Heads or Tails**

Written in diary format, Jack's diary helps him deal with his problems which include dog-eating alligators, having a terror for an older sister, having a younger brother who keeps breaking parts of himself, and next-door neighbors who are really weird. It includes the stories: Copycat -- My brother's finger -- Candy Itani -- Rabies -- Donna Lowry -- Death and taxes -- My brother's arm -- Cocoa Beach. You're guaranteed to laugh! And be sure to keep track of your questions and thoughts for when the author comes to visit in the fall!

All students are required to read the 6th Grade Core Summer Reading Book as well as one other book on the list below.

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Latest and Greatest (new releases)

Choldenko, Gennifer. **Al Capone Shines My Shoes***

Sequel to *Al Capone Does My Shirts*; Moose Flanagan, who lives on Alcatraz along with his family and the families of the other prison guards, is frightened when he discovers that noted gangster Al Capone, a prisoner there, wants a favor in return for the help that he secretly gave Moose.

Fleming, Candace. **The Great and Only Barnum***

Chronicles the life of showman P. T. Barnum, discussing how he created his legendary circus, the people and events that shaped his life, and the impact Barnum had on the entertainment industry.

Hiaasen, Carl. **Scat**

Nick and Marta are both suspicious when their biology teacher, the feared Mrs. Bunny Starch, disappears, and try to uncover the truth despite the police and headmaster's insistence that nothing is wrong.

Kelly, Jacqueline. **The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate***

In central Texas in 1899, eleven-year-old Callie Vee Tate is instructed to be a lady by her mother, learns about love from the older three of her six brothers, and studies the natural world with her grandfather, the latter of which leads to an important discovery.

Mass, Wendy. **11 Birthdays**

After celebrating their first nine same-day birthdays together, Amanda and Leo, having fallen out on their tenth and not speaking to each other for the last year, prepare to celebrate their eleventh birthday separately but peculiar things begin to happen as the day of their birthday begins to repeat itself over and over again.

Stead, Rebecca. **When You Reach Me***

As her mother prepares to be a contestant on the 1980s television game show, "The \$20,000 Pyramid," a twelve-year-old New York City girl tries to make sense of a series of mysterious notes received from an anonymous source that seems to defy the laws of time and space.

Turner, Pamela. **The Frog Scientist***

Discusses the work of Tyrone Hayes and his efforts to study and protect frogs, and follows Hayes into the field with his students to perform experiments with various types of frogs.

Various. **Half-Minute Horrors***

How scared can you get in only 30 seconds? Dare to find out with *Half-Minute Horrors*, a collection of deliciously terrifying short short tales and creepy illustrations by an exceptional selection of writers and illustrators. So, grab a flashlight, set the timer, and get ready for instant chills!

If You Missed... (classics)

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. **Shiloh**

When he finds a lost beagle in the hills behind his West Virginia home, Marty tries to hide it from his family and the dog's real owner, a mean-spirited man known to shoot deer out of season and to mistreat his dogs. Newbery Medal winner.

DiCamillo, Kate. **Because of Winn-Dixie**

Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni describes her first summer in the town of Naomi, Florida, and all the good things that happen to her because of her big ugly dog Winn-Dixie. 2001 Newbery Honor Book.

Montgomery, L.M. **Anne of Green Gables**

Anne, an eleven-year-old orphan, is sent by mistake to live with a lonely, middle-aged brother and sister on a Prince Edward Island farm and proceeds to make an indelible impression on everyone around her.

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For Real... (non-fiction)

Armstrong, Jennifer. **Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World**
Armstrong recreates the amazing true story of the 1914 Antarctic voyage of Ernest Shackleton and the crew aboard his ship, The Endurance. Members of the expedition intend to traverse the frozen continent, but their ship becomes trapped in the ice. Survival becomes uncertain and then unlikely. A great real-life adventure story.

