

6th Graders' Suggested Summer Reading List



Avi. *Crispin: Loss of Lead.* Hyperion, 2002. Falsely accused of theft and declared a "wolf's head" (whom any man may kill) after his mother's death, humble, pious Crispin flees the feudal village where he was raised and the steward who...

Avi. *The Book Without Words: A Fable of Medieval Magic.* Hyperion, 2005. Sybil is a servant girl working for Thorston, an alchemist, who has spent his life trying to figure out the secret to immortality, which can be found in *The Book Without Words*. Just as he is about to succeed, he drops dead, leaving Sybil and Odo, the talking raven, to reap the rewards of his work.

Cooper, Susan. *The Dark is Rising.* Aladdin Paperbacks, 1973. On Midwinter's Eve, the night before his eleventh birthday, Will Stanton, seventh son of a seventh son, finds his world suddenly become ominous. Early on his birthday morning, Will awakes to find himself centuries back in time and discovers that he is actually the last of the 'Old Ones', a mystical company whose mission has always been to keep the forces of the Dark at bay. Will has been born with a great gift of power; and he must now undertake the heroic quest to find and to join together the six Signs of the Light - for "the Dark is Rising."

Cooper, Susan. *Victory.* McElderry, 2006. Molly, upset by her family's move from London to the U.S., is strangely drawn to an old book about the life of Admiral Lord Nelson, and soon finds her life intertwined with that of Sam, a boy her age who served with Nelson aboard the HMS "Victory" a century earlier.

Cushman, Karen. *Catherine, Called Birdy.* Clarion, 1994. The scene is a manor house in England in 1290 and Catherine, the willful, stubborn and delightful daughter of Sir Rollo and Lady Aislinn, has been asked, by her brother the monk, to keep a journal and these are her daily entries for one important year in her life.

Cushman, Karen. *Rodizna.* Clarion, 2003. A twelve-year-old Polish American girl is boarded onto an orphan train in Chicago with fears about traveling to the West and a life of unpaid slavery.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Among The Hidden.* Aladdin Paperbacks, 2000. Luke is a third child and is forbidden by the Population Law, which states that because of a shortage of food, a family is only allowed to have two children. Since Luke will be killed if he is seen, he doesn't go to school, or church, nor have friends. Luke meets Jen Talbot by accident, and they become friends. Jen introduces Luke to a world he had never known. Jen plans a rally protesting against the Population Law and Luke is torn between helping the only friend he's ever known, and staying hidden with his family for the rest of his life.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Double Identity.* Simon & Schuster, 2005. Thirteen-year old Bethany's parents have always been overprotective, but when they suddenly drop out of sight with no explanation, leaving her with an aunt she never knew existed, Bethany uncovers shocking secrets that make her question everything she thought she knew about herself and her family.

Ibbotson, Eva. *Journey to the River Sea.* Dutton, 2001. Sent with her governess to live with the dreadful Carter family in exotic Brazil in 1910, Maia endures many hardships before fulfilling her dream of exploring the Amazon River.

Ibbotson, Eva. *The Secret of Platform 13.* Penguin Putnam Inc., 1998. There is a doorway under Platform 13 that leads to a magical island world filled with mermaids, ogres and mistmakers. But when the island's Prince was a baby, he was kidnapped and taken to London where he's being raised as a human boy. Now the King and Queen send a hag, a wizard, an ogre and a fey to the big city to retrieve their son and bring him home. Will the rescuers succeed? Will they be unnoticed by humans?

Kadohata, Cynthia. *Kira-Kira.* Atheneum, 2004. This is the story of a close friendship between two Japanese-American sisters growing up in rural Georgia during the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the despair when one sister becomes terminally ill. Newbery Medal

L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time.* Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1962. Meg Murry, her little brother Charles Wallace, and their mother are having a midnight snack on a dark and stormy night when an unearthly stranger appears at their door. She claims to have been blown off course, and goes on to tell them that there is such a thing as a "tesseract," which, if you didn't know, is a wrinkle in time. Newbery Medal

London, Jack. *The Call of the Wild.* Buck, a beloved pet, is stolen and shipped to Alaska during the 1890's Gold Rush. Mistreated, he learns to survive as a member of a dog sled team.

Nye, Naomi Shihab, ed. *Is This Forever or What?: Poems and Paintings from Texas.* Greenwillow, 2004. Full-color artwork accompanies a collection of poems by 140 Texans.

Nye, Naomi Shihab. *This Same Sky: A Collection of Poems from Around the World.* Aladdin, 1996. Contains translated work by 129 poets from 68 different countries

Paulsen, Gary. *Dogsong.* 1985. Motivated by vivid dreams, 14-year-old Russel Susskit attempts to escape the modern ways of his Eskimo village in order to discover his own path. A dogsled across the frozen Alaskan wilderness becomes a journey of spirit as he struggles to confront himself and the forces of nature around him.

