

SUMMER READING 6th Grade

All students are required to read two books during the summer and submit reviews. Students have the option of seeing one or two plays in lieu of reading a book. Each play seen will require a review and program from the performance.

The following is a list of possible selections. It is not a complete list. If a student has a suggestion of another book he/she would like to read, email me at jack.hartsfield@mytesa.org for approval.

The goal of summer reading is to encourage students to stay fresh and involved with literature and reading – not to create busy work. Most importantly, summer reading should be enjoyable. **Parents are encouraged to read selections with their children. Reading together is a great experience regardless of age!**

Possible 6th grade books:

From the recent past...

Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson: **Newberry Award winner.**

Sara Louise Bradshaw is sick and tired of her beautiful twin Caroline. Ever since they were born, Caroline has been the pretty one, the talented one, the better sister. Even now, Caroline seems to take everything: Louise's friends, their parents' love, her dreams for the future.

For once in her life, Louise wants to be the special one. But in order to do that, she must first figure out who she is . . . and find a way to make a place for herself outside her sister's shadow.

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli: From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of “Stargirl, Stargirl.” She captures Leo Borlock’s heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first.

Then they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different, and Leo, panicked and desperate with love, urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her: normal. In this celebration of nonconformity, Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli weaves a tense, emotional tale about the perils of popularity and the thrill and inspiration of first love.

Moccasin Trail by Eloise Jarvis McGraw: **award winning book**

Jim Keath has lived for six years as a Crow Indian when he learns that his two younger brothers and a sister are journeying west to take up land. Although Jim finds it difficult to fit in with the family he hasn't seen since childhood, and though they are wary and distrustful of him, Jim feels his duty is at their side. But slowly, as they survive the dangerous trek west, the perils of frontier life, and the kidnapping of their younger brother, Jim and his family realize that the only way to survive is to accept each other and truly reunite the family.

Flipped by Wendelin Van Draanen: The first time she saw him, she flipped. The first time he saw her, he ran. That was the second grade, but not much has changed by the seventh. Juli says: "My Bryce. Still walking around with my first kiss." He says: "It's been six years of strategic avoidance and social discomfort." But in the eighth grade everything gets turned upside down: just as Bryce is thinking that there's maybe more to Juli than meets the eye, she's thinking that he's not quite all he seemed.

Summer of the Monkeys by Wilson Rawls: The last thing fourteen-year-old Jay Berry Lee expects to find while trekking through the Ozark Mountains of Oklahoma is a tree full of monkeys. But then Jay learns from his grandpa that the monkeys have escaped from a traveling circus *and* there's a big reward for the person who finds and returns them.

His family could really use the money, so Jay sets off, determined to catch them. But by the end of the summer, Jay will have learned a lot more than he bargained for—and not just about monkeys.

From the beloved author of *Where the Red Fern Grows*, comes another memorable adventure novel filled with heart, humor, and excitement over the course of one extraordinary summer.

My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George: Terribly unhappy in his family's crowded New York City apartment, Sam Gribble runs away to the solitude-and danger-of the mountains, where he finds a side of himself he never knew.

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen: This award-winning contemporary classic is the survival story with which all others are compared—and a page-turning, heart-stopping adventure, recipient of the Newbery Honor.

Thirteen-year-old Brian Robeson is on his way to visit his father when the single-engine plane in which he is flying crashes. Suddenly, Brian finds himself alone in the Canadian wilderness with nothing but a tattered Windbreaker and the hatchet his mother gave him as a present—and the dreadful secret that has been tearing him apart since his parent's divorce. But now Brian has no time for anger, self pity, or despair—it will take all his know-how and determination, and more courage than he knew he possessed, to survive.

Mr. Tucket by Gary Paulsen: Fourteen-year-old Francis Tucket is heading west on the Oregon Trail with his family by wagon train. When he receives a rifle for his birthday, he is thrilled that he is being treated like an adult. But Francis lags behind to practice shooting and is captured by Pawnees. It will take wild horses, hostile tribes, and a mysterious one-armed mountain man named Mr. Grimes to help Francis become the man who will be called Mr. Tucket.