Fleischman, Sid. **Escape! The Story of the Great Houdini**
Who was this man who could walk through brick walls and, with the snap of his fingers, vanish elephants? In this biography, Fleischman introduces readers to the amazing Houdini--magician, ghost chaser, daredevil, pioneer aviator, and king of escape artists. No jail cell or straitjacket could hold him!

Fleischman, John. **Phineas Gage: a Gruesome but True Story about Brain Science**
Phineas Gage was truly a man with a hole in his head. A railroad construction foreman, Phineas was blasting rock when a thirteen-pound iron rod was shot through his brain. Miraculously, he survived another eleven years. But he was forever changed by the accident. What happened inside his brain will tell you a lot about how your brain works and what makes us who we are.

Lasky, Kathryn. **Interrupted Journey: Saving Endangered Sea Turtles**
This book describes efforts to protect sea turtles, particularly Kemp's ridley turtles, and helps them reproduce and replenish their once-dwindling numbers.

Swinburne, Stephen R. **Once a Wolf: How Wildlife Biologists Fought to Bring Back the Grey Wolf**
With powerful and rare photographs by Jim Brandenburg, this explores the long, troubled relationship of humans and wolves. The book traces the persecution of the wolf throughout history and also reveals the role scientists have played in wolf preservation.

Wagner, Jane. **Looking for Life in the Universe (series)**
Dr. Jill Tarter, the head of SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence), investigates the universe for other alien life. The SETI crew looks for other life in space using the largest radio telescope in the world. So far, no one, not even Jill Tarter, has found any life in space but you never know what lies ahead...

Montgomery, Sy. **The Man-Eating Tigers of Sundarbans**
About three hundred people a year are killed by the man-eating tigers of the Sundarbans Reserve, a swamp in Bengal. No where else do tigers live in a swamp, and no where else

do tigers kill humans. Sy Montgomery, author of this exciting, true story, sets out to unravel the mystery of the Sundarbans tigers' unusual behavior.

Freedman, Russell. **Children of the Great Depression**
"It's my sister's turn to eat," a hungry child tells her teacher. Quotations like this bring home what it was like to be young and poor in Depression America. This stirring photo-essay combines such unforgettable personal details with a clear historical overview of the period and black-and-white photos by Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, and many other famous photographers of the period.

Freedman, Russell. **The Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane**
What unusual people the Wright brothers were! Despite a four-year difference in age, the two grew up to be as close as twins, a patient pair who methodically set out to prove the possibility of powered, controlled human flight. Just as methodically, they promoted their new flying machine, made lots of money, and overcame the U. S. government's stubborn lack of interest. Freedman takes readers back to that exciting time, using not only the Wrights' written descriptions and the accounts of awed observers, but also a large selection of the careful photographs that Wilbur and Orville took to document their experiments.

Schroeder, Peter W., & Dagmar Schoeder-Hildebrand **Six Million Paper Clips: The Making of a Children's Holocaust Memorial**
In rural Whitwell, Tennessee, all 1,600 residents are alike, "white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant." When the community middle school decided to teach diversity by focusing on the Holocaust, the students did not believe that the Nazis had killed six million Jews and five million others. To help them grasp the numbers, they collected 11 million paper clips, which they placed in a memorial made from a German World War II railcar. A moving, true story.

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more non-fiction

Murphy, Jim. **Blizzard**

On March 10, 1888, the weather on the eastern coast of the U.S. was so pleasant that families were picnicking. By Monday morning, however, a huge, destructive blizzard--actually two storms--stretched from Delaware north to Maine and as far west as the Mississippi River. New York City had 21 inches of drifting snow; Troy, New York, was blanketed under 55 inches. Supplies of fuel, food, and milk dwindled; power lines snapped; trains were trapped; nearly 200 ships were lost at sea; and an estimated 800 people died in New York City alone. No wonder some called the storm "The Great White Hurricane."

