



6th Grade Summer Reading 2026

Each incoming 6th grade student is to read *Carry On, Mr. Bowditch*, by Jean Lee Latham. Once you have completed the book, answer the following questions neatly on lined paper. The teacher will collect this assignment the first day of class.

Questions to answer:

1. Throughout the story the author applies expressions to people that normally would apply to ships. Explain how each of the expressions below applies to ships. Then explain how the author used them to apply to people.

“having an anchor to windward”

ships:

people:

“being becalmed”

ships:

people:

“sailing by ash breeze”

ships:

people:

2. The final paragraph in the novel sums up more than just Nat’s latest journey—it sums up Nat’s life. What was some of the “rough weather” that Nat had to endure? List at least five examples of difficulties that Nat endured.
Through his difficulties, how did Nat keep from being “becalmed”?
3. Would Nat’s life have been the same if he was not diligent to work and study on his own? How does Nat’s intelligence and desire to learn help him?

Other books we recommend:

- *The Jungle Book*, Rudyard Kipling
- *The Magician’s Nephew*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Horse and His Boy*, by C.S. Lewis
- *Prince Caspian*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*
- *The Silver Chair*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Last Battle*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Giver*, Lois Lowry
- *Where the Red Fern Grows*, Wilson Rawls
- *Around the World in 80 Days*, Jules Verne
- *Shackleton’s Boat Journey*, Frank Arthur Worsley



7th Grade Summer Reading 2026

Each incoming 7th grade student is to read *Black Ships Before Troy*, by Rosemary Sutcliff. This book should be brought to class on the first day of school. Once you have completed the required reading, answer the following questions neatly on lined paper or as a typed document. The teacher will collect this assignment the first day of class.

Questions to answer:

1. "Now, therefore, let us learn from the hawk, and since by strength we can do nothing more against Troy, let us turn to cunning." (p. 131) Write a paragraph describing the ways Odysseus uses brain over brawn to help turn the tide of the war.
2. Is the sacking of Troy a moment of glory in the text? Does it bring glory to the victors? If yes, how? If not, why not? (1 paragraph)
3. The term "fatal flaw" describes a singular shortcoming of an otherwise perfect hero, which often leads to the hero's death. The most common such flaw in Greek mythology is hubris, or excessive pride that tempts fate or arrogantly dismisses the gods. Describe a character from the story that possesses excessive pride which leads to their downfall. (1 paragraph)

Other books we recommend:

- *The Trojan War*, by Olivia Coolidge
- *The Young Carthaginian*, by G.A. Henty
- *The Cat of Bubastes*, by G.A. Henty
- *The Magician's Nephew*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Horse and His Boy*, by C.S. Lewis
- *Prince Caspian*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Silver Chair*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Last Battle*, by C.S. Lewis
- *The Bronze Bow*, by Elizabeth George Speare
- *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, by Jules Verne
- *Detectives in Togas*, by Henry Winterfeld



8th Grade Summer Reading 2026

Each incoming 8th grade student is to read *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, by Howard Pyle. Once you have completed *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, answer the following questions neatly on lined paper or as a typed document. The teacher will collect this assignment the first day of class.

Questions to answer:

1. **Theme:** Discuss the loyalty among Robin Hood's band of Merry Men. How does their loyalty to each other contribute to their success? How do their friendships shape their actions and decisions throughout the story? (2 paragraphs)
2. **Scriptural analysis:** Do you think Robin Hood's actions are Biblically justified? Why or why not? (2 paragraphs)
3. **Analysis:** Is the ending to the book satisfying? If so, why? If not, what would you change and why? (1-2 paragraphs)

Other books we recommend:

- *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Arthur Conan Doyle
- *The Dragon and the Raven*, G.A. Henty
- *Winning His Spurs*, G.A. Henty
- *The Nine Tailors*, Dorothy Sayers
- *The Fellowship of the Ring*, J.R.R. Tolkien
- *The Two Towers*, J.R.R. Tolkien
- *The Return of the King*, J.R.R. Tolkien
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, William Shakespeare



9th Grade Summer Reading 2026

Each incoming 9th grade student is to read *A Separate Peace*, by John Knowles. Once you have completed *A Separate Peace*, answer the following questions in a typed document. The teacher will collect this assignment the first day of class.

Questions to answer:

1. **Genre:** A bildungsroman is a coming-of-age story which deals with a protagonist's formative years and emotional/moral growth as he or she travels from youth to adulthood. In two paragraphs, explain how *A Separate Peace* is a bildungsroman using events and examples from the novel.
2. **Character development:** Gene and Finney are different in many ways (adherence to rules, spontaneity, ability in sports and academics, beliefs, backgrounds), and yet they are drawn together in a special bond of friendship. In two paragraphs, explain the dynamics of the boys' friendship and how those dynamics both draw them together and create distance between them. Use examples from the novel to support your assertions.
3. **Scriptural Analysis:** Find two scriptures addressing friendship and discuss in two paragraphs how Gene and Finney's friendship meets or fails to meet the standards set forth in these verses. Cite the Bible verses you use verbatim and use examples/events from the novel to support your assertions.
4. **Theme:** The theme of a novel is its underlying message, i.e., the critical belief (s) about life which the author tries to convey through his/her writing. The theme differs from the subject of a literary work in that it involves a statement or opinion about the subject. Since *A Separate Peace* deals with competitiveness and jealousy in friendship, what is John Knowles communicating about these two potential attributes of friendship? Use examples from the novel to support your assertions (2-3 paragraphs).

