

Incoming 6th Grade Summer Reading Assignment – 2019 - 2020

Dear Students,

We are so excited to work with you next year in middle school, and we are eagerly preparing for our classes with you in September!

Over the summer, please read two (2) books. The first book must be *The Lightning Thief*, by Rick Riordan, which will tie in perfectly with our first unit on mythology and the hero's journey. The other book you may choose on your own, but please try hard to choose a book that is both interesting and challenging.

After you finish the books, please complete one (1) reading letter, describing in detail the two books you read. Follow the guidelines listed below:

Reading Letter Content

- Paragraph 1 - Summarize the plot of *The Lightning Thief*, including characters, setting, major problems, and how the problems are solved (8-15 sentences).
- Paragraph 2 - Summarize the plot of your *second* book, including characters, setting, major problems, and how the problems are solved (8-15 sentences).
- Paragraph 3 – Explain which book was your favorite. In your response, justify your choice with details and examples from the book (5-10 sentences).

Reading Letter Format

- Start with a greeting (Dear Mr. Walter and Ms. Poloner,)
- End with a closing (Sincerely, Your Name)
- Double spaced, Times New Roman, Size 12 Font

This assignment is due, PRINTED and ready to hand in to your English teacher, on the first day of school. Should you misplace your assignment, you can always access this information on our BWL website at

http://www.bwl.org/middle_school, or you can email Mr. Walter at james.walter@bwl.org. Happy summer and happy reading!

Sincerely,

Your 6th Grade teachers

SAMPLE 6th Grade Summer Reading Letter

Dear 6th Grade Teachers,

This summer I read a book called *Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library* by Chris Grabenstein. The main character's name is Kyle; he is a huge game fanatic. He loves board games, word games, video games... all kinds of games. It just so happens that his hero, Mr. Lemoncello, the inventor of all of his favorite games, has built a new library in Kyle's town. As part of the celebration for the opening of the new library, twelve lucky kids get to have a sleepover inside. Kyle gets chosen, but when he gets to the library, the doors are locked and all the kids are stuck inside. He quickly realizes that Mr. Lemoncello has designed an elaborate game that the kids must solve in order to escape from the library. This book was really fun to read because I love puzzles and games, too. Kyle forms alliances with different kids so they can work together to figure out the puzzles. The whole time I was reading it, I was reminded of the TV show "Survivor." In the end, of course Kyle and his friends win, and the kids who showed bad sportsmanship the entire time are kicked out.

For my second book, I chose to read *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*. This book is a bit different from my normal genre choice because it is historical fiction, but I thought I'd give it a try. The story is about Byron and Kenny Watson, two brothers growing up in Flint, Michigan in the early 1960s. Kenny is a huge nerd who is constantly bullied by his classmates. Byron, the older brother, always gets in trouble with his parents for acting out in school and making bad decisions at home (like lighting matches in the bathroom!). To teach Byron a lesson, his parents decide to drive the family down to Birmingham, Alabama

to drop Byron off for the summer with Grandma Sands. Little do they know, life in Alabama is a LOT different for African Americans than it is in Michigan. The family experience segregation, racism, and even a church bombing. In the end, Kenny and Byron realize they have to grow up quickly, because the world isn't all fun and games. They have to find the strength and courage within themselves to face their problems. I thought for sure that Joey (Byron and Kenny's little sister) was going to die at the end, but luckily she didn't. This still ended up being a sad book in the end.

Of all the books I read, I think my favorite was *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*. I say this because even though the ending was a little sad, it still had so much humor. Byron always gets himself into hilarious situations, like the time his lips froze to the car mirror (he was kissing his own reflection!). He also tells his brother and sister funny stories, like when he told them Southern people freeze in the winter in the North and garbage trucks pick up their frozen, dead bodies. I also thought it was sad when Kenny hid behind the couch for several weeks after the bombing. I got a little emotional reading that part! The author did a great job showing how devastated and frightened he was after that experience. I've never lived through anything so traumatic, but I think if I had experienced something like that, I would have reacted in the same way. I was so glad the book ended on a positive note, with Kenny recovering and becoming better friends with Byron.

Sincerely,

Susie Smith