

Sixth Grade Summer Reading

OVERVIEW

All 6th grade students are required to read three books: *Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper and two additional books from the 6th Grade Directed Reading List below. Students should not select any texts that they have previously read, and students should submit the reading log to their English teachers when they return to school in August.

The purpose of summer reading at Baylor is to encourage students to develop a life-long habit of reading, echo the students' classroom learning experiences, and provide opportunities for students to read classics and other texts that expand their perspectives and stimulate interest in the world around them.

CLASSICS

The Westing Game, Ellen Raskin

A bizarre chain of events begins when sixteen unlikely people gather for the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will. Although no one knows why the eccentric, game-loving millionaire has chosen a virtual stranger—and a possible murderer—to inherit his vast fortune, one thing's for sure: Sam Westing may be dead...but that won't stop him from playing one last game!

Anne of Green Gables, L.M. Montgomery

Anne of Green Gables recounts the adventures of Anne Shirley, an 11-year-old orphan girl who is mistakenly sent to live with Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert. The family had originally intended to adopt a boy to help them on their farm in Prince Edward Island, but they can't help but be charmed by Anne's spirit. As a child of imagination, Anne takes much joy in life and adapts quickly, thriving in the close-knit farming village. Anne's story is full of humor, and the book follows her adventures at the country school where she quickly excels in her studies, her friendship with Diana Barry, her budding literary ambitions, and her rivalry with classmate Gilbert Blythe.

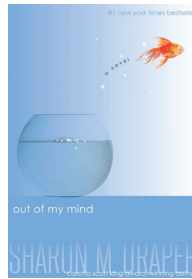
The Birchbark House, Louise Erdrich

Omakayas and her family live on the land her people call the Island of the Golden-Breasted Woodpecker. Although the "chimookoman" encroach more and more on their land, life continues much as it always has: every summer they build a new birchbark house; every fall they go to ricing camp to harvest and feast; they move to the cedar log house before the first snows arrive, and celebrate the end of the long, cold winters at maple-sugaring camp. In between, Omakayas fights with her annoying little brother, Pinch; plays with the adorable baby, Neewo; and tries to be grown-up like her big sister, Angeline. But the satisfying rhythms of their life are shattered when a visitor comes to their lodge one winter night, bringing with him an invisible enemy that will change things forever – but that will eventually lead Omakayas to discover her calling.

REALISTIC/COMING OF AGE FICTION

Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie, Jordan Sonnenblick

Thirteen-year-old Steven has a totally normal life: he plays drums in the All-Star Jazz band, has a crush on the cutest girl in the school, and is constantly annoyed by his five-year-old brother, Jeffrey. When Jeffrey is diagnosed with



Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper

Eleven-year-old Melody has a photographic memory. Her head is like a video camera that is always recording. Always. And there's no delete button. She's the smartest kid in her whole school—but NO ONE knows it. Most people—her teachers and doctors included—don't think she's capable of learning, and up until recently her school days consisted of listening to the same preschool-level alphabet lessons again and again and again. If only she could speak up, if only she could tell people what she thinks and knows. But she can't. She can't talk. She can't walk. She can't write. Being stuck inside her head is making Melody go out of her mind—that is, until she discovers something that will allow her to speak for the first time ever. At last Melody has a voice...but not everyone around her is ready to hear it. From multiple Coretta Scott King Award winner Sharon M. Draper comes a story full of heartache and hope. Get ready to meet a girl whose voice you'll never, ever forget.

leukemia, Steven's world is turned upside down. He is forced to deal with his brother's illness and his parents' attempts to keep the family in one piece. Salted with humor and peppered with devastating realities, *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* is a heartwarming journey through a year in the life of a family in crisis.

