

Grade Six Summer Reading Suggestions

Realistic Fiction

The Thing about Jellyfish ~Ally Benjamin

“After her best friend dies in a drowning accident, Suzy is convinced that the true cause of the tragedy must have been a rare jellyfish sting--things don't just happen for no reason. Retreating into a silent world of imagination, she crafts a plan to prove her theory--even if it means traveling the globe, alone.” ~Publisher's Summary

The Worst-Case Scenario Ultimate Adventure

Novels: Deadly Seas ~David Borgenicht

“Faced with fearsome dangers and difficult decisions, your choices will determine your fate on the deadly seas. Will you survive tropical storms, high winds, navigation crises, and sharks? Or will you be forced to return home early? Only the reader can decide how to survive.”

~Publisher's Summary

See you in the Cosmos ~Jack Cheng

“11-year-old Alex Petroski loves space and rockets, his mom, his brother, and his dog Carl Sagan—named for his hero, the real-life astronomer. All he wants is to launch his golden iPod into space the way Carl Sagan (the man, not the dog) launched his Golden Record on the Voyager spacecraft in 1977. From Colorado to New Mexico, Las Vegas to L.A., Alex records a journey on his iPod to show other lifeforms what life on earth, his earth, is like. But his destination keeps changing. And the funny, lost, remarkable people he meets along the way can only partially prepare him for the secrets he'll uncover...” ~Publisher's Summary

Audrey Summerlost ~Ally Condie

“It's the first real summer since the accident that killed Cedar's father and younger brother, Ben. Cedar and what's left of her family are returning to the town of Iron Creek for the summer. They're just settling into their new house when a boy named Leo, dressed in costume, rides by on his bike. Intrigued, Cedar follows him to the renowned Summerlost theatre festival. Soon she finds herself surrounded by mystery..” ~Publisher's Summary

Absolutely Normal Chaos ~Sharon Creech

“This prequel to Walk Two Moons chronicles the life of a thirteen-year-old during her most chaotic and romantic summer ever via journal entries, filled with hilarious observations on love, death, and the confusing mechanics of holding hands..” ~Publisher's Summary

Stella by Starlight ~Sharon Draper

“Stella lives in the segregated South...Some stores she can go into. Some stores she can't...to Stella, it sort of evens out, and heck, the Klan hasn't bothered them for years. But one late night, later than she should ever be up, much less wandering around outside, Stella and her little brother see something they're never supposed to see, something that is the first flicker of change to come, unwelcome change by any stretch of the imagination.”

~Publisher's Summary

One Crazy Summer ~Rita Williams Garcia

“In One Crazy Summer, eleven-year-old Delphine is like a mother to her two younger sisters, ever since their mother, Cecile, left them seven years ago for a radical new life in California. But when the sisters arrive from Brooklyn to spend the summer with their mother, Cecile is nothing like they imagined. While the girls hope to go to Disneyland and meet Tinker Bell, their mother sends them to a day camp run by the Black Panthers.”

~Publisher's Summary

Perfect Season ~Tim Green

“Troy's dreams of the big time have backfired. Sure, he's moved to New Jersey to start his new job as "genius" for the New York Jets, but his dad has taken his entire salary, leaving Troy and his mom broke. Instead of going to the private school of his dreams and playing for a football powerhouse, he's going to be part of a team with an unbroken losing streak. But Troy isn't giving up.”

~Publisher's Summary

One Amazing Elephant ~Linda Oatman High

“Twelve-year-old Lily Pruitt loves her grandparents, but she doesn't love the circus—and the circus is their life. She's perfectly happy to stay with her father, away from her neglectful mother and her grandfather's beloved elephant, Queenie Grace. Then Grandpa Bill dies, and both Lily and Queenie Grace are devastated. When Lily travels to Florida for the funeral, she keeps her distance from the elephant. But the two are mourning the same man—and form a bond born of loss.” ~Publisher's Summary

Home Team Series ~Mike Lupica

Many books in this series for those who love to read about sports.

