

Summer 2026 Summer Reading List for Rising 6th Graders

Please select two books from the list below to read over the summer. Choose books you have not read before, and be sure they are the unabridged versions. You will then write a one-page review (2 paragraphs long) of one of the two books you have chosen. You will also make a creative project inspired by the other book you have read.

All summer reading assignments will be graded and checked for plagiarism/AI. If any assignments are found to be plagiarized or created using AI, you will receive a ZERO, and disciplinary action will be taken according to the AHS Family Handbook.

1) The Written Book Review (2 paragraphs)

The book review should be typed (double-spaced; Arial 12-point font), using one-inch margins. The review should be well written with proper mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar) and at least 1 page long. Use the guidelines below to write this assignment. **Bring both your rough draft and your final draft to class on the first day of school, Monday, August 31.**

Paragraph 1

First, you need to write one paragraph in which you describe the setting (time and place) of the novel, introduce the main character(s), and provide a brief synopsis of the overall conflict/s and plot. Did the main character learn anything from this conflict? Try to stir others' interest, but don't give away the ending. NO SPOILERS!

Paragraph 2

In a second paragraph, describe two themes of the book. What are the messages the author is trying to communicate to the reader? For example, greed is evil; small is mighty; anyone can be a hero; the power of friendship. What events of the plot/story make you think the author is trying to convey these messages? Describe one or two specific scenes that bring the theme of the novel to light.

2) The Creative Project

Along with the book review on one of your books, you must also complete a creative project on your second book. **Make sure your project is neatly done and presented in a polished manner. Bring your project to class on the first day of school, Monday, August 31.**

Your project should include:

1. Your name
2. Title of the book in the correct format (italics if typed, underlined if handwritten)
3. Author's name
4. Proper writing mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar)

Choose one of the following projects:

FOR THE KIDS: Write a children's version of the book and illustrate it.

POV: Tell the story in the book from a different character's point of view.

DEAR DIARY: Write a series of diary or journal entries that a main character in your book might have written. Imagine you are the character and write entries over the length of the book.

DEAR AUTHOR: Write a letter to the author of the book giving your opinion of the events and/or characters in the story. Support your opinion with details from the story. Is there anything you think the author should have done differently?

BREAKING NEWS: Pretend you are an investigative reporter for the nightly news and interview a character from the book. Prepare a list of questions a reporter might ask and the character's answers to the questions to make a compelling news story.

BON APPETIT: Cook a food or a meal mentioned in your book. Find a recipe for a food mentioned in your book, buy the ingredients, and prepare the recipe yourself (take photos of yourself making the recipe and photos of the finished product). Then write a paragraph to explain how the recipe goes along with the book and why you think the author included this food in his story. Be sure to include your photos and the recipe you used so others can make it too!

MERCH: Design and make your own t-shirt graphic/illustration for the book. Create a design and neatly apply it on a t-shirt in fabric markers or permanent markers. *Machine wash and dry your t-shirt first before you start for best results.*

BLUEPRINT: Create scale drawings of rooms in your book. Use graph paper with a set scale to make plausible blueprints of rooms in buildings portrayed in your book. Write a paragraph to explain how the drawings go along with the book and what happened in those rooms.

BACK TO THE FUTURE: Pretend you are one of the characters who has "come back" to the world 25 years after the novel has ended. In a paragraph, describe how the world is different from the time before and your reactions to the "new" world around you.

MYTH-MAKER: The story in your book has been told and passed down through many generations over a few hundred years. Write and illustrate a legend, fable, or myth based on an event in the story.

LET'S GO: Illustrate and advertise the "world" of your novel in a brochure to entice travelers to book a trip. What sights can they see? What activities can they do? What experiences are a MUST-SEE OR DO?

MODEL: Build a detailed model based on a setting or scene in the book. Include a short written explanation (no more than 1 paragraph) of the purpose or importance of that setting or scene in the book.

