

## HIES SIXTH GRADE: SUMMER READING 2025

“A great book is the best of friends, the same today and forever.”

*Martin Tupper, 1838*

Students must read **TWO** books this summer. **All** students are required to read *A Rover's Story* by Jasmine Warga. In addition, you and your parents should review the “choice” reading selections below and select a second book that you will enjoy reading.

**EVALUATION FOR SUMMER READING:** You will need to be prepared for focused activities related to both of your summer reading books. At the start of the school year, we will engage in class discussions and activities focused on *A Rover's Story*, leading to a final assessment. For the choice book, instead of completing an assignment over the summer, you will complete an alternate assessment during the first few weeks of school. Every student is expected to have completed reading both novels prior to the start of school.

### **The Required Novel:**

Warga, Jasmine. **A ROVER'S STORY.** Meet Resilience, a Mars rover determined to live up to his name, Res was built to explore Mars. He was not built to have human emotions. But as he learns new things from the NASA scientists who assemble him, he begins to develop human-like feelings. Maybe there's a problem with his programming....

### **Student Choice Reading List :**

Choose one novel from this list to be your additional novel.

Albus, Kate. **NOTHING ELSE BUT MIRACLES.**

An ancient and creaky hand-cranked elevator leads to a secret apartment in an abandoned hotel in World War II era New York. To avoid getting sent to an orphanage by their cranky new landlord, twelve-year-old Dory and her two brothers need a place to hide out while their father is away in Europe fighting the Nazis. When the letters from their father stop arriving and their money runs low, the children show their ingenuity with the help of their neighbors on the Lower East Side. This is a great book for lovers of historical fiction and mystery.

Bauer, Joan. **HOPE WAS HERE.**

When Hope and her aunt move to small-town Wisconsin to take over the local diner, Hope's not sure what to expect. But what they find is that the owner, G.T., isn't quite ready to give up yet--in fact, he's decided to run for mayor against a corrupt candidate. And as Hope starts to make her place at the diner, she also finds herself caught up in G.T.'s campaign--particularly his visions for the future. After all, as G.T. points out, everyone can use a little hope to help get through the tough times . . . even Hope herself. Filled with heart, charm, and good old-fashioned fun, this is Joan Bauer at her best.

Bowling, Dusti. **MOMENTOUS EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF A CACTUS.**

Aven Green, the gutsy protagonist of *Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus*, is back in this exciting sequel that picks up when she starts high school and faces a whole new set of challenges and adventures. This book is a winner.

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker. **THE NIGHT WAR**

This middle-grade novel by the author of *The War that Saved my Life* and *The War I Almost Won* tells the story of Miriam, a Jewish girl who escapes the Nazi round-ups in Paris and has to flee to a boarding school in the French countryside where members of the French Resistance Movement help her to escape.

Brown, Daniel James. **THE BOYS IN THE BOAT.** (Young Readers Adaptation).

The astonishing tale of nine working-class boys from the American West who at the 1936 Olympics showed the world what true grit really meant. With rowers who were the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington's eight-oar crew was never expected to defeat the elite East Coast teams, yet they did, going on to shock the world by challenging the German boat rowing for Adolf Hitler.

Cooper, Susan. **OVER SEA, UNDER STONE.**

Three children on holiday in Cornwall find an ancient manuscript, which sends them on a dangerous quest for a grail that would reveal the true story of King Arthur.

DiCamillo, Kate. **THE BEATRYCE PROPHECY.**

A collaboration between two-time Newbery Award winner, Kate DiCamillo and two-time Caldecott winner, Sophie Blackall, this beautifully written and illustrated book is a play on a medieval epic complete with a courageous girl amend Beatryce, a cantankerous goat, a young monk, and the agents of the king who will seemingly stop at nothing to capture Beatryce. This is an exciting and memorable book for all readers.

Feinstein, John. **CHANGE-UP: MYSTERY AT THE WORLD SERIES.**

Teen reporters Stevie Thomas and Susan Carol Anderson are covering baseball's World Series, and during the course of an interview with a new hot pitcher, they discover more than a few contradictions in his life story. What's he hiding? An embarrassing secret? A possible crime? Let the investigation begin!

Gratz, Alan. **GROUND ZERO.**

September 11, 2001, New York City: Brandon is visiting his dad at work, on the 107th floor of the World Trade Center. Out of nowhere, an airplane slams into the tower, creating a fiery nightmare of terror and confusion. And Brandon is in the middle of it all. Can he survive -- and escape?