Marrin, Albert. **Oh, Rats! : the story of rats and people***

Describes rat behavior and survival skills and aspects of their relationship with humans, including disease, rats as food, rats as pests, and the training of rats as rescuers.

Scieszka, Jon. **Knucklehead**

In comic book-esq format, this book presents a memoir of what it was like to grow up in the 1950s. Includes true and "almost true stories" by American children's author Jon

It Happened Back Then...
(historical fiction)

Going, K.L. **The Liberation of Gabriel King**

In a small town in Georgia in 1976, Gabe King, who is white, and his friend Frita Wilson, who is African-American, take on a special project. Gabe is determined not to go to fifth grade in the fall, in the "big kids" wing of the school where he will be one of the smallest students and at the mercy of bullies Duke Evans and Frankie Carmen. Frita, however, has determined to use the summer to liberate her friend from his fears and make sure he moves up with her.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. **The Watsons Go to Birmingham**

The ordinary interactions and everyday routines of the Watsons, an African-American family living in Flint, Michigan, are drastically changed after they go to visit Grandma in Alabama in the summer of 1963

Klages, Ellen. **Green Glass Sea**

While her father works on the Manhattan Project, eleven-year-old gadget lover and outcast Dewey Kerrigan lives in Los Alamos Camp, and becomes friends with Suze, another young girl who is shunned by her peers. (sequel: White Sands, Red Menace)

Duble, Kathleen Benner. **The Sacrifice**

What was it like to be accused during the Salem witch hunts in 1692? Duble brings the history alive through the viewpoint of Abigail, 10, who is accused of working with the devil, imprisoned, and tried along with her older sister.

Erdrich, Louise. **Birchbark House (series)**

19th-century Ojibwa family's everyday life as they move through the seasons of one year on an island on Lake Superior. Omakayas, now seven, adores baby brother Neewo, detests rambunctious five-year-old brother Pinch, and worships her beautiful teenage sister, Angeline. Omakayas works and plays through the summer and fall, learning the ways of her people; she has a frightful adventure with bears and adopts a young raven as a pet.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. **Nory Ryan's Song**

When a terrible blight attacks Ireland's potato crop in 1845, twelve-year-old Nory Ryan's courage and ingenuity help her family and neighbors survive.

Levine, Gail Carson. **Dave at Night**

When orphaned Dave is sent to the Hebrew Home for Boys where he is treated cruelly, he sneaks out at night and is welcomed into the music and culture-filled world of the Harlem Renaissance.

Lowry, Lois. **Number the Stars**

In 1943, during the German occupation of Denmark, ten-year old Annemarie learns how to be brave and courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis.

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Home Run! (sports)

Gutman, Dan. Million Dollar Shot

Eddie Ball has the chance of a lifetime: to win a million dollars by sinking a foul shot during halftime at the NBA finals, but someone really wants Eddie to shoot an air ball on the big day and will do anything to sabotage the million dollar shot

Haven, Paul. Two Hot Dogs With Everything

Although everyone credits him and his superstitions for the Slugger's first winning streak in 108 baseball seasons, eleven-year-old Danny Gurkin believes that his discovery of a secret from the team's past may be the real reason behind the ball club's success.

Lupica, Mike. Travel Team (series)

Danny Walker is crushed when he doesn't make the seventh grade basketball team because he is too short; he suspects that the real reason has something to do with a feud between his father and the father of the team's best player. Then Danny's father announces that he is starting his own youth team, but unexpected setbacks sideline his dad and the team.

Mackel, Kathy. Madcat*

Fast-pitch softball catcher MadCat Campione's love for the sport is strained when her team competes on a national level and her best pal Jess puts the game before her friends.

Wolff, Virginia Euwer. Bat 6

Each year the girls' softball teams of Bear Creek Ridge and Barlow compete to the friendly cheers of townspeople. This year Shazam's racial hatred of Aki Mikami explodes in this riveting novel set in post-World War II Oregon.