Classics – these books can be a challenge to get into, but they are all worth it! A good strategy is to read the first couple of chapters with an adult – it helps a lot!!

The Yearling by Marjorie Rawlings: great novel of growing up in rural Florida in late 19th century. Plenty of action (bears, gators, fights, floods) as well as some of the most memorable characters in American Literature.

The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Graham: this novel is much more than a story of animal friends and their adventures. It is about friendship and loyalty and the willingness to overcome one's fears. This is one of my favorite books of all time. I carry a copy with me just about everywhere.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte: this book which tells of the romance of Jane and Rochester " ...takes on an unforgettable atmosphere that lifts it above mere melodrama." Every year this book becomes some student's favorite novel.

Anne of Green Gables by Lucy Maud Montgomery: when red-headed orphan Anne arrives at the Cuthberts' home, Green Gables, she feels sure she's found the home she has longed for. They, however, are less certain; their request to the orphanage had been for a boy. But before long Anne's irrepressibly optimistic, loving nature has charmed them. While her temper is unpredictable and her extravagant imagination makes her dreamily whimsical and prone to comic mishap, the Cuthberts come to love Anne as if she were their own child. Montgomery's classic tale is a celebration of the transformative power of love and the unique qualities of a girl who has a second chance at childhood.

us author's own life from abused child laborer to successful writer. This book is a story that never gets old and is filled with unforgettable characters – both good and evil.

. Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card: in order to develop a secure defense against a hostile alien race's next attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. A brilliant young boy, Andrew "Ender" Wiggin lives with his kind but distant parents, his sadistic brother Peter, and the person he loves more than anyone else, his sister Valentine. Peter and Valentine were candidates for the soldier-training program but didn't make the cut--young Ender is the Wiggin drafted to the orbiting Battle School for rigorous military training.

Ender's skills make him a leader in school and respected in the Battle Room, where children play at mock battles in zero gravity. Yet growing up in an artificial community of young soldiers, Ender suffers greatly from isolation, rivalry from his peers, pressure from the adult teachers, and an unsettling fear of the alien invaders. His psychological battles include loneliness, fear that he is becoming like the cruel brother he remembers, and fanning the flames of devotion to his beloved sister.

Is Ender the general Earth needs? But Ender is not the only result of the genetic experiments. The war with the Buggers has been raging for a hundred years, and the quest for the perfect general has been underway for almost as long. Ender's two older siblings are every bit as unusual as he is, but in very different ways. Between the three of them lie the abilities to remake a world. If the world survives, that is.

Winner of the Hugo and Nebula Awards

King Solomon's Mines by H. Ryder Haggard: Alan Quatermain leads Sir Henry Curtis and Captain Goode into unexplored Africa in search of Solomon's legendary diamond mines. Led by the mysterious Umbopa, they cross deserts, face starvation and encounter a sinister king, and an evil witch named Gagool. This is a great action and adventure story with a dose of fantasy thrown in for good measure. **Keep in mind that it starts slow** but picks up speed in a hurry! This is my favorite adventure book of all time!

Tarzan of the Apes by Edgar Rice Burroughs: Without his animal strength and human intelligence, Tarzan of the Apes would many times have been a dead man. Orphaned in infancy, Tarzan is adopted by a female ape who has just lost her own baby. Against all odds, he survives and learns the ways of the great apes. But Tarzan is different from the apes, and he knows this more with each passing day. Then he comes face-to-face with a beautiful woman named Jane, and, more than ever, he wonders just who the real Tarzan is. One of my all time favorites!!

Shane by Jack Schaefer: this classic western tells the tale of a mysterious stranger who rides into the middle of a range war between small farmers and their families and a rancher who believes the range belongs to him.