Other books we recommend:

- *My Antonia*, Willa Cather
- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, Frederick Douglass
- *The Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison
- *A Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry
- *The Sun also Rises*, Ernest Hemingway
- *A Moveable Feast*, Ernest Hemingway
- *Hiroshima*, John Hersey
- *Unbroken*, Laura Hillenbrand
- *The Crucible*, Arthur Miller
- *Death of a Salesman*, Arthur Miller
- *Of Mice and Men*, John Steinbeck
- *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck
- *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker



10th Grade Summer Reading 2026

Each incoming 10th grade student is to read the designated sections of *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes*, by Edith Hamilton. Once you have completed the assigned selections, answer the following questions neatly on lined paper or as a typed document. The teacher will collect this assignment the first day of class. This book will also prove a valuable reference throughout the 10th grade courses in both Ancient Literature and Ancient History.

Assigned Selections: You must read what is listed below, but are encouraged to read as much as you would like.

Part One (all): The Gods, Creation and Earliest Heroes

Part Four (all): The Heroes of the Trojan War

Questions to answer:

1. **Context:** The simple definition of a myth is a traditional story, particularly stories about the history of a people. Identify two to three purposes that these myths serve. Give a specific example of each.
2. **Theme:** What makes a Greek hero/heroine great? Write a 7-10 sentence long paragraph describing how these myths characterize the Greek hero. Reference specific examples from the text and cite the page number(s) for each.
3. **Scriptural analysis:** In what ways does the Greco-Roman account of creation and the early days of man reflect the biblical account? Identify specific stories from Hamilton's book and specific chapters and verses from the Bible.

Other books we recommend:

Ancient Works

- *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
- *The Oresteia* - Aeschylus
- *Jason and the Golden Fleece* - Apollonius
- Greek Plays by Aristophanes, Euripides or Sophocles
- Roman Plays by Terence, Plautus or Seneca

Modern Works on Ancient Themes

- *Death Comes as the End*, Agatha Christie
- *Eagle of the Ninth*, Rosemary Sutcliff
- *Perelandra*, C.S. Lewis (Space Trilogy Book 1)
- *Out of the Silent Planet*, C.S. Lewis (Space Trilogy Book 2)
- *That Hideous Strength*, C.S. Lewis (Space Trilogy Book 3)
- *Achilles to Christ: Why Christians Should Read the Pagan Classics*, Louis Markos



11th Grade Summer Reading 2026

Each incoming 11th grade student is to read *Utopia*, by Sir Thomas More . Once you have completed *Utopia*, answer the following questions neatly on lined paper or as a typed document. Each answer should be thoughtful and thorough (at minimum about ½ page, double-spaced). The teacher will collect this assignment the first day of class.

Questions to answer:

1. Pick one aspect of Utopian society from the reading that seems admirable and desirable, and explain why.
2. Pick one aspect that seems undesirable, and explain why.
3. In *Utopia*, Hythloday argues against the death penalty. Give one reason why he finds this punishment excessive. Using this same reason, argue for or against the death penalty from your perspective.
4. What attribute or character quality do Utopians most value? And how is this evidenced in their culture?

Other books we recommend:

- *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki*, Jesse Byock
- *The Saga of the Volsungs*, Jesse Byock
- *The Name of the Rose*, Umberto Eco
- *The Praise of Folly*, Erasmus
- *The Great Divorce*, C.S. Lewis
- *Here I Stand*, Martin Luther
- *Tartuffe*, Moliere
- *The Taming of the Shrew*, William Shakespeare
- *A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court*, Mark Twain



12th Grade Summer Reading 2026

Senior Thesis independent reading and dialectical exercise

Dialectical Exercises for Research

Rhetoric and Thesis Program

Whenever you read a book, article, or other resource for one of your Humanities classes, you might be wondering how you can best use that resource. It can be especially difficult to know how to interact with a given text when it “isn’t saying what you want to say.” It takes some extra thinking to figure out how to use some sources. This means that you need to identify what the author argues, what you believe, what exactly you are arguing in your paper, and how to interpret the text whether you align or disagree with it. These “Dialectic Exercises” are meant to help you identify whatever tensions exist between you and the author, and they will equip you to engage and incorporate almost any text, regardless of how much different their view is from yours.

Nota Bene: You must meet the minimum sentence lengths, but you can exceed the maximum if it is necessary.

Dialectical Exercises for Full-Length Books

Whenever you read a full-length book for your thesis or paper, please answer the following questions as thoroughly as possible. You can type or handwrite, depending on your preference.

1. What is the book about? **Summarize** the overarching **central message** and **main argument** of the book. [5–10 complete sentences]
2. Copy down one passage from each chapter with which you either **agree or disagree**. Then explain the following. [quotation + 5-10 complete sentences for each quotation]
 - a. **What** exactly you agree or disagree with.
 - b. **Why** you agree or disagree.
 - c. **How** you might be able to use this passage in your paper. [email me with questions]
3. What was one area of the book that caused you to (1) **learn** something you didn’t know before, (2) **change** your view, or (3) be **surprised**? Explain what that process looked like and felt like. [5–7 complete sentences]
4. What **new questions** do you have after reading the book? [at least two questions]
5. Write out the full **MLA works cited entry**. [email me with questions]

Examples:

ESV Student Study Bible. English Standard Version, Crossway, 2011.

Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Translated by Charles Martin, W.W. Norton & Co., 2004.