Too Funny... (humor)

Gantos, Jack. Jack on the Tracks

Jack exhibits his fascination with all things disgusting, constantly struggling to sort out how boys are supposed to behave. Between picking a hookworm (his secret pet") out of his arm and lying in a hole with a screaming locomotive passing overhead, Jack is no role model, but he is real.

Kurzweil, Allen. Leon and the Champion Chip (series)

Potato chip collector Leon is excited when the new science teacher announces they'll be using Leon's favorite snack food as the basis for the year's curriculum. In order to earn money, Leon enters an international potato chip competition. Leon and his friends are also trying to tame the class bully.

Peck, Richard. Soup (series)

When it came to getting the two of us in trouble, Soup was a regular genius. Soup was my best pal. Here are the stories of that friendship, stories from a boyhood filled with barrels to roll in, apples to whip, windows to break, ropes to bind prisoners, acorn pipes, and ten-cent Saturday movies. But then as always nothing was quite as important as a best friend.

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Picture This... (graphic novels)

Krosoczka, Jarrett.

Lunch lady and the Cyborg Substitute (series)

The school lunch lady, a secret crime fighter, uncovers an evil plot to replace all the popular teachers with robots.

Smith, Jeff. **Bone** (series)

This nine-volume graphic novel series was originally published in comic book form. It follows the fantastical and hilarious adventures of the Bone family through thick and thin.

Thielbar, Melinda. **Hundred Dollar Robber** (Manga Math Mysteries series)

Someone has stolen money from the soccer team's car-wash earnings, and the students from Sifu Faiza's Kung Fu School must set aside their feud with the soccer players to figure out how much money was stolen and by whom.

Varon, Sara. **Robot Dreams**

This wordless graphic novel depicts an enduring friendship between a dog and his robot. Dog wants a friend, so he orders and constructs a mail-order robot. The two are the best of friends until a rust-inducing trip to the beach. After that fateful visit, dog and robot are able to see what true friendship is.

It Could Happen To You... (realistic fiction)

Alvarez, Julia. **How Tia Lola Came to Stay**

Miguel is upset both that his parents are separating and that his mother has relocated the family to Vermont. Tia Lola, visiting from the Dominican Republic, helps ease the adjustment.

Birdsall, Jeanne. **The Penderwicks** (series)

The Penderwick sisters head for a cottage in the Berkshires for a summer vacation with their dad. When they discover Jeffrey, the boy who lives at the neighboring estate, the adventures begin, much to the disappointment of his snooty mother.

Choldenko, Gennifer. **Notes from a Liar and Her Dog**

Ant is sandwiched between two perfect sisters, Katherine the Great and Your Highness Elizabeth. She has a talent for getting into trouble and driving her parents crazy. She copes by pretending that she is adopted and by lying. Then an interested art teacher takes her under her wing and insists on honesty and the truth.

Clements, Andrew. **The Janitor's Boy**

Fifth-grader Jack becomes the target of ridicule at school when it becomes known that his father is one of the janitors. Jack then turns his anger onto his father.

Ellis, Deborah. **The Breadwinner** (series)

Parvana lives with her family in one room of a bombed-out apartment building in Kabul, Afghanistan. Because he has a foreign education, her father is arrested by the Taliban, the religious group that controls the country. The family becomes increasingly desperate until Parvana conceives a plan. She cuts her hair and disguises herself as a boy to earn money for her family.

Henkes, Kevin. **Olive's Ocean**

On a summer visit to her grandmother's cottage by the ocean, twelve-year-old Martha gains perspective on the death of a classmate, on her relationship with her grandmother, on her feelings for an older boy, and on her plans to be a writer.

Holm, Jennifer. **Middle School is Worse than Meatloaf** *

Ginny makes a to do list for her seventh grade year, which includes landing a role in the school play, trying to make friends, ignoring her horoscope, and going to see her grandpa Joe in Florida; but she always seems to come up short in accomplishing any of it.

