

Friends Academy  
2021 Middle School Summer Reading List  
for students entering  
**6th Grade**

### Challenge One

Students entering sixth grade are required to read the following:

Stead, Rebecca. *When You Reach Me*.\*

ISBN-13: 978-0375850868

**Mystery**

**2010 Newbery Medal Winner**

Twelve-year-old Miranda travels in her 1970s New York City neighborhood with ease. But her everyday life becomes harder to navigate as she tries to make sense of notes from an anonymous source who claims to want to save her life. There is a crisscross of reality and fantasy in this book that is similar to *A Wrinkle in Time*, Miranda's favorite book.

### Challenge Two

Students entering sixth grade are also required to read one book from the following list:

Anderson, John David. *Posted*.

ISBN-13: 978-0062338211

**Realistic Fiction**

When cell phones are banned at Branton Middle School, Frost and his friends Deedee, Wolf, and Bench come up with a new way to communicate: leaving sticky notes for each other all around the school. It catches on, and soon all the kids in school are leaving notes—though for every kind and friendly one, there is a cutting and cruel one as well. A sticky-note war quickly escalates, and the pressure to choose sides mounts. Frost soon realizes that after this year, nothing will ever be the same.

Behar, Ruth. *Lucky Broken Girl*.

ISBN-13: 978-0399546457

**Historical Fiction**

In this novel, based on the author's childhood in the 1960s, a young Cuban-Jewish immigrant girl is adjusting to her new life in New York City when a car accident leaves her in a body cast and confined to her bed for a long recovery. As Ruthie's world shrinks because of her inability to move, her powers of observation and her heart grow larger and she comes to understand how fragile life is, how vulnerable we all are as human beings, and how friends, neighbors, and the power of the arts can sweeten even the worst of times.

\*Buyea, Rob. *The Perfect Score*. **Series**

**Realistic Fiction**

No one likes or wants to take the statewide assessment tests. Not the students in Mrs. Woods's sixth-grade class. Not even Mrs. Woods. It's not as if the kids don't already have things to worry about. . . . Randi is under pressure to be the top gymnast her mother expects her to be, football-crazy GAVIN struggles with reading, Trevor acts tough and mean, but as much as he

hates school, he hates being home even more, Scott's got a big brain and an even bigger heart but his good intentions always backfire in spectacular ways, and know-it-all Natalie who loves to follow the rules is about to break them all. When one of the kids has a big idea for acing the tests, they're all in. But things get ugly before they get better, and in the end, the real meaning of the perfect score surprises them all.

Book 1: *The Perfect Score* ISBN-13: 978-1101938287

Book 2: *The Perfect Secret* ISBN-13: 978-1524764623

Book 3: *The Perfect Star* ISBN-13: 978-1524764661

**\*Note that the Mr. Terupt series by Rob Buyea is also approved!**

Colfer, Chris. *The Land of Stories*. **Series**

**Fantasy**

*The Land of Stories* tells the tale of twins Alex and Conner. Through the mysterious powers of a cherished book of stories, they leave their world behind and find themselves in a foreign land full of wonder and magic where they come face-to-face with fairy tale characters they grew up reading about. But after a series of encounters with witches, wolves, goblins, and trolls alike, getting back home is going to be harder than they thought.

Book 1: *The Wishing Spell* ISBN-13: 978-0316201568

Book 2: *The Enchantress Returns* ISBN-13: 978-0316201551

Book 3: *A Grimm Warning* ISBN-13: 978-0316406826

Book 4: *Beyond the Kingdoms* ISBN-13: 978-0316406871

Book 5: *An Author's Odyssey* ISBN-13: 978-0316383219

Book 6: *Worlds Collide* ISBN-13: 978-0316355889

Dashner, James. *The Maze Runner*. **Series**

**Science Fiction**

Follow Mark, Trina, and Thomas as they struggle to solve the Maze and cross the Scorch while having to rely on Gladers and fight off Cranks. If only they were so sure that they could trust Wicked as they mark their way through these trails.