True Grit by Charles Portis: This is the story of Mattie Ross, who is just fourteen years of age when a coward going by the name of Tom Chaney shoots her father down in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and robs him of his life, his horse, and \$150 in cash money. Mattie leaves home to avenge her father's blood. With the one-eyed Rooster Cogburn, the meanest available U.S. Marshal, by her side, Mattie pursues the homicide into Indian Territory.

True Grit is eccentric, cool, straight, and unflinching, like Mattie herself.

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien: the story that starts the ring trilogy. Bilbo Baggins is a reluctant adventurer thrown in with a group of determined dwarves. As is usually the case, the book is much better than the movie!

Other possible fantasy selections: Lord of the Rings (Tolkien), The Once and Future King (T.H. White), Conan the Barbarian (Robert E. Howard), Redwall series (Brian Jacques), The Dark is Rising series (Susan Cooper), Watership Down (Richard Adams)

How Green Was My Valley by Richard Llewellyn: this novel, set in Wales, is a beautiful story of life in a coal mining village as seen through the eyes of the youngest son of a large Welsh family. Joyous and heartbreaking this is a novel well worth the read.

Contemporary Fiction –

When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead: this Newberry Award winning novel is a bit mystery and science fiction – although you won't see the connection between the two at first. Lots of strange, random events seem to be going on, but this author does a great job of fitting everything together in the end. One of my favorites.

Full Tilt by Neal Shusterman: Sixteen-year-old Blake and his younger brother, Quinn, are exact opposites. Blake is the responsible member of the family. He constantly has to keep an eye on the fearless Quinn, whose thrill-seeking sometimes goes too far. But the stakes get higher when Blake has to chase Quinn into a bizarre phantom carnival that traps its customers forever. I really liked this story and found it to be quite a ride! It is a good companion for Bradbury's Something Wickid This Way Comes (also on this list).

*Unwind by Neal Shusterman: In America after the Second Civil War, the Pro-Choice and Pro-Life armies came to an agreement: The Bill of Life states that human life may not be touched from the moment of conception until a child reaches the age of thirteen. Between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, however, a parent may choose to retroactively get rid of a child through a process called "unwinding." Unwinding ensures that the child's life doesn't "technically" end by transplanting all the organs in the child's body to various recipients. Now a common and accepted practice in society, troublesome or unwanted teens are able to easily be unwound.

*The Fault in Our Stars by John Green: Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten.

Insightful, bold, irreverent, and raw, The Fault in Our Stars is award-winning-author John Green's most ambitious and heartbreaking work yet, brilliantly exploring the funny, thrilling, and tragic business of being alive and in love.

*Eleanor and Park by Rainbow Rowell: "*Eleanor & Park* reminded me not just what it's like to be young and in love with a girl, but also what it's like to be young and in love with a book."—John Green, *The New York Times Book Review*

Bono met his wife in high school, Park says.
So did Jerry Lee Lewis, Eleanor answers.
I'm not kidding, he says.
You should be, she says, we're 16.
What about Romeo and Juliet?
Shallow, confused, then dead.
I love you, Park says.
Wherefore art thou, Eleanor answers.
I'm not kidding, he says.
You should be.

Set over the course of one school year in 1986, this is the story of two star-crossed misfits—smart enough to know that first love almost never lasts, but brave and desperate enough to try. When Eleanor meets Park, you'll remember your own first love—and just how hard it pulled you under.

Alcatraz vs. the Evil Librarians by Brandon Sanderson: Alcatraz is a young teen boy who is always breaking and destroying things. A visit from an elderly man, who says he is Alcatraz's grandfather, says that the "breaking" of things is a powerful talent. He also says that there is a powerful force called the Librarians and that they aim to rule the world. Three books follow in this unique and very funny adventure.

The Scorpio Races by Maggie Stiefvater: Some race to win. Others race to survive.

It happens at the start of every November: the Scorpio Races. Riders attempt to keep hold of their water horses long enough to make it to the finish line.

Some riders live. Others die. At age nineteen, Sean Kendrick is the returning champion. He is a young man of few words, and if he has any fears, he keeps them buried deep, where no one else can see them.

