RISING 6th GRADE REQUIRED SUMMER READING

*Fish in a Tree*
Lynda Mullaly Hunt
Publisher: Penguin Young Readers Group or Nancy Paulsen Books

**Required Rising 6th Grade Summer Reading**
The author of the beloved *One for the Murphys* gives readers an emotionally-charged, uplifting novel that will speak to anyone who’s ever thought there was something wrong with them because they didn’t fit in. “Everybody is smart in different ways. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its life believing it is stupid.” Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the troublemaker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there’s a lot more to her - and to everyone - than a label, and that great minds don’t always think alike.
RISING 7th GRADE REQUIRED SUMMER READING

*The Wednesday Wars*
Gary D. Schmidt
Publisher: Clarion Books
ISBN-10: 054723760X

**Rising 7th Grade Required Summer Reading**
In this 2008 Newbery Honor-winning novel, Gary D. Schmidt offers an unforgettable antihero. *The Wednesday Wars* is a wonderfully witty and compelling story about a teenage boy’s mishaps and adventures over the course of the 1967–68 school year in Long Island, New York.

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.

RISING 8th GRADE REQUIRED READING

Several short stories from the book read in 7th grade – information to be posted by the English Department
Required Rising 9th Grade Summer Reading

*The Hate U Give*
Angie Thomas
Publisher: Balzer + Bray
ISBN-10: 0062498533

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil’s name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

Required Rising 9th Grade Honors Summer Reading

*The Book Thief*
Markus Zusak
Publisher: Knopf Books for Young Readers

It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier and will be busier still. By her brother's graveside, Liesel's life is changed when she picks up a single object, partially hidden in the snow. It is *The Gravedigger's Handbook*, left behind there by accident, and it is her first act of book thievery. So begins a love affair with books and words, as Liesel, with the help of her accordion-playing foster father, learns to read. But these are dangerous times. When Liesel's foster family hides a Jew in their basement, Liesel's world is both opened up, and closed down. In superbly crafted writing that burns with intensity, award-winning author Markus Zusak has given us one of the most enduring stories of our time.
**SUMMER READING PICKS**

**Featuring A Summer of Classic Reads**

*The Giver*
Lois Lowry
Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers
ISBN-10: 0544336267

Twelve-year-old Jonas lives in a seemingly ideal world. Not until he is given his life assignment as the Receiver does he begin to understand the dark secrets behind this fragile community.

*The Prettiest*
Brigit Young
Publisher: Roaring Brook Press
ISBN-10: 1626729239

Drama explodes in the eighth grade class when someone posts a list of the 50 prettiest girls. Jewish Eve Hoffman, #1 prettiest, just wants to “slide by, unnoticed,” but she’s suddenly receiving a lot of unwanted attention, including an onslaught of inappropriate texts (“I know you stuff your bra”). Eve’s plus-size best friend, Nessa Flores-Brady, didn’t make the list and is sick of being devalued because of her size and Latinx heritage. And blonde queen-bee Sophie Kane is furious about her number two ranking. While the administration tries to find out who’s behind the rankings, the three girls join forces to launch their own investigation, learning something about each other and themselves. Written using language that middle schoolers will find relatable, *The Prettiest* conveys a timely message about bullying and sexism, digging beneath the surface to show her protagonists’ intelligence, distinct talents, and misguided preconceptions.