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missed by any fantasy fan!

more realistic fiction

Mass, Wendy. **A Mango Shaped Space**

Afraid that she is crazy, thirteen-year-old Mia, who sees a special color with every letter, number, and sound, keeps this a secret until she becomes overwhelmed by school, changing relationships, and the loss of something important to her.

McKay, Hilary. **Saffy's Angel (series)**

Meet the Cassons, an artistic and eccentric family, whose ups and downs are charmingly told in the four books of this series. *Saffy's Angel*, the first in the series, tells of Saffron Casson's quest to find her real parents once she finds out that unlike her brother and sisters, she is adopted.

Perkins, Lynne Rae. **All Alone in the Universe**

Debbie feels that she is all alone in the universe, when her best friend Maureen suddenly starts spending all her time with their classmate, Glenna. As Debbie mourns her changing relationship with Maureen, she slowly begins the process of forming new friendships.

Ryan, Pam Munoz. **Becoming Naomi Leon**

When Naomi's absent mother resurfaces to claim her, Naomi runs away to Mexico with her great-grandmother and younger brother in search of her father.

Imagine That... (fantasy/science fiction)

Hale, Shannon. **Princess Academy**

Miri's family lives on the slopes of Mount Eskel, where every child dreams of someday working in the quarry. Then word comes from the lowlands: the king's priests have predicted that the next princess will come from Mount Eskel. Suddenly all the eligible young girls of Miri's village are sent to a makeshift academy to prepare for life in the lowland—and Miri must go too.

Gaiman, Neil. **The Graveyard Book**

The orphan Bod, short for Nobody, is taken in by the inhabitants of a graveyard as a child of eighteen months and raised lovingly and carefully to the age of eighteen years by the community of ghosts and otherworldly creatures.

Clements, Andrew. **Things Not Seen**

Bobby Phillips wakes up and can't see himself in the mirror. Not blind, not dreaming, Bobby is just plain invisible. Even his dad the physicist can't figure it out. For Bobby, that means no school, no friends, no life. He is a missing person. Then he meets Alicia. She's blind, and Bobby can't resist talking to her, trusting her.

Collins, Suzanne. **Gregor the Overlander (series)**

When eleven-year-old Gregor and his two-year-old sister are pulled into a strange underground world, they trigger an epic battle involving humans, bats, rats, cockroaches, and spiders while on a quest foretold by an ancient prophecy.

Cooper, Susan. **The Dark is Rising (series)**

Drawing on Arthurian mythology, Cooper chronicles an age old struggle between the Light and the Dark. Not to be

Delaney, Joseph. **The Revenge of the Witch (Last Apprentice series)**

For years, Old Gregory has been the Spook for the county, ridding the local villages of evil. Now his time is coming to an end, but who will take over for him? Twenty-nine apprentices have tried—some floundered, some fled, some failed to stay alive. Only Thomas Ward is left. He's the last hope, the last apprentice.

Farmer, Nancy. **The Sea of Trolls (series)**

The year 793, and fierce Vikings pass through a Saxon village and enslave two of its residents: Jack, an 11-year-old apprentice mage and his 5-year-old sister. When Jack offends the Northmen's queen, she threatens to kill his sister unless he reverses a misfired spell. Jack and Lucy must embark on a perilous journey through lands filled with trolls, dragons, giant spiders, and talking crows to get back home.

Flanagan, John. **The Ruins of Gorlan (Rangers Apprentice series)**

The villagers believe the Rangers practice magic that makes them invisible to ordinary people. Now fifteen year-old Will, always small for his age, has been chosen as a Ranger's apprentice. Highly trained in the skills of battle and surveillance, the Rangers fight the battles before the battles reach the people, and as Will is about to learn, there is a large battle brewing.

Reisman, Michael. **Simon Bloom, The Gravity Keeper**

Sixth-grader Simon Bloom finds a book that enables him to control the laws of physics; but when two thugs come after him, he needs the formulas in the book to save himself.