Origin Story Book 4: *Kill Order* ISBN-13: 978-0385742894

Prequel Book 5: *The Fever Code* ISBN-13: 978-0553513127

Book 1: *Maze Runner* ISBN-13: 978-0385737951

Book 2: *Scorch Trials* ISBN-13: 978-0385738767

Book 3: *Death Cure* ISBN-13: 978-0385738781

Gibbs, Stuart. *Spy School*. **Series**

**Fantasy**

Can an undercover nerd become a superstar agent? Ben Ripley sure hopes so—and his life may depend on it! Ben Ripley may only be in middle school, but he's already pegged his dream job: C.I.A. or bust. Unfortunately for him, his personality doesn't exactly scream "secret agent." In fact, Ben is so awkward, he can barely get to school and back without a mishap. Because of his innate nerdiness, Ben is not surprised when he is recruited for a magnet school with a focus on science—but he's entirely shocked to discover that the school is actually a front for a junior C.I.A. academy. Could the C.I.A. really want him?

Book 1: *Spy School* ISBN-13: 978-1442421837

Book 2: *Spy Camp* ISBN-13: 978-1442457546

Book 3: *Evil Spy School* ISBN-13: 978-1442494909

Book 4: *Ski Spy School* ISBN-13: 978-1481445634  
Book 5: *Spy School Secret Service* ISBN-13: 978-1481477833  
Book 6: *Spy School Goes South* ISBN-13: 978-1481477864  
Book 7: *Spy School British Invasion* ISBN-13: 978-1534424715

Graff, Lisa. *Absolutely Almost*. ISBN-13: 978-0147508577 **Realistic Fiction**  
Albie has never been the smartest kid in his class. He has never been the tallest. Or the best at P.E. Or the greatest artist. Or the most musical. In fact, Albie has a long list of the things he's not very good at. But then Albie gets a new babysitter, Calista, who helps him figure out all of the things he is good at and how he can take pride in himself.

Hoge, Robert. *Ugly*. ISBN-13: 978-0425287774 **Nonfiction**  
When Robert Hoge was born, he had a tumor the size of a tennis ball in the middle of his face and short, twisted legs. Surgeons removed the tumor and made him a new nose from one of his toes. Amazingly, he survived—with a face that would never be the same. Strangers stared at him, kids called him names, and adults could be cruel in their own ways. Everybody seemed to agree that Robert was "ugly." But Robert refused to let his face dictate his entire life. Then, when Robert came face to face with the biggest decision of his life, he followed his heart.

Hunter, Erin. *Bravelands, Seekers, Survivors, or Warriors. Series\** **Fantasy**  
Animal fantasy series that focus on the adventures of animals of the African plains (*Bravelands*), wild bears (*Seekers*), packs of dogs (*Survivors*), and clans of wild cats (*Warriors*).  
Bravelands Book 1: *Broken Pride* ISBN-13: 978-0062642042  
Seekers Book 1: *The Quest Begins* ISBN-13: 978-0060871246  
Survivors Book 1: *The Empty City* ISBN-13: 978-0062102584  
Warriors Book 1: *Into the Wild* ISBN-13: 978-0062366962  
**\*Any book in any of these series is approved!**

\*Korman, Gordon. *Restart*. ISBN-13: 978-1338053807 **Realistic Fiction**  
Will a bully always be a bully? That's the question eighth-grade football captain Chase Ambrose has to answer for himself after a fall from his roof leaves him with no memory of who and what he was. When he returns to Hiawasse Middle School, everything and everyone is new.  
**\*All Gordon Korman books approved!**

Kraft, Jerry. *New Kid.\** ISBN-13: 978-0062691194 **Graphic Novel**  
Seventh-grader Jordan Banks is recently enrolled in a prestigious private school as one of the few kids of color. Drawn from the author-illustrator's own middle school experiences, this story explores complex topics of race, class, and friendship without ever becoming overwhelming or confusing; the balance of varied perspectives is handled with honesty and thoughtfulness.  
**\*Winner 2020 Newbery Medal & Coretta Scott King Award**

Mass, Wendy. *Jeremy Fink and the Meaning of Life* ISBN-13: 978-0316058490 **Mystery**  
Just before his thirteenth birthday, Jeremy Fink receives a keyless locked box, set aside by his father before his death five years earlier, that purportedly contains the meaning of life.