*The Queen Bee and Me*
Gillian McDunn
Publisher: Bloomsbury
ISBN-10: 1681197510

Meg and Beatrix, 12, have been best friends since kindergarten, but in their hierarchical friendship, anxious Meg is compelled to follow popular Beatrix’s lead or get frozen out. When Meg earns a coveted spot in an advanced science elective and drops the dance class Beatrix had chosen for them both, she’s terrified to tell her friend. McDunn (*Caterpillar Summer*) deftly sketches Meg’s struggles amid seventh grade’s unspoken social order, highlighting how “Beatrix comes with her own set of rules.” Tensions escalate further when quirky new girl Hazel is paired with Meg for a science project on bees, and the two form a bond that infuriates Beatrix. Told in Meg’s strong voice, McDunn’s narrative includes fieldwork updates on the bee project that effectively echo the story’s human interactions (“How does the worker bee realize it is time to switch to something new?”). Readers will identify with the pitch-perfect middle school dynamics and cheer for Meg as she navigates a toxic friendship.
Jinxed
Amy McCulloch
Publisher: Sourcebooks
McCulloch’s (The Oathbreaker’s Shadow) vividly imagined Toronto-set middle grade series opener intertwines smartphone technology with the hallmarks of classic science fiction via a fun, insightful narrative and bright voice. Lacey Chu, 12, lives with her mother in a “corporate mini city” that’s grown up around the campus of Moncha Corp., developer of baku—robotic companions that blend companionship with smartphone utility. Her dream is to begin seventh grade at the highly competitive, corporate-run Profectus Academy with an eye toward becoming a baku creator like her father, who disappeared under mysterious circumstances. Lacey is rejected despite excellent mechanical and coding skills, but when she rescues a nonfunctioning, battered baku—a cat that she names Jinx—she’s suddenly admitted. After spending the summer repairing Jinx, she joins Profectus’s hypercompetitive world, navigating friendships, social changes, academic excellence, and her decidedly and uncharacteristically headstrong baku. With a sharp eye toward the rising awareness of device addiction and a keen sense of wonder, McCulloch’s tale is a feast for the imagination that celebrates women in STEM fields.

The Hound of the Baskervilles
Arthur Conan Doyle
Publisher: Candlewick Press
ISBN: 9780763630645
Eerie illustrations enhance a blood-curdling edition of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's most-celebrated Sherlock Holmes mystery, bringing its delicious shivers to a new generation of readers. Is it true that a hellish hound is haunting the lonely moors, hunting down the hapless Baskervilles through the generations? If anyone can put this chilling legend to rest, it's Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. It seems the body of the latest owner of the Baskerville estate has just been discovered in a ghastly condition, and Holmes has been called in on the case none too soon. The howls and moans that punctuate the elaborate twists of this Gothic tale will raise the hair on readers' necks and make converts of any who are not already fans of the famed detective.

Little Women
Louisa May Alcott
Publisher: Signet Classics
ISBN: 9781607105480
In picturesque nineteenth-century New England, tomboyish Jo, beautiful Meg, fragile Beth, and romantic Amy are responsible for keeping a home while their father is off to war. At the same time, they must come to terms with their individual personalities--and make the transition from girlhood to womanhood. It can all be quite a challenge. But the March sisters, however different, are nurtured by their wise and beloved Marmee and bound by their love for one another and the feminine strength they share.
The Red Badge of Courage
Stephen Crane
Publisher: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
ISBN-10: 1508482764
The Red Badge of Courage, written in 1895 by Stephen Crane (1871-1900), is considered by many literary critics to be one of the greatest of all American novels. This is a book about the Civil War, and one Union soldier's struggle with his inner demons as he prepares for and fights his first battle.

Watership Down
Richard Adams
Publisher: Scribner
ISBN-10: 0743277708
Chronicles the adventures of a group of rabbits searching for a safe place to establish a new warren so that they can live in peace.

The Secret Garden
Frances Hodgson Burnett
Publisher: HarperCollins
ISBN-10: 006440188X
The plot centers round Mary Lennox, a young English girl who returns to England from India, having suffered immense trauma by losing both her parents in a cholera epidemic. However, her memories of her parents are not pleasant, as they were a selfish, neglectful and pleasure-seeking couple. Mary is given to the care of her uncle Archibald Craven, whom she has never met. When she arrives, she is a rude, stubborn and given to stormy temper tantrums. However, her nature undergoes a gradual transformation when she learns of the tragedies that have befallen her strict and disciplinarian uncle whom she earlier feared and despised. Once when he's away from home, Mary discovers a charming walled garden which is always kept locked.