September 11, 2019, Afghanistan: Reshmina has grown up in the shadow of war, but she dreams of peace and progress. When a battle erupts in her village, Reshmina stumbles upon a wounded American soldier named Taz. Should she help Taz -- and put herself and her family in mortal danger? Two kids. One devastating day. Nothing will ever be the same. Amazon recommended reading age-11 and up.

Green, Tim. **BASEBALL GREAT.**

Twelve-year-old Josh LeBlanc has moved a lot in his life; his father is a minor league pitcher hoping to make it to the majors. After his dad is abruptly dumped by his Triple-A team, Josh realizes that he has a chance to stay in one town and play baseball on his school team. His father, however, has other plans, signing Josh up for a traveling team, led by an intense and sometimes brutal coach, whose formula for winning includes some dishonest, even illegal, components.

Green, Tim. **FOOTBALL GENIUS.**

Troy White has a lot of frustrations, but they are offset by his most unusual gift: the ability to predict coming football plays with uncanny accuracy.

Green, Tim. **FOOTBALL HERO.**

Ty Lewis can't believe it when Coach V recruits him for the football team, but Ty's guardian won't let him play: Uncle Gus needs Ty to work for his cleaning business while he cooks up gambling schemes with the local mob boss, a man called Lucy, who befriends Ty. Is Lucy asking Ty about fantasy football . . . or using Ty to get valuable insider info from his superstar brother?

Hale, Shannon. **PRINCESS ACADEMY.**

Miri lives on a mountain where, for generations, her ancestors have quarried stone and lived a simple life. Then word comes that the king's priests have divided her small village into the home of the future princess. In a year's time, the prince himself will come and choose his bride from among the girls of the village. The king's ministers set up an academy on the mountain, and every teenage girl must attend and learn how to become a princess. But when bandits seek out the academy to kidnap the future princess, Miri must rally

the girls together and use a power unique to the mountain dwellers to save herself and her classmates.

Hiaasen, Carl. **SCAT.**

Bunny Starch, the most feared biology teacher ever, is missing. She disappeared after a school field trip to Black Vine Swamp. And, to be honest, the kids in her class are relieved. But when the principal tries to tell the students that Mrs. Starch has been called away on a "family emergency," Nick and Marta just don't buy it. No, they figure the class delinquent, Smoke, has something to do with her disappearance.

Hopkinson, Deborah. **HOW I BECAME A SPY: A MYSTERY OF WORLD WAR II**

**LONDON.** Bertie is on his first night as a volunteer in the youth air-raid patrol in war-time London. He is patrolling the darkened streets of wartime London by bicycle with his small search and rescue dog, Little Roo, in his bicycle basket when he accidentally crashes into an American girl. When she runs off into the night, she leaves behind a mysterious notebook full of ciphers and codes that will help Bertie and his friends save an innocent girl and capture a double agent. This fast-paced historical mystery is a celebration of friendship, courage, and kids' ingenuity. A bonus: This book contains lots of information and fun practice to help the reader learn to decipher secret codes and ciphers.

Kelly, Lynne. **SONG FOR A WHALE.**

If you liked *Fish in a Tree*, you will love this book. The only deaf student in her school, 12 year Iris desperately wants to fit in and find good friends. In her science class, she learns about a whale that communicates at a different frequency. She becomes obsessed with this whale whose song is so off-pitch he's become unrecognizable to other whales. She feels compelled to communicate with this whale and to let him know that he's not alone. In fact, she's willing to break family and school rules to reach him. Partially based on the story of a real whale-this book is amazing.

Konigsburg, EL. **FROM THE MIXED UP FILES OF MRS. BASIL E. FRANKWEILER**

This is the story of two young children who run away from home to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art...and find themselves in the heart of a mystery. This humorous and richly-detailed book is a Newbery Medal winner and has been named by the New York Times as "A Best YA Book of All Time."

Lore, Pittacus. **NUMBER 4.**

Nine of us came here. We look like you. We talk like you. We live among you. But we are not you. We can do things you dream of doing. We have powers you dream of having. We are stronger and faster than anything you have ever seen. We are the superheroes you worship in movies and comic books—but we are real. Our plan was to grow, and train, and become strong, and become one, and fight them. But they found us and started hunting us first. Now all of

us are running. Spending our lives in shadows, in places where no one would look, blending in. we have lived among you without you knowing. But they know.