Paulsen, Gary. *Hatchet.* 1987. Thirteen-year-old Brian Robeson is the sole survivor of a plane crash in the Canadian wilderness. Brian must use his wits to survive.

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Paulsen, Gary. *Soldier's Heart*. 1998. Based on the real-life story of 15-year-old farm boy named Charley Goddard who faked his age in order to join the First Minnesota Volunteers and fight in the Civil War. After his first battle he realizes horror of combat, but it is too late to turn back, and he can only hope to get out alive.

Paulsen, Gary. *The Voyage of the Frog*. 1989. Fourteen-year-old David Alspeth wants only to scatter the ashes of his recently deceased uncle over the sea when he sets out in his sailboat. But when a storm hits, David is stranded. With little water and just seven days of food, David must survive many days on his own as he learns to understand himself and his uncle.

Paulsen, Gary. *The Winter Room*. 1989. In the 1930's, Eldon, a young boy growing up on a remote Minnesota farm, listen to their Uncle David's stories of superheroes. One night Uncle David tells the story "The Woodcutter" and the boys soon discover the truth about their elderly uncle and his tales.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Becoming Naomi Leon*. Scholastic, 2004. When Naomi's absent mother resurfaces to claim her, Naomi runs away to Mexico with her great-grandmother and younger brother in search of her father.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Esperanza Rising*. Scholastic Press, 2000. Esperanza Ortega possesses all the treasures a young girl could want: fancy dresses; a beautiful home in Aguascalientes, Mexico. But a sudden tragedy shatters that dream, forcing Esperanza and Mama to flee to California and settle in a Mexican farm labor camp. There they confront the challenges of hard work, acceptance by their own people, and economic difficulties brought on by the Great Depression. When Mama falls ill from Valley Fever and a strike for better working conditions threatens to uproot their new life, Esperanza must relinquish her hold on the past and learn to embrace a future ripe with the riches of family and community.

Silverstein, Shel. *A Light in the Attic*. HarperCollins Publishers, 1981. Here in the attic of Shel Silverstein you will find Backward Bill, Sour Face Ann, the Meehoo with an Exactlywatt, and the Polar Bear in the Frigidaire. You will talk with Broiled Face, and find out what happens when Somebody steals your knees, you get caught by the Quick-Digesting Gink, a Mountain snores, and They Put a Brassiere on the Camel.

Silverstein, Shel. *The Giving Tree*. HarperCollins Publishers, 1964. The story is a short moral tale about a relationship between a young boy and a tree in a forest. It tells the account of how the tree loves the boy, and helps the boy with his needs throughout his life, from the boy's childhood until his golden years.

Silverstein, Shel. *Where the Sidewalk Ends*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2004. A book of children's poetry written and illustrated by Shel Silverstein. The book's poems address many common childhood concerns, as well as presenting purely fanciful stories.

Soto, Gary. *A Fire in my Hands*. A collection of poetry exploring the emotions surrounding first love, family life, and the drama of friendship.

Soto, Gary. *Baseball in April and Other Stories*. A collection of short-stories that focus on the hopes, dreams, and hardships of young Mexican-Americans growing up in the barrio.

Soto, Gary. *Local News*. One boy tries to save the planet by becoming a vegetarian. Another seeks to blackmail his older brother with pictures taken of him in the shower.

Soto, Gary. *The Pool Party*. When Rudy Herrera is invited to a pool party by a rich and popular Tiffany Perez, he discovers that getting ready will be a family affair. It seems like everyone from his sister to his grandfather has already decided how Rudy should behave at the big event.

Spinelli, Jerry. *Maniac Magee*. A homeless wanderer "Maniac" Magee moves like no one else in town. He intercepts footballs, hits a home run without a baseball, and wins a race running backward. But there are two challenges he can't outrun: the string racial divisions in his hometown, and his need for a loving family.

Taylor, Mildred. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. During the Great Depression, members of the Logan family are threatened by disturbing actions to their close-knit family. The Logans draw together to fight in order to keep their 400-acre cotton farm.

Whelan, Gloria. *Chu Ju's House*. HarperCollins, 2004. In order to save her baby sister, fourteen-year-old Chu Ju leaves her rural home in modern China and earns food and shelter by working on a sampan, tending silk worms, and planting rice seedlings, all the while wondering if she will ever see her family again.

Whelan, Gloria. *Goodbye, Vietnam*. Yearling, 1993. When Mai's family discovers that Vietnam government soldiers will soon apprehend her father and grandmother, the family slips away in the night. They trudge through the swamps of the Mekong Delta toward the sea. The gut-wrenching trip to Hong Kong is just another step toward a new life, which the family eventually finds.

Yep, Laurence. *Dragonwings*. A young Chinese immigrant comes to San Francisco to join his father. Father and son encounter prejudice and danger, but meet new friends. They learn how to preserve heritage while pursuing long-held dreams.