Painting the Black
Carl Deuker
Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers
ISBN-10: 0544541154
In his senior year of high school, late-bloomer Ryan Ward has just begun to feel the magic of baseball. The magic of catching a wicked slider, of throwing a runner out, of training hard and pushing his limits. Giving up baseball would be like getting off the most exciting ride of his life. But when one of his teammates clearly pushes the limits too far, Ryan is faced with a heartbreaking dilemma: he must choose between his love for the game and his sense of integrity. Painting the Black is an absorbing, timely sports novel about the conflict of competing within limitations and understanding that it really is only a game, however magical.
The First Rule of Punk
Celia C. Perez
Publisher: Puffin Books
ISBN-10: 0425290425
*The First Rule of Punk* seriously rocks (pun intended)! Twelve-year-old punk-rocker Malú has to navigate her identity at a new school and in a new home in this fun story with themes of friendship, finding your place, and learning to rock out like no one’s watching.

Harbor Me
Jacqueline Woodson
Publisher: Nancy Paulsen Books
ISBN-10: 0399252525
*Harbor Me* is a breathtakingly beautiful and well-written story about a diverse group of middle school students who become unlikely confidantes through storytelling. Woodson poses the interesting question: “If the worst thing in the world happened, would I help protect someone else? Would I let myself be a harbor for someone who needs it?” I love how each of the characters finds safe harbor in each other’s stories.

The Science of Breakable Things
Tae Keller
Publisher: Yearling
ISBN-10: 1524715697
Natalie Napoli is a 12-year-old girl who is convinced she can fix her mother who is a botanist suffering from depression. If she can just win the egg drop, win enough money for tickets to New Mexico, show her mother the miracle Cobalt Blue Orchid — a flower she hopes will bring her back to life — then everything will be solved. A moving book centered on themes of family, friendship, mental health, and STEM subjects.

The Stars Beneath Our Feet
David Barclay Moore
Publisher: Yearling
ISBN-10: 1524701270
Twelve-year old Wallace “Lolly” Rachpaul lives in Harlem is dealing with a lot after his older brother’s unexpected, tragic death. Family, friends, community, and a passion for building with LEGOs all help him navigate his own way in this poetic story about grief, anger, and coping with the tough breaks in life.
All Quiet on the Western Front: A Novel
Erich Maria Remarque
Publisher: Ballantine Books
ISBN-10: 0449213943

Considered by many the greatest war novel of all time, All Quiet on the Western Front is Erich Maria Remarque’s masterpiece of the German experience during World War I. “I am young, I am twenty years old; yet I know nothing of life, but despair, death, fear, and fatuous superficiality cast over an abyss of sorrow. . . .” This is the testament of Paul Bäumer, who enlists with his classmates in the German army during World War I. They become soldiers with youthful enthusiasm. But the world of duty, culture, and progress they had been taught breaks in pieces under the first bombardment in the trenches. Through years of vivid horror, Paul holds fast to a single vow: to fight against the principle of hate that meaninglesslly pits young men of the same generation but different uniforms against one another . . . if only he can come out of the war alive.

The Hunger Games (Book 1)
Suzanne Collins
Publisher: Scholastic Press
ISBN-10: 0439023521

Winning means fame and fortune. Losing means certain death. The Hunger Games have begun. . . . In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. The Capitol is harsh and cruel and keeps the districts in line by forcing them all to send one boy and one girl between the ages of twelve and eighteen to participate in the annual Hunger Games, a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen regards it as a death sentence when she steps forward to take her sister's place in the Games. But Katniss has been close to dead before-and survival, for her, is second nature. Without really meaning to, she becomes a contender. But if she is to win, she will have to start making choices that weigh survival against humanity and life against love.

The Shadow Thieves (1) (The Cronus Chronicles)
Anne Ursu
Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers
ISBN-10: 141690588X

Something extraordinary is about to happen to Charlotte Mielswetzki. It's not the very cute kitten that appears out of nowhere. It's not the arrival of her cousin Zee, who believes he's the cause of a mysterious sickness that has struck his friends back in England. And it's not the white-faced, yellow-eyed men in tuxedos who follow Charlotte everywhere. What's so extraordinary is not any one of these things. It's all of them. When Charlotte's friends start to get sick, Charlotte and Zee set out to find a cure. Their quest leads them to a not-so-mythical Underworld, where they face Harpies that love to rhyme, gods with personnel problems, and ghosts with a thirst for blood. Charlotte and Zee learn that in a world overrun by Nightmares, Pain, and Death, the really dangerous character is a guy named Phil. And then they discover that the fate of every person — living and dead — is in their hands.
The Catcher in the Rye
J.D. Salinger
Publisher: Little, Brown, and Company
ISBN-10: 0316769533
The "brilliant, funny, meaningful novel" (The New Yorker) that established J. D. Salinger as a leading voice in American literature—and that has instilled in millions of readers around the world a lifelong love of books.

