6th Grade Summer Reading 2026-2027

Choose three books from the list below to read over the summer. For each book, you will create a short, 10-question quiz that you will turn in the first week of school. You should include the answer key as well.

1. ***The Crossover*** **by Kwame Alexander**

   Josh and JB are inseparable, basketball-playing, identical twins who are almost 13 years old, and the sons of a professional basketball player. JB gets a girlfriend and spends less and less time with his brother. Josh is so upset at being left out of JB's life that he chucks the ball at JB's face during a game, nearly breaking his nose. The book is told in verse.

2. ***Posted*** **by John David Anderson**

   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.

3. ***The Strange Case of Origami Yoda*** **by Tom Angleberger**

   Meet Dwight, a sixth-grade oddball. Dwight does a lot of weird things, like wearing the same T-shirt for a month or telling people to call him "Captain Dwight." But Dwight does one cool thing. He makes origami. One day, he makes an origami Yoda finger puppet, and things get mysterious. Origami Yoda can predict the future and suggest the best way to deal with a tricky situation. His advice works, and soon most of the sixth grade is lining up with questions.

4. ***Chasing Vermeer*** **by Blue Balliett**

   Petra and Calder find themselves at the center of an international art scandal. Seemingly unrelated events connect: an eccentric old woman seeks their company, and an invaluable Vermeer painting disappears. The two are drawn into a mysterious labyrinth, draw on their powers of intuition, use their problem-solving skills, and expand their knowledge of Vermeer to decipher a crime that has stumped even the FBI.

5. ***The Maze Runner*** **by James Dashner**

   When Thomas wakes up in the lift, the only thing he can remember is his name. He’s surrounded by strangers, boys whose memories are also gone. Outside the towering stone walls that surround them is a limitless, ever-changing maze. It’s the only way out, and no one’s ever made it through alive. The first girl ever arrives, and her terrifying message is to remember, survive, and run.

6. ***Stormbreaker*** **by Anthony Horowitz**

   They said his uncle Ian died in a car accident, but Alex Rider knows that’s a lie, and the bullet holes in the windshield prove it. Alex never suspected the truth. His uncle was a spy for Britain’s top-secret intelligence agency, and Alex has been recruited to find his uncle’s killers.

7. ***Serafina and the Black Cloak*** **by Robert Beatty**

Serafina lives secretly in the basement of the grand Biltmore Estate amidst the splendor of the Gilded Age. Serafina's pa, the estate's maintenance man, has warned her to keep herself hidden from the fancy folk who live on the floors above, but when children at the estate start disappearing, Serafina and her friend Braeden Vanderbilt work together to solve a dark and dangerous mystery.

8. ***Doll Bones*** **by Holly Black**

Friends Zach, Poppy, and Alice have been playing one continuous, ever-changing game of pirates and thieves, mermaids, and warriors. Ruling over all is the Great Queen, a bone china doll, cursing those who displease her. When they enter middle school, Zach's father wants him to give up their game until Poppy declares she's been having dreams about the Queen and the ghost of a girl who will not rest until the bone china doll is buried in her empty grave. When Zach, Alice, and Poppy set off to lay the Queen's ghost to rest, creepy things begin to happen. Is the doll something sinister, and if there really is a ghost, will it ever let them go?

9. ***Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus*** **by Dusti Bowling**

Aven Green loves to tell people that she lost her arms in an alligator-wrestling match or in a wildfire in Tanzania, but the truth is, she was born without them. When her parents take a job running Stagecoach Pass, a rundown western theme park in Arizona, Aven knows that she will have to answer the question again. Her new life takes an unexpected turn when she bonds with Connor, a classmate who also feels isolated because of his own disability, and they discover a room at Stagecoach Pass that holds big secrets. It's hard to solve a mystery, help a friend, and face your worst fears, but Aven discovers she can do it all, even without arms.

10. ***Because of Mr. Terupt*** **by Rob Buyea**

Seven students find themselves thrown together in Mr. Terupt's fifth grade class at Snow Hill School: Jessica, the new girl, smart and perceptive, who's having a hard time fitting in; Alexia, a bully, a friend one second, an enemy the next; Peter, class prankster and troublemaker; Luke, the brain; Danielle, who never stands up for herself; shy Anna, whose home situation makes her an outcast; and Jeffrey, who hates school. They don't have much in common and have never gotten along until the new teacher, Mr. Terupt, arrives and helps them find strength inside themselves and in each other. When Mr. Terupt suffers a terrible accident, will his students remember the lessons he taught them?