The River ~Gary Paulson

“Two years after Brian Robeson survived fifty-four days alone in the Canadian wilderness, the government wants him to head back so they can learn what he did to stay alive. This time Derek Holtzer, a government psychologist, will accompany him. But a freak storm leaves Derek unconscious. Brian's only hope is to transport Derek a hundred miles down the river to a trading post...For the first time it's not only Brian's survival that's at stake.” ~Publisher's Summary

Best Man ~Richard Peck

“Archer Magill has spent a lively five years of grade school with one eye out in search of grown-up role models...along the way he finds...Mr. McLeod, a teacher. In fact, the first male teacher in the history of the school. But now here comes middle school and puberty. Change. Archer wonders how much change has to happen before his voice does. He doesn't see too far ahead, so every day or so a startling revelation breaks over him. Then a really big one when he's the best man at the wedding of two of his role models. But that gets ahead of the story. In pages that ripple with laughter, there's a teardrop here and there. And more than a few insights about the bewildering world of adults, made by a boy on his way to being the best man he can be.” ~Publisher's Summary

A Good Kind of Trouble Ramee ~Lisa Moore

“Twelve-year-old Shayla is allergic to trouble. All she wants to do is to follow the rules. (Oh, and she'd also like to make it through seventh grade with her best friendships intact, learn to run track, and have a cute boy see past her giant forehead.) But in junior high, it's like all the rules have changed. Now she's suddenly questioning who her best friends are and some people at school are saying she's not black enough. Wait, what? Shay's sister, Hana, is involved in Black Lives Matter, but Shay doesn't think that's for her. After experiencing a powerful protest, though, Shay decides some rules are worth breaking.” ~Publisher's Summary

Where the Red Fern Grows ~Wilson Rawls

“Billy has long dreamt of owning not one, but two, dogs. So when he's finally able to save up enough money for two pups to call his own—Old Dan and Little Ann—he's ecstatic... Soon Billy and his hounds become the finest hunting team in the valley. Stories of their great achievements spread throughout the region, and the combination of Old Dan's brawn, Little Ann's brains, and Billy's sheer will seems unbeatable. But tragedy awaits these determined hunters—now friend...” ~Publisher's Summary

Holes ~Louis Sachar

“Stanley Yelnats is under a curse. A curse that has since followed generations of Yelnatses. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the boys build character by spending all day, every day digging holes exactly five feet wide and five feet deep. There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. But there are an awful lot of holes. It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake.” ~Publisher's Summary

Stargirl ~Jerry Spinelli

“From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of “Stargirl, Stargirl.” She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first. Then they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different, and Leo, panicked and desperate with love, urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her normal.” ~Publisher's Summary

The Cay ~Theodore Taylor

“Phillip is excited when the Germans invade the small island of Curaçao. War has always been a game to him, and he's eager to glimpse it firsthand—until the freighter he and his mother are traveling to the United States on is torpedoed. When Phillip comes to, he is on a small raft in the middle of the sea. Besides Stew Cat, his only companion is an old West Indian, Timothy. Phillip remembers his mother's warning about black people: “They are different, and they live differently.” But by the time the castaways arrive on a small island, Phillip's head injury has made him blind and dependent on Timothy.” ~Publisher's Summary

Flipped ~Wendelin Van Draanen

“The first time she saw him, she flipped. The first time he saw her, he ran. That was the second grade, but not much has changed by the seventh. Juli says: “My Bryce. Still walking around with my first kiss.” He says: “It's been six years of strategic avoidance and social discomfort.” But in the eighth grade everything gets turned upside down: just as Bryce is thinking that there's maybe more to Juli than meets the eye, she's thinking that he's not quite all he seemed.” ~Publisher's Summary

