



May 2026

Dear Rising 6th Grade Students and Parents,

I hope you have a restful summer and also get to spend your time with a few good books. Your required assignment for summer reading is to choose 1 book from the list that starts on the next page (all books come from either the [Texas Lone Star](#) or [Texas Bluebonnet Award](#) reading lists). Each book has a corresponding project you will complete. **You can find the selected books and their corresponding project on the following pages. Regardless of the project you choose, it must be presented in a visually appealing way.**

We will discuss these books and share our projects during the first week of school. The purpose of these activities is to:

1. encourage you to think critically about what you are reading,
2. allow you to share your understanding in creative ways, and
3. foster robust discussion when the school year begins in August.

Your summer reading project will be due the Friday of the first week of the school year, on **Friday, August 21, 2026**. We will spend the first week of school drawing from your work with these books and projects. Use the included Summer Reading Project Rubric to further guide your work. One special aspect of being a 6th grader is your eligibility to participate in both the Bluebonnet Reading Challenge (must read at least 10 books from the Texas Bluebonnet List) and the Lone Star Reading Challenge (must read at least 5 books from the Texas Lone Star List) during the school year. Students who complete the Bluebonnet Reading Challenge get invited to a special breakfast in the library, and students who complete the Lone Star Reading Challenge get invited to an ice cream social!

Please don't hesitate to email over the summer if you have any questions. Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,

6th Grade Language Arts  
[ssmith@stmes.org](mailto:ssmith@stmes.org)



## 6th Grade Summer Reading Assignment Options

Choose 1 of the following books to read and its corresponding project to complete.

Title & Author of Book	Genre	Project Description
<p><i>Bye Forever, I Guess</i> by Jodi Meadows (2026-27 Lone Star List)</p>	<p>Realistic Fiction</p>	<p>Letter Writing: Write 4 letters from Ingrid to an advice columnist asking for help with her situations throughout the book. Reference specific things that happened to her and think about how she would ask for help / what she might say. She loves to be behind-the-scenes and anonymous, so address the letters from her alias, Anony Mouse.</p>
<p><i>The Factory</i> by Catherine Egan (2026-27 Lone Star List)</p>	<p>Sci-Fi/ Adventure</p>	<p>Friendship and trust are important factors in this novel. As you read, notice and note how characters have to place trust in what is happening and in new friendships with other characters. Find evidence of friendship and trust throughout the novel. How is that trust in new friends validated and how is it broken? Find 8 quotes from the novel to support your thinking.</p>
<p><i>A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall</i> by Jasmine Warga (2026-27 Bluebonnet Award List)</p>	<p>Mystery</p>	<p>As you read this novel, begin to notice and note clues that the author leaves for readers about who might have taken the painting. What are some places where there is foreshadowing? Present this in a visually appealing way.</p>
<p><i>A Hero's Guide to Summer Vacation</i> by Pablo Cartaya (2026-27 Lone Star List)</p>	<p>Realistic Fiction / Adventure</p>	<p>Gonzalo undergoes major character changes over the course of the novel. As you read the novel, find 8 quotes from the beginning to end that demonstrate this change. Compile these quotes and include how they show Gonzalo's development. Present this in a visually appealing way.</p>
<p><i>The Trouble with Heroes</i> by Kate Messner (2026-27 Bluebonnet Award List; 2026-27 Lone Star List)</p>	<p>Realistic Fiction / Book In-Verse</p>	<p>After reading the novel, create your own version of Finn's summer assignment by writing the following types of poems that center around your own summer activities: <b>found poem</b> (1 must be sourced from the novel and the other can come from a pamphlet you got on a trip, another book you read, a cookbook you use, etc.), <b>haiku</b>, and <b>free verse</b>. Write 6 poems in all! Present them in a visually appealing way.</p>
<p><i>The Girl Who Kept the Castle</i> by Ryan Graudin (2026-27 Lone Star List)</p>	<p>Fantasy / Mystery</p>	<p>The castle Celurdur is a living presence and a central character in the novel. For your summer reading project, design a map of the castle as you read. Label rooms, passages, and notable features, and include a key that cites</p>



		passages or page numbers showing where you found each element. Present this in a visually appealing way.
<i>Gloom</i> by Jack Mackay (2026-27 Bluebonnet Award List)	Scary / Mystery	As you read this novel, notice and note any descriptions of the setting (time and place). After reading the novel, create a detailed map using examples from the novel with at least 8 locations and a map key. Include a description of why these places matter to the novel. Present this in a visually appealing way.
<i>Will's Race for Home</i> by Jewell Parker Rhodes (2026-27 Bluebonnet Award List)	Historical Fiction	As you read this historical fiction novel, notice and note where you learn about Will's experiences traveling from Texas to Oklahoma. After reading the novel, create a dual timeline of the true events that take place during the land rush in 1889 and what you learn from the novel. Be sure to create a key or color system to show what happened in real life versus what happened in the novel. Present this in a visually appealing way.



## Reading Project Rubric

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<b>Understanding of the Novel</b>	The project shows evidence of an understanding of the novel. Through the student's work, they have captured major themes, or ideas, in the novel.	The project shows some evidence of an understanding of the novel.	It is unclear that the student understands the bigger themes asked of the project.	The student does not demonstrate understanding of the novel through their project.
<b>Creativity, Individuality, Neatness</b>	The student's project demonstrates creativity and individual thought in presentation. They have taken time to present your work in a visually appealing way. (Examples of ways to do this include using a straight-edge to draw lines, tracing over pencil in a fine-tipped marker, backing any printed and cut paper to give it a border and "finished" look, centering titles/words, etc.)	The project meets most of the expectations set out.	The project doesn't meet several of the expectations set.	The project meets few of the expectations set.
<b>Evidence of Information and Organization</b>	The student followed the specific instructions in the novel project assignment and has included all aspects.	The project includes some aspects of the project instructions, but not all.	The project includes a few of the required elements, but not most.	The student completed a different project or did not follow the project instructions.
<b>Writing Conventions:</b> - Capitalization - Usage - Punctuation - Spelling	Punctuation is correct, spelling is accurate, and there are no major errors in grammar.	The project includes some errors in writing conventions—a few punctuation, spelling, and/or grammatical issues—but not enough to cause difficulty in reading and understanding the text.	Several punctuation, spelling, and grammatical errors stand out in the writing.	Punctuation, spelling, and grammatical errors are very common and stand out.

Total: \_\_\_\_\_/16