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for Rising 6th Graders**

A Dog's Life: The Autobiography of a Stray by Ann M. Martin

Life of Pi by Yann Martel

A Wrinkle in Time (or its sequels) by Madeleine L'Engle

Bridge to Terebithia by Katherine Paterson

The Giver by Lois Lowry

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

City of Ember by Jeanne Duprau

Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbitt

Journey to the Center of the Earth by Jules Verne

The War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells

Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card

Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH by R. O'Brien

Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

The Legend of Spud Murphy by E. Colfer

Sunder by William Armstrong

The Crying of Crow by Jean Craighead George

Paint the Wind by Pam Munoz Ryan

Let the Circle Be Unbroken by Mildred Taylor

Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz Ryan

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor

Refugee by Alan Gratz

The London Eye Mystery by Siobhan Dowd

The Mysterious Benedict Society (or its sequels) by Trenton Lee Stewart

The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy by J. Birdsall

2026 Forum Summer Assignment
Grades 6-8 Returning Students Only

Greetings, Scholars!

I hope you're getting outside to enjoy the beautiful weather! While you're out and about, you can begin thinking about your first Forum for next year. Keep reading for the highlights...

Umbrella theme: **cycles**

Task	Due Date	Details
Topic Choice ☐ Done	By July 15	Email Ms. Desjarlais at sdesjarlais@academyhill.org to get your topic approved. Please include a detailed description of your proposed topic, including what aspects of the cycle you will research. Remember, you should be digging deep into your topic.
Create an Outline ☐ Done	Submitted by July 30	Create an outline for your topic. It should have at least three main parts that will be the focus of your research. Type and share your outline with Ms. Desjarlais for approval.
Research	Ongoing	Once your outline is approved, it's time to begin the research! Remember, there are sources other than the Internet: ☐ Book ☐ Interview ☐ Magazine Please use at least one source type other than the Internet.
Write your script. ☐ Done Include time on script ☐ Done	Due by August 31	Grades 5 and 6: 4 to 6 minute time limit Grades 7 and 8: 6 to 8 minute time limit Remember to read your script aloud and time it. Include your time on your typed script. Please type your script and share it with Ms. Desjarlais at sdesjarlais@academyhill.org .
Create your slideshow. ☐ Done	Due by August 31	Review and follow the guidelines I've attached for how to create a good slideshow. Remember to share your slideshow with Ms. Desjarlais at sdesjarlais@academyhill.org .

Please follow the following guidelines when preparing your Forum slideshow:

The slides should enhance the learning, not distract from it.

Follow the 5 by 5 rule (as closely as you can)

- No more than 5 lines on a slide
- No more than 5 words in a line
- Use keywords and not complete sentences!
- Keep it simple.
- You should present/say many more words than what is on the slide.

Large pictures on each slide

- Primary sources/real photographs are best.
- Consider adding a background to your slides.

Simple font

- Don't get too fancy with color, animation, and style.
- Times New Roman, Comic Sans, Lexend, or Arial
- Lighter font colors wash out when on the big screen.
- Be sure to contrast the font color with the background color.

Capitalize slide titles

- Capitalize the first letter of all important words in the title.

Sources

- REMEMBER THAT ALL PICTURES HAVE A SOURCE TOO!
- GOOGLE IMAGES IS NOT A SOURCE
- Search engines (Google, etc) are NOT sources!

Discussion Questions

- Make a slide for each discussion question.
- Consider including an image on each slide.

Here are some possible ideas for the cycle umbrella theme. These are just to get you started. Feel free to find your own ideas!

- Olympic cycles and traditions
- Injury and rehabilitation cycles
- Cycles of popular music styles
- Trends in movies and television
- The cycle of invention, improvement, and replacement
- Recycling and electronic waste
- Renewable energy cycles
- Drought and flood cycles
- Climate patterns such as El Niño and La Niña
- Forest regeneration after wildfires

Questions to consider as you research:

- What is a cycle?
- Why do cycles occur?
- What happens when a cycle is disrupted?
- How do cycles affect people and the environment?
- Can cycles be predicted?
- How have cycles changed over time?