



## **Sixth Grade Summer Reading – 2021**

Students will read **one** book from **Group A** and **one** book from **Group B**. Students should read books that they have not previously read.

### **GROUP A: *Choose one***

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Chains*. 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. (Amazon)

Lupika, Mike. *The Only Game*. Can a young baseball star maintain his love of the game after the loss of his brother? Jack Callahan is the star of his baseball team and sixth grade is supposed to be his year. Undefeated season. Records shattered. Little League World Series. The works. That is, until he up and quits. Jack's best friend Gus can't understand how Jack could leave a game that means more to them than anything else. But Jack is done. It's a year of change. Jack's brother has passed away, and though his family and friends and the whole town of Walton thinks baseball is just the thing he needs to move on, Jack feels it's anything but.

Medina, Meg. *Merci Suárez Changes Gears*. **Winner of the 2019 Newbery Medal**. Thoughtful, strong-willed sixth grader Merci Suárez navigates difficult changes with friends, family, and everyone in between in a resonant new novel from Meg Medina.

Merci Suárez knew that sixth grade would be different, but she had no idea just *how* different. For starters, Merci has never been like the other kids at her private school in Florida, because she and her older brother, Roli, are scholarship students. They don't have a big house or a fancy boat, and they have to do extra community service to make up for their free tuition. So when bossy Edna Santos sets her sights on the new boy who happens to be Merci's school-assigned Sunshine Buddy, Merci becomes the target of Edna's jealousy. Things aren't going well at home, either: Merci's grandfather and most trusted ally, Lolo, has been acting strangely lately. (Amazon)

Meloy, Maile. *The Apothecary*. It's 1952 and the Scott family has just moved from Los Angeles to London. Here, fourteen-year-old Janie meets a mysterious apothecary and his son, Benjamin Burrows - a fascinating boy who's not afraid to stand up to authority and dreams of becoming a spy. When Benjamin's father is kidnapped, Janie and Benjamin must uncover the secrets of the apothecary's sacred book, the Pharmacopoeia, in order to find him, all while keeping it out of the hands of their enemies - Russian spies in possession of nuclear weapons. Discovering and testing potions they never believed could exist, Janie and Benjamin embark on a dangerous race to save the apothecary and prevent impending disaster.

Myers, Walter Dean . *The Journal of Bidly Owens: The Negro Leagues* . Teenager Bidly Owens' 1948 journal about working for the Birmingham Black Barons includes the games and the players, racism the team faces from New Orleans to Chicago, and his family's resistance to his becoming a professional baseball player. Includes a historical note about the evolution of the Negro Leagues.

Entrada Kelly, Erin. *Hello, Universe*. Told from four intertwining points of view—two boys and two girls—the novel celebrates bravery, being different, and finding your inner *bayani* (hero). “Readers will be instantly engrossed in this relatable neighborhood adventure and its eclectic cast of misfits.”—*Booklist*

In one day, four lives weave together in unexpected ways. Virgil Salinas is shy and kindhearted and feels out of place in his crazy-about-sports family. Valencia Somerset, who is deaf, is smart, brave, and secretly lonely, and she loves everything about nature. Kaori Tanaka is a self-proclaimed psychic, whose little sister, Gen, is always following her around. And Chet Bullens wishes the weird kids would just stop being so different so he can concentrate on basketball. (HarperCollins)

### **GROUP B: Choose one – Meeting Challenges**

Anderson, Laurie Halse . *Fever 1793*. In 1793 Philadelphia, sixteen-year-old Matilda Cook, separated from her sick mother, learns about perseverance and self-reliance when she is forced to cope with the horrors of a yellow fever epidemic.

Bruchac, Joseph. *A Code Talker: A novel about the Navajo Marines of World War II*. After being taught in a boarding school run by whites that Navajo is a useless language, Ned Begay and other Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become Code Talkers, sending messages during World War II in their native tongue.