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more sci fi/fantasy

Riordan, Rick. **The Lightning Thief (series)**

The escapades of the Greek gods and heroes get a fresh spin in the first book in the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series. Perseus, aka Percy Jackson, thinks he has big problems. His father left before he was born, he's been kicked out of six schools in six years, he's dyslexic, and he has ADHD. What a surprise when he finds out that that's only the tip of the iceberg.

Winthrop, Elizabeth. **Castle in the Attic**

William receives the best present of his life--an old, real looking stone and wooden model of a castle, with a drawbridge, moat, and a finger-high knight to guard the gates. He can't wait to play with it. When he picks up the tiny silver knight, it comes alive in his hand!

Edge of Your Seat...
(mystery & adventure)

Anderson, M.T. **Whales on Stilts (series)**

Racing against the clock, shy middle-school student Lily and her best friends, Katie and Jasper, must foil the plot of her father's conniving boss to conquer the world using an army of whales.

Avi. **True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle**

Told as a flashback, these "confessions" cover 13-year-old Charlotte's eventful 1832 transatlantic crossing.

Hautman Pete. **Snatched: a Bloodwater Mystery**

Alicia Camden, the snooty new kid who lives in a mansion with her cold mother and bland stepfather, has been kidnapped. Brian, a boy science nerd and Roni, a girl investigator for the school paper, try to solve the mystery. Together, they have the bright skills to question authority and pry into odd events.

Horowitz, Anthony. **Stormbreaker (series)**

When his uncle and guardian dies in a mysterious accident, 14-year-old Alex Rider finds out that he was a spy for the MI6, Britain's equivalent of the CIA. Alex is recruited by the agency to continue his uncle's mission, kicking off his career as the youngest-ever international British spy.

Ibbotson, Eva. **The Star of Kazan**

Annika, a twelve-year-old foundling in late nineteenth century Vienna, inherits a trunk of costume jewelry, and soon afterwards a woman claiming to be her aristocratic mother arrives and takes her to live in a strangely decrepit mansion in Germany.

Roberts, Willo Davis. **The View from the Cherry Tree**

Rob's family is pre-occupied with his sister's upcoming wedding. Rob stays out of their way, up in his favorite spot, his cherry tree where he sees old Mrs. Calloway get murdered. No one likes the old woman, and everyone seems

to think it was an accident. But Rob knows it wasn't and he proves it too.

Sachar, Louis. **Holes**

Through a series of misunderstandings, the very unlucky Stanley Yelnats lands in Camp Greenlake, not a camp at all but a juvenile detention facility in the middle of the desert. The cruel warden forces Stanley and his fellow "inmates" to dig holes all over the camp in the hot sun to "build character". But when Stanley starts to wonder if that's not the only reason for the digging, he uncovers stories from his own family's past and turns his luck around.

Springer, Nancy. **The Case of the Left-Handed Lady: an Enola Holmes Mystery (series)**

Enola Holmes is being hunted by the world's most famous detective—her own brother, Sherlock Holmes. But while she is on the run in the world's biggest, darkest, dirtiest city, she discovers a hidden cache of charcoal drawings and feels as if she is a soul mate to the girl who drew them. But that girl, Lady Cecily, has disappeared without a trace. Enola must unravel the clues to find this left-handed lady, but in order to save her, Enola risks revealing more than she should.

Stewart, Trenton Lee. **Mysterious Benedict Society (series)**

Through a series of mysterious, mind-bending tests, Reynie and three other unique gifted children are recruited to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened to derail a plot to take over the world. Using intellect, imagination, and resourcefulness, they embark on an adventure.

Wright, Betty Ben. **The Doll House Murders**

The attic is always a great place to look for nuggets of one's family history, but when 12-year-old Amy explores her great grandparents' attic, she uncovers clues to a chilling family secret.

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