11. ***Awkward*** **by Svetlana Chmakova (Graphic Novel)**

Rules for surviving middle school: Don't get noticed by the mean kids, and seek out groups with similar interests and join them. On her first day at her new school, Peppi Torres reminds herself of these basics, but when she trips over a quiet boy in the hall, Jaime Thompson, she's already broken the first rule, and the mean kids start calling her the "nerd girlfriend." Peppi shoves Jaime, runs away, and surrounds herself with new friends in the art club, but can't help feeling ashamed about the way she treats Jaime. Things are already awkward enough between the two, but he's a member of her own art club's archrivals, the science club! When the two clubs go to war, Peppi realizes that sometimes you have to break the rules to survive middle school!

12. ***Al Capone Does My Shirts*** **by Gennifer Choldenko**

Moose Flanagan and his family move to Alcatraz, a prison on a tiny island off the coast of San Francisco that houses some of the country's most dangerous criminals, where his dad is a warden. There are only 23 kids there because their fathers also work at the prison. Moose's autistic sister, Natalie, was accepted into the Esther P. Marinoff School but is sent back home because she could not adjust to the school, and Moose became her caretaker. It turns out that being out and about has helped Natalie adapt to the world around her. Out of ideas for how to help her, Moose's family applies to the Esther P. Marinoff School again, but are rejected. Moose takes matters into his own hands and writes a letter to Al Capone, the infamous gangster at Alcatraz, asking him to use his connections to help his sister get into school. Within days, Natalie is accepted into the Esther P. Marinoff School. Was Capone a part of this? Right after the good news, Moose finds a rather cryptic note in one of his convict-washed shirts.

13. ***Lunch Money*** **by Andrew Clements**

Greg Kenton is obsessed with making money and his a long-standing competition with his annoying neighbor, Maura Shaw. When Greg discovers that Maura is cutting into his booming Chunky Comics business with her own original illustrated mini-books, he's ready to declare war. Greg has to admit that Maura's books are good, and soon the longtime enemies become unlikely business partners. Their partnership is threatened when the principal bans the sale of their comics in school. The two former rivals find themselves united against an adversary tougher than they ever were to each other and wonder if their enterprise and their friendship will survive.

14. ***Soar*** **by Joan Bauer**

Adopted by computer genius Walt, Jeremiah has looked at his life as a series of lucky breaks. When a weak heart keeps him from playing his beloved baseball, Jeremiah becomes the team coach. Hillcrest, Ohio, where Jeremiah and his father, Walt, have just moved, is a town known for its once-championship baseball team, which is now defunct. Too sick to play, but Jeremiah loves the game, and he's an incredible coach. Jeremiah finds the town caught up in a doping scandal and on the verge of giving up on baseball. It's up to Jeremiah and his can-do spirit to get the town and the team back in the game.

15. ***Raymie Nightingale*** **by Kate DiCamillo**

Raymie Clarke realizes that everything depends on her. And she has a plan. If Raymie can win the Little Miss Central Florida Tire competition, then her father, who left town two days ago with a dental hygienist, will see Raymie's picture in the paper and (maybe) come home. To win, not only does Raymie have to do good deeds and learn how to twirl a baton, she also has to contend with the wispy, frequently fainting Louisiana Elefante, who has a show-business background, and the fiery, stubborn Beverly Tapinski, who's determined to sabotage the contest. As the competition approaches, loneliness, loss, and unanswerable questions draw the three girls into an unlikely friendship and challenge each of them to come to the rescue in unexpected ways.

16. ***Out of My Mind*** **by Sharon Draper**

Because of cerebral palsy, eleven-year-old Melody can't walk, talk, or write, but has a photographic memory and can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She's the smartest kid in her whole school, but no one knows it. Her teachers, her doctors, and her classmates dismiss her as mentally challenged because she can't tell them otherwise. At school, Melody receives a personal aide named Catherine, who encourages Melody to obtain a Medi-Talker, allowing Melody to speak digitally. Melody does so well academically at school that she makes the Whiz Kids quiz team that will compete in a locally televised tournament, and leads her team to victory. Melody studied diligently for weeks before the national tournament in Washington, D.C. When Melody and her family arrive at the airport for their trip to D.C., they are met with a disturbing sight.