Belle Prater's Boy ~Ruth White

"Everyone in Coal Station, Virginia, has a theory about what happened to Belle Prater, but twelve-year-old Gypsy wants the facts, and when her cousin Woodrow, Aunt Belle's son moves next door, she has her chance. Woodrow isn't as forthcoming as Gypsy hopes, yet he becomes more than just a curiosity to her-- during their sixth-grade year she finds that they have enough in common to be best friends. Even so, Gypsy is puzzled by Woodrow's calm acceptance of his mother's disappearance, especially since she herself has never gotten over her father's death. When Woodrow finally reveals that he's been keeping a secret about his mother, Gypsy begins to understand that there are different ways of finding the strength to face the truth, no matter how painful it is." ~Publisher's Summary

Historical Fiction

True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle ~Avi

"Thirteen-year-old Charlotte Doyle is excited to return home from her school in England to her family in Rhode Island in the summer of 1832. But when the two families she was supposed to travel with mysteriously cancel their trips, Charlotte finds herself the lone passenger on a long sea voyage with a cruel captain and a mutinous crew." ~Publisher's Summary

The War that Saved my Life ~Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

"Ten-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada's twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn't waste a minute—she sneaks out to join him." ~Publisher's Summary

Summer of my German Soldier ~Betty Greene

"The summer that Patty Bergen turns twelve is a summer that will haunt her forever. When her small hometown in Arkansas becomes the site of a camp housing German prisoners during World War II, Patty learns what it means to open her heart. Even though she's Jewish, she begins to see a prison escapee, Anton, not as a Nazi, but as a lonely, frightened young man with feelings not unlike her own." ~Publisher's Summary

The Lions of Little Rock ~Kristin Levine

"As twelve-year-old Marlee starts middle school in 1958, it feels like her whole world is falling apart. Until she meets Liz, the new girl at school. Liz is everything Marlee wishes she could be: she's brave, brash and always knows the right thing to say. But when Liz leaves school without even a good-bye, the rumor is that Liz was caught passing for white." ~Publisher's Summary

The Time-Traveling Fashionista on Board the Titanic

~Bianca Turetsky

"Louise Lambert has always dreamed of movie starlets and exquisite gowns and longs for the day when she can fill the closet of her normal suburban home with stylish treasures. But when she receives a mysterious invitation to a vintage fashion sale in the mail, her once painfully average life is magically transformed into a time-travel adventure. Suddenly onboard a luxurious cruise ship a hundred years ago, Louise relishes the glamorous life of this opulent era and slips into a life of secrets, drama, and decadence." ~Publisher's Summary

Pharaoh's Boat ~David Weitzman

"In the shadow of the Great Pyramid at Giza, the most skilled shipwrights in all of Egypt are building an enormous vessel that will transport Cheops, the mighty pharaoh, across the winding waterway and into a new world. Pharaoh's boat will be a wonder to behold, and well prepared for the voyage ahead. But no one, not even the Egyptian king himself, could have imagined just where the journey of Pharaoh's boat would ultimately lead." ~Publisher's Summary

Counting on Grace ~Elizabeth Winthrop

"1910. Pownal, Vermont. At 12, Grace and her best friend Arthur must leave school and go to work as a "doffers" on their mothers' looms in the mill. Grace's mother is the best worker, fast and powerful, and Grace desperately wants to help her. But she's left handed and doffing is a right-handed job. Grace's every mistake costs her mother... Together they write a secret letter to the Child Labor Board about underage children working in Pownal. A few weeks later a man with a camera shows up. It is the famous reformer Lewis Hine, undercover, collecting evidence for the Child Labor Board." ~Publisher's Summary

Graphic Novels

El Deafo ~Cecil Belle

"Starting at a new school is scary, especially with a giant hearing aid strapped to your chest! At her old school, everyone in Cece's class was deaf. Here, she's different. She's sure the kids are staring at the Phonic Ear, the powerful aid that will help her hear her teacher. Too bad it also seems certain to repel potential friends. Then Cece makes a startling discovery. With the Phonic Ear she can hear her teacher not just in the classroom but anywhere her teacher is in the school— in the teacher's lounge . . . in the bathroom! This is power." ~Publisher's Summary