Denenberg, Barry. *The Journal of Ben Uchida, Citizen 13559, Mirror Lake Internment Camp, CA, 1942*. Ben Uchida, An American citizen, spent his twelfth and thirteenth years in a Japanese internment camp. This journal captures his struggles as he learns that compassion and humor can help his family endure the World War II internment camp. (Can be found on Amazon. Com)

de los Santos, Marisa and Teague, David. *Connect the Stars*. From *Saving Lucas Biggs* by the same authors comes a heartwarming middle grade adventure about two misfits discovering the importance of just being themselves. When thirteen-year-olds Aaron and Audrey meet at a wilderness camp in the desert, they think their quirks are enough to prevent them from ever having friends. But as they trek through the challenging and unforgiving landscape, they learn that they each have what it takes to make the other whole. Luminous and clever, *Connect the Stars* takes on some hefty topics of the day—bullying, understanding where you fit in, and learning to live with physical and mental challenges—all in a joyous adventure kids will love! (Amazon)

Lai, Thanhha. *Inside Out and Back Again*. Based on the author's own childhood and written in free-verse poems, this unforgettable story captures a fierce girl's struggles to find her place in her family, in her new home, and in the world. Things are changing in Hà's world, as the Vietnam War comes closer and closer to her home in Saigon. Her friends and neighbors are leaving, her oldest brother is speaking out against the North, and the likelihood of being reunited with her father — who has been missing in action for nine years — is growing dimmer. When Saigon falls in 1975, Hà and her family are forced to flee on a navy ship and, after spending months in refugee camps, end up moving to Alabama. There, Hà struggles to deal with everything from learning the language and customs to handling the bullies who make fun of her at school. Will she ever feel at home in this strange new land? And will she ever see her father again?

Pearsall, Shelley. *Jump into the Sky*. It's May 5, 1945. Carrying nothing but a suitcase and a bag of his aunt's good fried chicken, 13-year-old Levi Battle heads south to a U.S. Army post in search of his father—a lieutenant in an elite unit of all black paratroopers. The fact that his father doesn't even know he's coming turns out to be the least of his problems. As Levi makes his way across the United States, he learns hard lessons about the way a black boy is treated in the Jim Crow South. And when he arrives at his destination, his struggles are far from over. The war may be ending, but his father's secret mission is just beginning—and it's more dangerous than anybody imagined. . . .

Sherry, Maureen, *Walls within Walls*. After their father, a video-game inventor, strikes it rich, the Smithfork kids find they hate their new life. They move from their cozy Brooklyn neighborhood to a swanky apartment on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue. They have no friends, a nanny who takes the place of their parents, and a school year looming ahead that promises to be miserable.

And then, one day, Brid, CJ, and Patrick discover an astonishing secret about their apartment: The original owner, the deceased multimillionaire Mr. Post, long ago turned the apartment itself into a giant puzzle containing a mysterious book and hidden panels—a puzzle that, with some luck, courage, and brainpower, will lead to discovering the Post family fortune. Unraveling the mystery causes them to race through today's New York City—and to uncover some long-hidden secrets of the past. (Amazon)

Sonnichsen, A. L., *Red Butterfly*. A young, orphaned girl in modern-day China discovers the meaning of family in this “heartbreaking, heartwarming, and impressive debut” (Publishers Weekly, starred review) told in verse, in the tradition of *Inside Out and Back Again*. Kara never met her birth mother. Abandoned as an infant, she was taken in by an American woman living in China. Now eleven, Kara spends most of her time in their apartment, wondering why she and Mama cannot leave the city of Tianjin and go live with Daddy in Montana. Mama tells Kara to be content with what she has...but what if Kara secretly wants more?

Told in lyrical, moving verse, *Red Butterfly* is the story of a girl learning to trust her own voice, discovering that love and family are limitless, and finding the wings she needs to reach new heights. (Barnes and Noble)