"If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth."

The hero-narrator of The Catcher in the Rye is an ancient child of sixteen, a native New Yorker named Holden Caufield. Through circumstances that tend to preclude adult, secondhand description, he leaves his prep school in Pennsylvania and goes underground in New York City for three days.

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas
John Boyne
Publisher: David Fickling Books
ISBN-10: 0307494233
The Boy in the Striped Pajamas tells the story of Bruno, a young boy whose father works at Auschwitz. Bruno knows very little about Auschwitz or what his father does; he only knows that he is separated from all of the people behind the fence. He strikes up a friendship with another boy on the other side of the fence, which provides much-needed companionship for them both. This book is told solely from Bruno’s relentlessly innocent perspective, which is frustrating for the wise reader who wants him to face the reality of what’s happening. It’s unflinching, and you won’t be able to turn away, even as you can see what’s going to happen. I don’t recommend this for younger readers, but it will be impactful for pre-teens or young teens who can handle it.

The House on Mango Street
Sandra Cisneros
Publisher: Random House
ISBN-10: 0679735569
Acclaimed by critics, beloved by readers of all ages, taught everywhere from inner-city grade schools to universities across the country, and translated all over the world, The House on Mango Street is the remarkable story of Esperanza Cordero. Told in a series of vignettes—sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes deeply joyous—it is the story of a young Latina girl growing up in Chicago, inventing for herself who and what she will become. Few other books in our time have touched so many readers.
Refugee
Alan Gratz
Publisher: Scholastic Press
ISBN: 9780545880831

JOSEF is a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world.

ISABEL is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety in America.

MAHMOUD is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe.

All three kids go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers — from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But there is always the hope of tomorrow. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, shocking connections will tie their stories together in the end. This action-packed novel tackles topics both timely and timeless: courage, survival, and the quest for home.

Edge of Nowhere
John Smlecer
Publisher: Leapfrog Press
ISBN: 9781935248576

Sixteen-year-old Seth and his dog fall off his father's commercial fishing boat in Prince William Sound. They struggle to survive off land and sea as they work their way home from island to island in a three-month journey. The isolation allows Seth to understand his father's love, accept his Native Alaskan heritage, and accept his grief over his mother's death.

Black Ice
Lorene Cary
Publisher: Vintage
ISBN: 9780679737452
ISBN-10: 0679737456

In 1972 Lorene Cary, a bright, ambitious black teenager from Philadelphia, was transplanted into the formerly all-white, all-male environs of the elite St. Paul's School in New Hampshire, where she became a scholarship student in a "boot camp" for future American leaders. Like any good student, she was determined to succeed. But Cary was also determined to succeed without selling out. This wonderfully frank and perceptive memoir describes the perils and ambiguities of that double role, in which failing calculus and winning a student election could both be interpreted as betrayals of one's skin. Black Ice is also a universally recognizable document of a woman's adolescence; it is, as Houston Baker says, "a journey into selfhood that resonates with sober reflection, intelligent passion, and joyous love."
A timely, crucial, and empowering exploration of racism—and antiracism—in America.

*This is NOT a history book.*

*This is a book about the here and now.*

*A book to help us better understand why we are where we are.*

*A book about race.*

The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power, to create dynamics that separate and silence. This remarkable reimagining of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi’s National Book Award-winning *Stamped from the Beginning* reveals the history of racist ideas in America and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited. Through a gripping, fast-paced, and energizing narrative written by beloved award-winner Jason Reynolds, this book shines a light on the many insidious forms of racist ideas—and on ways readers can identify and stamp out racist thoughts in their daily lives.