Awkward ~Svetlana Chmakova

“Cardinal rule #1 for surviving school: Don’t get noticed by the mean kids. Cardinal rule #2 for surviving school: Seek out groups with similar interests and join them. On her first day at her new school, Penelope–Peppi–Torres reminds herself of these basics. But when she trips into a quiet boy in the hall, Jaime Thompson, she’s already broken the first rule, and the mean kids start calling her the “nerder girlfriend.” How does she handle this crisis? By shoving poor Jaime and running away!” ~Education.com

Class Act ~Jerry Craft

“Eighth grader Drew Ellis is no stranger to the saying “You have to work twice as hard to be just as good.” His grandmother has reminded him his entire life. But what if he works ten times as hard and still isn’t afforded the same opportunities that his privileged classmates at the Riverdale Academy Day School take for granted?” ~Education.com

Be Prepared ~Vera Vosgrol

“In Be Prepared, all Vera wants to do is fit in—but that’s not easy for a Russian girl in the suburbs. Her friends live in fancy houses and their parents can afford to send them to the best summer camps. Vera’s single mother can’t afford that sort of luxury, but there’s one summer camp in her price range—Russian summer camp.” ~Education.com

Science Fiction

Children of Exile (series) ~Margaret Peterson Haddix

“For the past twelve years, adults called “Freds” have raised Rosi, her younger brother Bobo, and the other children of their town, saying it is too dangerous for them to stay with their parents, but now they are all being sent back. Since Rosi is the oldest, all the younger kids are looking to her with questions she doesn’t have the answers to. She’d always trusted the Freds completely, but now she’s not so sure. And their home is nothing like she’d expected, like nothing the Freds had prepared them for?” ~Publisher’s Summary

A Wrinkle in Time ~Madeleine L’Engle

“It was a dark and stormy night; Meg Murry, her small brother Charles Wallace, and her mother had come down to the kitchen for a midnight snack when they were upset by the arrival of a most disturbing stranger. “Wild nights are my glory,” the unearthly stranger told them. “I just got caught in a downdraft and blown off course. Let me sit down for a moment, and then I’ll be on my way. Speaking of ways, by the way, there is such a thing as a tesseract.” ~Publisher’s Summary

When You Reach Me ~Rebecca Stead

“Shortly after a fall-out with her best friend, sixth grader Miranda starts receiving mysterious notes, and she doesn’t know what to do. The notes tell her that she must write a letter—a true story, and that she can’t share her mission with anyone.

It would be easy to ignore the strange messages, except that whoever is leaving them has an uncanny ability to predict the future. If that is the case, then Miranda has a big problem—because the notes tell her that someone is going to die, and she might be too late to stop it.” ~Publisher’s Summary

The Mysterious Benedict Society ~Trenton Stewart

“Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?” Dozens of children respond to this peculiar ad in the newspaper and are then put through a series of mind-bending tests, which readers take along with them. Only four children—two boys and two girls—succeed. Their challenge: to go on a secret mission that only the most intelligent and inventive 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. But what they’ll find in the hidden underground tunnels of the school is more than your average school supplies. So, if you’re gifted, creative, or happen to know Morse Code, they could probably use your help.” ~Publisher’s Summary

Vande Heir Apparent ~Vivian Velde

“In the virtual reality game Heir Apparent, there are way too many ways to get killed—and Giannine seems to be finding them all. Which is a darn shame, because unless she can get the magic ring, locate the stolen treasure, answer the dwarf’s dumb riddles, impress the head-chopping statue, charm the army of ghosts, fend off the barbarians, and defeat the man-eating dragon, she’ll never win. And she has to, because losing means she’ll die—for real this time.” ~Publisher’s Summary

Nonfiction

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl ~Anne Frank

“In 1942, with the Nazis occupying Holland, a thirteen-year-old Jewish girl and her family fled their home in Amsterdam and went into hiding. For the next two years, until their whereabouts were betrayed to the Gestapo, the Franks and another family lived cloistered in the “Secret Annexe” of an old office building. Cut off from the outside world, they faced hunger, boredom, the constant cruelties of living in confined quarters, and the ever-present threat of discovery and death. In her diary Anne Frank recorded vivid impressions of her experiences during this period. Her account offers a fascinating commentary on human courage and frailty and a compelling self-portrait of a sensitive and spirited young woman whose promise was tragically cut short.” ~Publisher’s Summary