17. ***Last Shot: A Final Four Mystery*** **by John Feinstein**

When Stevie wins a writing contest for aspiring sports journalists, his prize is a press pass to the Final Four in New Orleans. While exploring the Superdome, he overhears a plot to throw the championship game. With the help of fellow contest winner Susan Carol, Stevie has just 48 hours to figure out who is blackmailing one of the star players and why.

18. ***The Graveyard Book*** **by Neil Gaiman**

Nobody Owens, known as Bod, is a normal boy. He would be completely normal if he didn't live in a graveyard, being raised and loved by kind ghosts, with a guardian who belongs to neither the world of the living nor the dead. There are adventures in the graveyard for a boy, an ancient Indigo Man, a gateway to the abandoned city of ghouls, and the strange and terrible Sleer. If Bod leaves the graveyard, he will be in danger from the man Jack, who has already killed Bod's family.

19. ***The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street*** **by Karina Yan Glaser**

The Vanderbeekers have always lived in the brownstone on 141st Street. It's practically another member of the family. So when their reclusive, curmudgeonly landlord decides not to renew their lease, the five siblings have eleven days to do whatever it takes to stay in their beloved home and convince the dreaded Beiderman just how wonderful they are.

20. ***Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library*** **by Chris Grabenstein**

When Kyle Keeley learns that the world's most famous game maker, Luigi Lemoncello, has designed the town's new library and is having an invitation-only lock-in on opening night, Kyle is determined to be there! The tricky part isn't getting *into* the library; it's getting *out* because when morning comes, the doors stay locked. Kyle and the other kids must catch every clue and solve every puzzle to find the hidden escape route.

21. ***Football Genius*** **by Tim Green**

Twelve-year-old Troy White has a gift: He can predict football plays before they even happen, any position, any player, any team. When Troy's single mom gets a job with the Atlanta Falcons, he sees it as an opportunity to show what he can do. First, he has to get to the Falcons, and with tight security and a notoriously mean coach, even his mom's field passes aren't much help. Troy and his best friends devise a plan to get the attention of star linebacker Seth Halloway. With Seth's playing and Troy's genius, the Falcons could be unstoppable. If Troy can't convince Seth he's telling the truth, the Falcons' championship and his mom's job are at risk.

22. ***The Strangers*** **by Margaret Peterson Haddix**

Chess has always been the protector of his younger siblings. Emma loves math, and Finn does what Finn does best, acting silly and being adored. They've been a happy family, just the three of them and their mom. Everything changes when reports of three kidnapped children reach the Greystone kids, and they're shocked by the startling similarities between themselves and these strangers. The other kids share the same first and middle names, are the same ages, and have identical birthdays. Before Emma, Finn, and Chess can question their mom about it, she takes off on a sudden work trip, leaving them in the care of Ms. Morales and her daughter, Natalie. But puzzling clues left behind lead to complex codes, hidden rooms, and a dangerous secret that will turn their world upside down.

23. ***The Great Green Heist*** **by Varian Johnson**

Jackson Greene swears he's given up scheming. Then, school bully Keith Sinclair announces he's running for Student Council President, against Jackson's former friend Gaby de la Cruz. Gaby wants Jackson to stay out of it, but he knows Keith has "connections" to the principal, which could win him the presidency no matter the vote count. Jackson assembles a crack team of Hashemi Larijani, tech genius; Victor Cho, bankroll; Megan Feldman, science goddess; and Charlie de la Cruz, reporter. They devise a plan to take down Keith, win Gaby's respect, and ensure the election is conducted properly. If they can pull it off, it will be remembered as the school's greatest con ever and one worthy of the name The Great Greene Heist.