When You Trap a Tiger, Tae Keller (2021 Newbery Medal Winner)

Some stories refuse to stay bottled up...When Lily and her family move in with her sick grandmother, a magical tiger straight out of her halmoni's Korean folktales arrives, prompting Lily to unravel a secret family history. Long, long ago, Halmoni stole something from the tigers. Now they want it back. And when one of the tigers approaches Lily with a deal—return what her grandmother stole in exchange for Halmoni's health—Lily is tempted to agree. But deals with tigers are never what they seem! With the help of her sister and her new friend Ricky, Lily must find her voice...and the courage to face a tiger.

Before the Ever After, Jacqueline Woodson

For as long as ZJ can remember, his dad has been everyone's hero. As a charming, talented pro football star, he's as beloved to the neighborhood kids he plays with as he is to his millions of adoring sports fans. But lately life at ZJ's house is anything but charming. His dad is having trouble remembering things and seems to be angry all the time. ZJ's mom explains it's because of all the head injuries his dad sustained during his career. ZJ can understand that—but it doesn't make the sting any less real when his own father forgets his name. As ZJ contemplates his new reality, he has to figure out how to hold on tight to family traditions and recollections of the glory days, all the while wondering what their past amounts to if his father can't remember it. And most importantly, can those happy feelings ever be reclaimed when they are all so busy aching for the past?

HISTORICAL FICTION

Stella by Starlight, Sharon Draper

Stella lives in the segregated South—in Bumblebee, North Carolina, to be exact about it. Some stores she can go into. Some stores she can't. Some folks are right pleasant. Others are a lot less so. Late one night, later than she should ever be up, much less wandering around outside, Stella and her little brother see something they're never supposed to see, something that is

the first flicker of change to come, unwelcome change by any stretch of the imagination. As Stella's community—her world—is upended, she decides to fight fire with fire, and she learns that ashes don't necessarily signify an end.

Chains, Laurie Halse Anderson

As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom.

SCI-FI and FANTASY

Aru Shah and the End of Time, Roshani Chokshi

Twelve-year-old Aru Shah has a tendency to stretch the truth in order to fit in at school. While her classmates are jetting off to family vacations in exotic locales, she'll be spending her autumn break at home, in the Museum of Ancient Indian Art and Culture, waiting for her mom to return from her latest archeological trip. Is it any wonder that Aru makes up stories about being royalty, traveling to Paris, and having a chauffeur? One day, three schoolmates show up at Aru's doorstep to catch her in a lie. They don't believe her claim that the museum's Lamp of Bharata is cursed, and they dare Aru to prove it. Just a quick light, Aru thinks, and then she can get herself out of this mess and never ever fib again, but lighting the lamp has dire consequences. She unwittingly frees the Sleeper, an ancient demon whose duty it is to awaken the God of Destruction. Her classmates and beloved mother are frozen in time, and it's up to Aru to save them.

Tesla's Attic, Neal Shusterman

After their home burns down, fourteen-year-old Nick, his younger brother, and their father move into a ramshackle Victorian house they've inherited. When Nick opens the door to his attic room, he's hit in the head by a toaster, and that's just the beginning of his weird experiences with the old junk stored up there. After getting rid of the odd antiques in a garage sale, Nick befriends some local kids, Mitch, Caitlin, and Vincent, and they discover that all of the objects have extraordinary properties. What's more, Nick figures out that the attic is a strange magnetic vortex, which attracts all sorts of trouble. It's as if the attic itself has an intelligence . . . and a purpose.

Saving Fable, Scott Reintgen

Indira has been a character-in-waiting her entire life, so she can't believe her luck when she's finally chosen to travel to Fable and study at the renowned Protagonist Preparatory, a school known for producing the best heroes. But Indira's dreams of achieving hero status don't exactly go as planned. A failed audition lands her in the school's side-character track, and her best efforts to prove advisors—famous characters like Alice from Wonderland and Professor Darcy—wrong are constantly sabotaged. Indira is starting to feel like an evil antagonist might be to blame. As the danger spreads, Indira discovers all of Fable is under siege. With her friends Maxi and Phoenix by her side, she pieces together clues that will reveal who is behind the dark magic threatening them all. But the more Indira uncovers, the more doubt she feels about her place in this world of stories. After all, can a side character really save the day?