Mass, Wendy. **CANDY MAKERS.**

In the town of Spring Haven, four children have been selected to compete in the national candy making contest of a lifetime. Who will make a candy more delicious than the Oozing Crunchorama or the Neon Yellow Lightning Chew? Logan, the candymaker's son, who can detect the color of chocolate by feel alone? Miles, the boy allergic to rowboats and the color pink? Daisy, the cheerful girl who can lift a fifty-pound lump of taffy as if it were a feather? Philip, the suit-and-tie-wearing boy who's always scribbling in a secret notebook? This sweet, charming, and cleverly crafted story, told from each contestant's perspective, is filled with mystery, friendship, and juicy revelations.

Mass, Wendy. **A MANGO-SHAPED SPACE.**

Mia Winchell has synesthesia, the mingling of perceptions whereby a person can see sounds, smell colors, or taste shapes. Forced to reveal her condition, she must look to herself to develop an understanding and appreciation of her gift in this coming-of-age novel.

Nielsen, Jennifer A. **RESCUE.**

Jennifer A. Nielsen is a perennial favorite among middle school students who enjoy historical fiction of the World War II era. rIn this book, readers will meet Meg Kenyon, a young British girl who has been living in occupied France. Meg has secretly been helping the resistance movement, but when her father is arrested by the Nazis, the stakes become much higher. Can she use her code-breaking skills and a daring winter rescue mission through the mountains of France to save her family and her country? This is an exciting book-almost anyone who reads this will go looking to read Nielsen's other books about brave teens during World War II.

Okogwu, Tola. **ONYEKA AND THE ACADEMY OF THE SUN.**

*As Onyeka and the Academy Of The Sun* opens, main character Onyeka's best friend, Cheyenne, almost drowns, but she's saved by Onyeka's abundant hair. When Onyeka returns home, her mother tells her that her superpower is a sign that Onyeka is a *Solaris*, a special protector of Nigeria. That means they must flee London and hide out at the secret Academy of the Sun. This superhero adventure based in Nigerian culture combines X-Men-like adventures with Nigerian folklore. Expect superhero confrontations and action violence, but there's no bloodshed, and nothing gets too graphic. A Georgia Book Award winner and Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl choice.

Rylant, Cynthia. **MISSING MAY.**

After the death of her Aunt May, twelve-year-old Summer and her Uncle Ob miss May so much that they accept the help of a friend of Summer's and search for a sign from her.

Schmidt, Gary D. **THE LABORS OF HERCULES BEAL**

For fans of Rick Riordan—Cape Cod meets Greek mythology. A sweet, very funny, and poignant story of a modern-day boy named Herc, short for Hercules, who is challenged by his teacher at his new middle school to complete the Twelve Labors of Hercules. What? On Cape Cod? It sounds like an impossible task, but the young protagonist pulls it off and becomes a real-life hero in his own story. Named as one of Amazon's best children's books of 2023.

Stewart, Trenton Lee. **THE MYSTERIOUS BENEDICT SOCIETY.**

"Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?" When this peculiar ad appears in the newspaper, dozens of children enroll to take a series of mysterious, mind-bending tests. (And you, dear reader, can test your wits right alongside them.) But in the end just four very special children will succeed. Their challenge: to go on a secret mission that only the most intelligent and resourceful children could complete. To accomplish it they will have to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules.

Warga, Jasmine. **OTHER WORDS FOR HOME**

Jude is an 11 year old Syrian refugee who has been sent by her father to live in America in order to escape the violence in her own country. In this novel, told in verse, Jude is initially overwhelmed by all the changes she is experiencing, but eventually finds friends and a voice of her own as she takes part in the school musical.

Yee, Lisa. **MAIZY CHEN'S LAST CHANCE**

Maizy is a 12-year-old from California who has never visited her grandparents' home or Chinese restaurant in the small town of Last Chance, Minnesota. When her grandfather becomes ill, her mother takes her home for a few weeks. Many old family rifts are exposed because the grandparents do not approve of their daughter's urban lifestyle and the estrangement is vivid while they are together for the summer. Maizy becomes very close to her granddad, solves a crime, and discovers the important historical role the restaurant played in the lives of new Chinese immigrants who were journeying across America in the early 1900s. Despite some of the challenging content, the book reaches an uplifting and inspiring conclusion and shows the power of children to effect change in the world. A National Book Award Finalist; Newbery Honor Book; Georgia Book Award.