24. ***Stand Up, Yumi Chung*** **by Jessica Kim**

On the outside, Yumi Chung suffers from #shygirlproblems, a perm-gone-wrong, and kids calling her "Yu-MEAT" because she smells like her family's Korean barbecue restaurant. On the inside, Yumi is ready for her *Netflix* stand-up special. Her notebook is filled with mortifying memories that she's reworked into comedy gold. All she needs is a stage and courage. Instead of spending the summer studying her favorite *YouTube* comedians, Yumi is enrolled in test-prep tutoring to qualify for a private school scholarship, which will help in a time of hardship at the restaurant. One day after class, Yumi stumbles on an opportunity that will change her life: a comedy camp for kids taught by one of her favorite *YouTube* stars. The only problem is that the instructor and all the students think she's a girl named Kay Nakamura, and Yumi doesn't correct them. As this case of mistaken identity unravels, Yumi must decide to stand up and reveal the truth or risk losing her dreams and disappointing everyone she cares about.

25. ***Restart*** **by Gordon Korman**

After falling off his roof, 13-year-old Chase Ambrose returns to school and struggles to regain what amnesia has erased. Before his fall, Chase was a jock and, following in his father's footsteps, captain of the football team. He was also the biggest bully in his middle school, had made many students' lives miserable, and was serving a community service sentence for the damage that his bullying had caused. Even Chase's little stepsister was afraid of him. If it were up to his dad and his former best friends, bullies Bear and Aaron, Chase would go right back to his bully-jock ways. However, the new Chase is a kinder, more sympathetic person who struggles with his past and becomes friends with his former victims. As he works with the video club geeks, who are understandably wary of the new Chase, he bonds with the elderly Mr. Solway, whose Korean War memories help him search for his own past. Chapters are first-person-narrated, alternating among seven students, including Chase, giving readers access to their feelings and points of view.

26. ***Yard War*** **by Taylor Kitchings**

Trip Westbrook has spent his first twelve years far from the struggle for civil rights going on in Mississippi. The one black person he knows well is Willie Jane, the family maid, who has been a second mother to him. When Trip invites her son, Dee, to play football in the yard, he discovers the ugly side of his smiling neighbors. Trip's old pals stop coming by. He is bullied, his house is defaced, and his family is threatened. The Westbrooks will be forced to choose between doing the right thing or losing the only home Trip has ever known.

27. ***The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl*** **by Stacy McAnulty**

Lucy Callahan's life was changed forever when she was struck by lightning. The zap gave her genius-level math skills, and she has been homeschooled ever since. Now, at twelve years old, she's technically ready for college. She just has to pass one more test, middle school! Lucy's grandma insists that she go to middle school for one year, make one friend, join one activity, and read one book that's not a math textbook. Lucy's not sure what a girl who does calculus homework for fun can learn in Seventh Grade. She has everything she needs at home, where nobody can make fun of her rigid routines or her superpowered brain. According to Lucy, the equation of her life has already been solved, unless there's been a miscalculation.

28. ***Keeper of the Lost Cities*** **by Shannon Messenger**

Twelve-year-old Sophie has never quite fit into her life. She's skipped multiple grades, doesn't really connect with her older classmates, and isn't comfortable with her family, either. Sophie is a Telepath, someone who can read minds, and Sophie thinks no one knows this secret about her. Sophie meets Fitz, a mysterious (and adorable) boy, and she learns he is a Telepath, too, and she discovers the reason she has never felt at home is that she isn't. Fitz opens Sophie's eyes to a shocking truth, and she is forced to leave behind her family for a new life in a place that is vastly different from home. Sophie still has secrets buried deep in her memory because the answers they hold are dangerous and in high demand. What is her true identity, and why was she hidden among humans? The truth could mean life or death, and time is running out.

29. ***City Spies*** **by James Ponti**

After breaking into the New York City juvenile justice system and exposing her foster parents as cheats and lawbreakers, hacker Sara Martinez faces years in a juvenile detention facility and is banned from using computers. A British spy secures Sara's release from jail and offers her a chance to join a secret team of young MI6 agents. Operating out of a centuries-old manor house on the coast of Scotland, the City Spies are five kids from around the world who attend an elite boarding school and train for their roles as the biggest secret in the British Secret Intelligence Service. Sara finds herself heading to Paris for an international youth summit, hacking into a rival school's computer to prevent them from winning a million euros, dangling thirty feet off the side of a building, and trying to stop a notorious villain, all while navigating the complex dynamics of her new team.

30. ***Ghost*** **by Jason Reynolds**

All Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known is running, and he has been running for the wrong reasons. It all started with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems and running away from them until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who sees Ghost's natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him?