MYSTERY

The Metropolitans, Carol Goodman

The day Japan bombs Pearl Harbor, four thirteen-year-olds converge at the Metropolitan Museum of Art where an eccentric curator is seeking four uncommonly brave souls to track down the hidden pages of the Kelmsbury Manuscript. The manuscript is an ancient book of Arthurian legends that lies scattered within the museum's collection that holds the key to preventing

a second attack on American soil. When Madge, Joe, Kiku, and Walt agree to help, they have no idea that the Kelmsbury is already working its magic on them, and they begin to develop extraordinary powers and experience the feelings of King Arthur, Queen Guinevere, Morgan le Fay, and Lancelot: courage, friendship, love...and betrayal. Are they playing out a legend that's already been lived, over and over, across the ages? Or can the Metropolitans forge their own story?

Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library, Chris Grabenstein

Kyle Keeley is the class clown and a huge fan of all games—board games, word games, and particularly video games. His hero, Luigi Lemoncello, the most notorious and creative game-maker in the world, just so happens to be the genius behind the construction of the new town library. Lucky Kyle wins a coveted spot as one of twelve kids invited for an overnight sleepover in the library, hosted by Mr. Lemoncello and riddled with lots and lots of games. But when morning comes, the doors stay locked, and Kyle and the other kids must solve every clue and figure out every secret puzzle to find the hidden escape route!

Framed, James Ponti

So, you're only halfway through your homework and the Director of the FBI keeps texting you for help...What do you do? Save your grade? Or save the country? If you're Florian Bates, you figure out a way to do both. Florian is twelve years old and has just moved to Washington. He's learning his way around using TOAST, which stands for the Theory of All Small Things. It's a technique he invented to solve life's little mysteries, such as where to sit on the on the first day of school, or which Chinese restaurant has the best eggrolls. But when he teaches it to his new friend Margaret, they uncover a mystery that isn't little. In fact, it's HUGE, and it involves the National Gallery, the FBI, and a notorious crime syndicate known as EEL. Can Florian decipher the clues and finish his homework in time to help the FBI solve the case?

NONFICTION

Calling All Minds: How to Think and Create Like an Inventor, Temple Grandin

Have you ever wondered what makes a kite fly or a boat float? Have you ever thought about why snowflakes are symmetrical, or why golf balls have dimples? Have you ever tried to make a kaleidoscope or build a pair of stilts? In *Calling All Minds*, Temple Grandin explores the ideas behind all of those questions and more. She delves into the science behind inventions, the steps various people took to create and improve upon ideas as they evolved, and the ways in which young inventors can continue to think about and understand what it means to tinker, to fiddle, and to innovate. Laced throughout it all, Temple gives us glimpses into her own childhood tinkering, building, and inventing. *Calling All Minds* creates a blueprint for different ways to look at the world and shows readers that there is truly no single way to approach any given problem—but that an open and inquisitive mind is always key.

Lincoln's Grave Robbers, Steve Sheinkin

The action begins in October of 1875 as Secret Service agents raid the Fulton, Illinois, workshop of master counterfeiter Ben Boyd. Soon after Boyd is hauled off to prison, members of his counterfeiting ring gather in the back room of a smoky Chicago saloon to discuss how to spring their ringleader out of jail. Their plan is to grab Abraham Lincoln's body from its Springfield tomb, stash it in the sand dunes near Lake Michigan, and demand, as a ransom, the release of Ben Boyd and \$200,000 in cash. From here, the action alternates between the conspirators, the Secret Service agents on their trail, and the undercover agent moving back and forth between the two groups. Along the way, readers get glimpses into the inner workings of counterfeiting, detective work, and the early days of the Secret Service.