- Raskin, Ellen. *The Westing Game*. ISBN-13: 978-0451480989 **Mystery**  
 1979 Newbery Medal Winner. The mysterious death of an eccentric millionaire brings together an unlikely assortment of heirs who must solve the mystery of his death before they can claim their inheritance.
- Rawls, Wilson. *Where the Red Fern Grows*. ISBN-13: 978-0440412670 **Classic Fiction**  
 When four twelve-year-olds, including Logan, who has grown up never leaving his parents' Life Is Sweet candy factory, compete in the Confectionary Association's annual contest, they unexpectedly become friends and uncover secrets about themselves during the process.
- Respicio, Mae. *The House that Lou Built*. ISBN-13: 978-1524717971 **Realistic Fiction**  
 Lou Bulosan-Nelson is going to build her dream. She shares a room with her mom in her grandmother's house in San Francisco, and longs for a place of her own where she can escape her lovable but large extended Filipino family. Lou has a talent for woodshop class and creating projects, and plans to build a tiny house, 100 square feet, all her own, on land that she inherited from her dad, who died before she was born. Then Lou discovers it's not so easy to build one, but she won't give up on her dream—and her friends and family won't either.
- Sachar, Louis. *Holes\**. ISBN-13: 978-0440414803 **Realistic Fiction**  
 Stanley Yelnats tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment—and redemption. Stanley is under a curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnats. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the warden makes the boys "build character" by spending all day, every day, digging holes: five feet wide and five feet deep. It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake.  
**\*If you like *Holes*, check out the sequel, *Small Steps*!**
- Spinelli, Jerry. *Loser*. ISBN-13: 978-0060540746 **Realistic Fiction**  
 Just like other kids, Zinkoff rides his bike, hopes for snow days, and wants to be like his dad when he grows up. But Zinkoff also raises his hand with all the wrong answers, trips over his own feet, and falls down with laughter over a word like "Jabip." Other kids have their own word to describe him, but Zinkoff is too busy to hear it. He doesn't know he's not like everyone else. And one winter night, Zinkoff's differences show that any name can someday become "hero."
- Stead, Rebecca. *Liar & Spy*. ISBN-13: 978-0375850875 **Realistic Fiction**  
 The first day Georges (the S is silent) moves into a new Brooklyn apartment, he sees a sign taped to a door in the basement: SPY CLUB MEETING—TODAY! That's how he meets his twelve-year-old neighbor, Safer. He and Georges quickly become allies—and fellow spies. Their assignment? Tracking the mysterious Mr. X, who lives in the apartment upstairs. But as Safer's requests become more and more demanding, Georges starts to wonder: how far is too far to go for your only friend?

Telgemeier, Raina. *Guts*.

**ISBN-13:** 978-0545852500 **Graphic Novel/Nonfiction**

Raina wakes up one night with a terrible upset stomach. Her mom has one, too, so it's probably just a bug. Raina eventually returns to school, where she's dealing with the usual highs and lows: friends, not-friends, and classmates who think the school year is just one long gross-out session. It soon becomes clear that Raina's tummy trouble isn't going away... and it coincides with her worries about food, school, and changing friendships. What's going on?

Venkatraman, Padma. *The Bridge Home*.

**ISBN-13:** 978-1524738136

**Realistic Fiction**

Life is harsh in Chennai, India's teeming streets, so when runaway sisters Viji and Rukku arrive, their prospects look grim. Very quickly, eleven-year-old Viji discovers how vulnerable they are in this uncaring, dangerous world. Fortunately, the girls find shelter--and friendship--on an abandoned bridge. With two homeless boys, Muthi and Arul, the group forms a family of sorts. And while making a living scavenging the city's trash heaps is the pits, the kids find plenty to laugh about and take pride in too. But when illness strikes, Viji must decide whether to risk seeking help from strangers or to keep holding on to their fragile, hard-fought freedom.

Wolk, Lauren. *Beyond the Bright Sea*.

**ISBN-13:** 978-1101994870

**Adventure**

Abandoned as an infant and rescued by a man named Osh, 12-year-old Crow knows nothing about her background - or even the world outside her island home. When she sees a mysterious fire across the water, it kindles curiosity in her, and sends her on a journey of discovery and danger.