Changers by T. Cooper and Allison-Glock Cooper: *Changers Book One: Drew* opens on the eve of Ethan Miller's freshman year of high school in a brand-new town. He's finally sporting a haircut he doesn't hate, has grown two inches since middle school, and can't wait to try out for the soccer team. At last, everything is looking up in life. Until the next morning. When Ethan awakens as a girl.

Ethan is a Changer, a little-known, ancient race of humans who live out each of their four years of high school as a different person. After graduation, Changers choose which version of themselves they will be

forever--and no, they cannot go back to who they were *before* the changes began.

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs: As a kid, Jacob formed a special bond with his grandfather over his bizarre tales and photos of levitating girls and invisible boys. Now at 16, he is reeling from the old man's unexpected death. Then Jacob is given a mysterious letter that propels him on a journey to the remote Welsh island where his grandfather grew up. There, he finds the children from the photographs--alive and well--despite the islanders' assertion that all were killed decades ago. As Jacob begins to unravel more about his grandfather's childhood, he suspects he is being trailed by a monster only he can see. A haunting and out-of-the-ordinary read, debut author Ransom Rigg's first-person narration is convincing and absorbing, and every detail he draws our eye to is deftly woven into an unforgettable whole. Interspersed with photos throughout, *Miss* with plot twists, turns, and surprises that will delight readers of any age. First in a series.

Clockwork Angel by Cassandra Clarke: Magic is dangerous—but love is more dangerous still. Discover the riveting first book in the #1 *New York Times* bestselling Infernal Devices Trilogy, prequel to the internationally bestselling Mortal Instruments series.

The Enemy by Charlie Higson: In the wake of a devastating disease, everyone sixteen and older is either dead or a decomposing, brainless creature with a ravenous appetite for flesh. Teens have barricaded themselves in buildings throughout London and venture outside only when they need to scavenge for food. The group of kids living a Waitrose supermarket is beginning to run out of options. When a mysterious traveler arrives and offers them safe haven at Buckingham Palace, they begin a harrowing journey across London. But their fight is far from over--the threat from within the palace is as real as the one outside it. First in a series.

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.

Dorothy Must Die – Danielle Paige

The *New York Times* bestselling first book in a dark new series that reimagines the Oz saga, from debut author Danielle Paige.

I didn't ask for any of this. I didn't ask to be some kind of hero. But when your whole life gets swept up by a tornado—taking you with it—you have no choice but to go along, you know?

Sure, I've read the books. I've seen the movies. I know the song about the rainbow and the happy little blue birds. But I never expected Oz to look like this. To be a place where Good Witches can't be trusted, Wicked Witches may just be the good guys, and winged monkeys can be executed for acts of rebellion. There's still a road of yellow brick—but even that's crumbling.

Red Queen – Victoria Aveyard

Graceling meets *The Selection* in debut novelist Victoria Aveyard's sweeping tale of seventeen-year-old Mare, a common girl whose once-latent magical power draws her into the dangerous intrigue of the king's palace. Will her power save her or condemn her?

Mare Barrow's world is divided by blood--those with common, Red blood serve the Silver- blooded elite, who are gifted with superhuman abilities. Mare is a Red, scraping by as a thief in a poor, rural village, until a twist of fate throws her in front of the Silver court. Before the king, princes, and all the nobles, she discovers she has an ability of her own.

Non-Fiction:

Twelve Mighty Orphans by Jim Dent: More than a century ago, a school was constructed in Fort Worth, Texas, for the purpose of housing and educating the orphans of Texas Freemasons. It was a humble project that for years existed quietly on a hillside east of town. Life at the Masonic Home was about to change, though, with the arrival of a lean, bespectacled coach by the name of Rusty Russell. Here was a man who could bring rain in the midst of a drought. Here was a man who, in virtually no time at all, brought the orphans' story into the homes of millions of Americans.