Small Steps ~Peg Kehret and Abby Levine

“Peg Kehret has written the true story of the year when she was twelve and stricken with polio. At first paralyzed and terrified, she fought her way to recovery, aided by doctors and therapists, a loving family, supportive roommates fighting their own battles with the disease, and plenty of grit and luck. With the humor and suspense that are her trademarks, Peg Kehret vividly recreates a year of heartbreak and triumph.” ~Publisher’s Summary

Fantasy

The Wish Giver ~Bill Brittain

“Thaddeus Blinn shows no signs of being different when he comes to Coven Tree. He was just a funny little man who drifted into town with a strange tale about being able to give people whatever they wished—for only fifty cents. There was nothing scary about him. At least, not until the wishing began...” ~Publisher’s Summary

The Land of Stories ~Chris Colfer

“Through the mysterious powers of a cherished book of stories, twins Alex and Conner leave their world behind and find themselves in a foreign land full of wonder and magic where they come face-to-face with the fairy-tale characters they grew up reading about.” ~Publisher’s Summary

Ranger’s Apprentice (series) ~John F. Flanagan

“They have always scared him in the past—the Rangers, with their dark cloaks and shadowy ways. The villagers believe the Rangers practice magic that makes them invisible to ordinary people. And now 15-year-old Will, always small for his age, has been chosen as a Ranger’s apprentice. What he doesn’t yet realize is that the Rangers are the protectors of the kingdom.” ~Publisher’s Summary

The Unwanteds (series) ~Lisa McMann

“Every year in Quill, thirteen-year-olds are sorted into categories: the strong, intelligent Wanteds go to university, and the artistic Unwanteds are sent to their deaths.” ~Publisher’s Summary

The Red Pyramid ~Rick Riordan

“Since their mother’s death, Carter and Sadie have become near strangers. While Sadie has lived with her grandparents in London, her brother has traveled the world with their father, the brilliant Egyptologist, Dr. Julius Kane. One night, Dr. Kane brings the siblings together for a “research experiment” at the British Museum, where he hopes to set things right for his family. Instead, he unleashes the Egyptian god Set, who banishes him to oblivion and forces the children to flee for their lives.” ~Publisher’s Summary

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone Series ~J.K. Rowling

“Harry Potter has never even heard of Hogwarts when the letters start dropping on the doormat at number four...they are swiftly confiscated by his grisly aunt and uncle. Then, on Harry’s eleventh birthday, a great beetle-eyed giant of a man called Rubeus Hagrid bursts in with some astonishing news: Harry Potter is a wizard, and he has a place at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.” ~Publisher’s Summary

The Egypt Game ~Zilfa Keatley Snyder

“The first time Melanie Ross meets April Hall, she’s not sure they have anything in common. But she soon discovers that they both love anything to do with ancient Egypt. When they stumble upon a deserted storage yard, Melanie and April decide it’s the perfect spot for the Egypt Game. Before long there are six Egyptians, and they all meet to wear costumes, hold ceremonies, and work on their secret code. Everyone thinks it’s just a game until strange things start happening. Has the Egypt Game gone too far?” ~Publisher’s Summary

Thickety Series ~J.A. White

“The Thickety: A Path Begins is a spellbinding tale about a girl, the Thickety, and the power of magic. Fans of Neil Gaiman will love this thrilling new world. When Kara Westfall was five years old, her mother was convicted of the worst of all crimes: witchcraft. Years later, Kara and her little brother, Taff, are still shunned by the people of their village, who believe that nothing is more evil than magic...except, perhaps, the mysterious forest that covers nearly the entire island. It has many names, this place. Sometimes it is called the Dark Wood, or Sordyr’s Realm. But mostly it’s called the Thickety.” ~Publisher’s Summary