



6th Grade Summer Reading Assignments

Greetings, Rising 6th Graders!

We are very excited to welcome you to Highlands' Middle School and look forward to working with you in language arts and humanities. In addition to the books you choose to read over the summer, you will need to secure your own copies of the titles below (links to Amazon), read them, and complete the writing assignments before school begins.

A note to parents:

5th-grade humanities' State course of study focused on the history of the United States from its beginnings to the Industrial Revolution/Civil War. 6th-grade humanities' State standards pick up with the Industrial Revolution/Civil War and endeavor to explore U.S. history to the present.

From the Alabama Social Studies Course of Study: "Sixth-grade content standards focus on the history of the United States from the Industrial Revolution to the present. Historical events studied by sixth graders include the rise of the United States as an industrial nation, World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War Era. Furthermore, the economic, political, social, and technological issues and developments from post-World War II to the present are explored. Emphasis is placed on economic, geographic, historic, and civic and governmental changes that have influenced every aspect of life during these events, including communication and technological advances, reorganization of national boundaries, and the movement of the United States into the role of world leader.

"Sixth-grade students are interested in acquiring a deeper understanding of cultures and political opinions that differ from their own.... As they enter into a transitional stage characterized by physical, cognitive, and social changes, they begin to analyze and evaluate relationships between ideas and practices" (Alabama Achieves, 2010, pp. 35-40).

Summer reading at Highlands Middle School weaves language arts and social studies into a humanities program with meaningful overlap. The summer reading selections for rising 6th graders feature first-hand accounts, from children their age, in developmentally appropriate language and format that explore the "human costs associated with World War II" and "critique major social and cultural changes in the United States since World War II" (Alabama Achieves, 2010, pp. 37, 38).

Required:

- [Farewell to Manzanar](#), memoir by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston

Synopsis:

During World War II a community called Manzanar was created in the high mountain desert country of California. Its purpose was to house thousands of Japanese Americans. Among them was the Wakatsuki family, who were ordered to leave their fishing business in Long Beach and take with them only the belongings they could carry. Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, who was seven years old when she arrived at Manzanar in 1942, recalls life in the camp through the eyes of the child she was.

- [Gaijin: American Prisoner of War](#), graphic historical novel by Matt Faulkner

Synopsis:

With a white mother and a Japanese father, Koji Miyamoto quickly realizes that his home in San Francisco is no longer a welcoming one after Pearl Harbor is attacked. And once he's sent to an internment camp, he learns that being half white at the camp is just as difficult as being half Japanese on the streets of an American city during WWII. Koji's story, based on true events, is brought to life by Matt Faulkner's cinematic illustrations that reveal Koji struggling to find his place in a tumultuous world—one where he is a prisoner of war in his own country.

- [Anne Frank's Diary: The Graphic Adaptation](#), Anne Frank's memoir adapted by Ari Folman and illustrated by David Polonsky

Description:

Adapted by Ari Folman, illustrated by David Polonsky, and authorized by the Anne Frank Foundation in Basel, this is the first graphic edition of *The Diary* and includes extensive quotation directly from the definitive edition. It remains faithful to the original, while the stunning illustrations interpret and add layers of visual meaning and immediacy to this classic work of Holocaust literature.

Required: Writing About the Literature

For each book, in a Google Doc, type a well developed **paragraph** where you describe the main character's central conflict and the solution(s) they find. Use at least **three direct quotes** from the book in each paragraph. Be sure to **include the author's last name and page number** of each quote in parentheses: (Faulkner 37).

Your **three paragraphs** will be due the first week of school and should give us an idea of your finest writing.

(Optional) For Challenge & Enrichment in Humanities

W.E.B. DuBois' [The Souls of Black Folk](#) is a collection of essays written on a ninth grade reading level and is recommended for students interested in history and who enjoy challenging literature.

Synopsis

This landmark book is a founding work in the literature of black protest. W.E.B. DuBois (1868–1963) played a key role in developing the strategy and program that dominated early 20th-century black protest in America. In this collection of essays, first published together in 1903, he eloquently affirms that it is beneath the dignity of a human being to beg for those rights that belong inherently to all humanity. He also charges that the strategy of accommodation to white supremacy, advanced by Booker T. Washington, then the most influential black leader in America, would only serve to perpetuate Black oppression.

Publication of *The Souls of Black Folk* was a dramatic event that helped to polarize Black leaders into two groups: the more conservative followers of Washington and the more radical supporters of aggressive protest. Its influence cannot be overstated. It is essential reading for everyone interested in African-American history and the struggle for Civil Rights in America.