The Rivalry: Bill Russell, Wilt Chamberlain and the Golden Age of Basketball by John Taylor:

In the mid-1950s, the NBA was a mere barnstorming circuit, with outposts in such cities as Rochester, New York, and Fort Wayne, Indiana. Most of the best players were white; the set shot and layup were the sport's chief offensive weapons. But by the 1970s, the league ruled America's biggest media markets; contests attracted capacity crowds and national prime-time television audiences. The game was played "above the rim"—and the most marketable of its high-flying stars were black. The credit for this remarkable transformation largely goes to two giants: Bill Russell and Wilt Chamberlain.

Anne Frank Portrait of a Young Girl

Discovered in the attic in which she spent the last years of her life, Anne Frank's remarkable diary has since become a world classic—a powerful reminder of the horrors of war and an eloquent testament to the human spirit. In 1942, with Nazis occupying Holland, a thirteen-year-old Jewish girl and her family fled their home in Amsterdam and went into hiding. For the next two years, until their whereabouts were betrayed to the Gestapo, they and another family lived cloistered in the "Secret Annex" of an old office building. Cut off from the outside world, they faced hunger, boredom, the constant cruelties of living in confined quarters, and the ever-present threat of discovery and death. In her diary Anne Frank recorded vivid impressions of her experiences during this period. By turns thoughtful, moving, and amusing, her account offers a fascinating commentary on human courage and frailty and a compelling self-portrait of a sensitive and spirited young woman whose promise was tragically cut short.

Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou, one of the best-loved authors of our time, shares the wisdom of a remarkable life in this best-selling spiritual classic. This is Maya Angelou talking from the heart, down to earth and real, but also inspiring. This is a book to treasure, a book about being in all ways a woman, about living well, about the power of the word, and about the power of spirituality to move and shape your life. Passionate, lively, and lyrical, Maya Angelou's latest unforgettable work offers a gem of truth on every page

Killer Angels by Michael Shaara: **"My favorite historical novel . . . a superb re-creation of the Battle of Gettysburg, but its real importance is its insight into what the war was about, and what it meant."**—**James M. McPherson**

In the four most bloody and courageous days of our nation's history, two armies fought for two conflicting dreams. One dreamed of freedom, the other of a way of life. Far more than rifles and bullets were carried into battle. There were memories. There were promises. There was love. And far more than men fell on those Pennsylvania fields. Bright futures, untested innocence, and pristine beauty were also the casualties of war. Michael Shaara's Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece is unique, sweeping, unforgettable—the dramatic story of the battleground for America's destiny.

REMEMBER: these books are only recommendations. They are the tip of the iceberg in all the great books out there. If you have suggestions of books you want to read, email them to me.

*These books may contain mature subject matter and language.
Please check them out for yourself before Okaying them for your kids.

BOOK REPORT FORM

Name: _____

Name of book: _____

Author: _____

Genre (contemporary, fantasy, science fiction, historical, biography, etc.) _____

Point of view (1st person, 3rd person, 3rd person omniscient) _____

Answer the following on a separate piece of paper:

Setting (5 sentences minimum): What is the time period, the place, the season of this book. Describe the locale (city or rural, house or apartment, etc.).

Summary (Be sure to include something from the beginning, middle, and end. Your summary should be **5 sentences only!**):

Describe the protagonist (good guy)t of the book. Be specific and give as many details as possible (3-5 sentences).

Describe the antagonist (bad guy) of the book. Once again, be specific (3-5 sentences)!

In your opinion, what is the theme of this story (underlying idea that ties the novel together 3- 5 sentences).

PLAY REPORT FORM

Name: _____

Name of Play: _____

Author of Play: _____

Time and location of play (for example Trinity Shakespeare Festival, TCU, June 11) _____

Genre (type of play for example tragedy, comedy, farce) _____

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER:

Describe the setting (3-5 sentences).

Describe the protagonist (3-5 sentences).

Describe the antagonist (3-5 sentences).

Summarize the play (no more than 5 sentences).

Would you recommend this play to a friend? Why or why not (3-5 sentences).