31. ***Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes**
Twelve-year-old Jerome is shot by a police officer who mistakes his toy gun for a real threat. As a ghost, he observes the devastation that's been unleashed on his family and community in the wake of what they see as an unjust and brutal killing. Soon, Jerome meets another ghost named Emmett Till, a boy from a very different time but similar circumstances. Emmett helps Jerome process what has happened, on a journey toward recognizing how historical racism may have led to the events that ended his life. Jerome also meets Sarah, the police officer's daughter, who grapples with her father's actions.

***32. The Fourth Stall* by Chris Rylander**
Do you need something? Mac can get it for you. He and his best friend and business manager, Vince, use methods that might sometimes run afoul of the law, or at least the school code of conduct, but if you have a problem, if no one else can help, and if you can pay him, Mac is on your side. His office is located in the East Wing boys' bathroom, fourth stall from the high window. Business is booming, or at least it was, until one particular Monday when Mac discovers money missing, and there may be a stool pigeon on his team. He realizes the trouble with solving everyone else's problems is that there is no one left to solve yours.

33. *Wonderstruck* by Brian Selznick
Ben and Rose secretly wish their lives were different. Ben longs for the father he has never known. Rose dreams of a mysterious actress whose life she chronicles in a scrapbook. When Ben discovers a puzzling clue in his mother's room, and Rose reads an enticing headline in the newspaper, both children set out alone on desperate quests to find what they are missing. Set fifty years apart, these two independent stories, Ben's told in words, 125 pages of text, and Rose's in pictures, weave back and forth with mesmerizing symmetry. How they unfold and ultimately intertwine will surprise you, challenge you, and leave you breathless with wonder.

34. *Three Times Lucky* by Sheila Turnage
Rising sixth grader Miss Moses LoBeau lives in the small town of Tupelo Landing, NC, where everyone's business is fair game, and no secret is sacred. She washed ashore in a hurricane eleven years ago, and she's been making waves ever since. Although Mo hopes someday to find her "upstream mother," she's found a home with the Colonel, a café owner with a forgotten past of his own, and Miss Lana, the fabulous café hostess. Mo will protect those she loves with every bit of her strong will and tough attitude. When a lawman comes to town asking about a murder, Mo and her best friend, Dale Earnhardt Johnson III, set out to uncover the truth in hopes of saving the only family Mo has ever known.

35. *The Running Dream* by Wendelin Van Draanen
Jessica thinks her life is over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She is not comforted by the news that she'll be able to walk with a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run? As she struggles to cope, Jessica feels that she's both in the spotlight and invisible. People who don't know what to say act like she's not there. Jessica's embarrassed to realize that she's done the same to Rosa, a girl with cerebral palsy. Rosa is going to tutor her through all the math she's missed and sees right into Jessica's heart. With the support of her family, friends, a coach, and her track teammates, Jessica may be able to run again, but she wants to cross the finish line with Rosa.

36. ***Sink or Swim: A Novel of World War II*** **by Steve Watkins**

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, America was at war with Germany and Japan, and everyone wanted to do their part. Twelve-year-old Colton's older brother, Danny, has joined the Navy. Before Danny leaves for boot camp, the brothers are fishing on the Atlantic Ocean when Danny's boat is capsized by a Nazi U-boat, nearly killing him. When more U-boats start attacking the next day, Colton realizes just how close the enemy is to American shores. With Danny's life in balance, Colton does the only thing he can think of to help his family and his country: He steals his brother's enlistment papers and joins the Navy. Even if he can keep his age a secret and survive boot camp, Colton will have to face Hitler's ruthless submarines. The longer he's on the seas, the less sure Colton is that he and his shipmates can stop such a relentless enemy. This book is inspired by the true story of the youngest boy who served in World War II.

37. ***The Length of a String*** **by Elissa Brent Weissman**

Imani knows exactly what she wants as her big bat mitzvah gift: to find her birth parents. She loves her family and her Jewish community in Baltimore, but she has always wondered where she came from, especially since she's black and almost everyone she knows is white. When her mom's grandmother, Imani's great-grandma Anna, passes away, Imani discovers Anna's diary from 1941, the year she was twelve and fled Nazi-occupied Luxembourg alone, sent by her parents to seek refuge in Brooklyn, New York. Anna's diary records her journey to America and her new life with an adoptive family. As Imani reads the diary, she begins to see her family and her place in it in a whole new way.