

## Welcome 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Readers!

Anytime is a great time for reading. Research says that children who read daily are more apt to be successful in school and score better on reading achievement tests. They practice important skills that support learning and thinking. Reading fosters confidence and independence. Besides, it's fun!

Here are some thoughts to encourage your readers:

- Visit the library! Encourage your children to read for pleasure.
- Books that are “just right”, not too hard or not too easy, are best for independent reading.
- There's a wealth of books for tweens with great variety in theme and content. Books are not one size fits all. Reader's interests and comfort will guide them in their selections.
- Talk to your children about what he or she is reading.
- 6<sup>th</sup> graders read to learn. They read increasingly more complex texts in a variety of genres and subjects at school and home. They understand how the central theme is supported and developed through details and can use them to draw inferences about plot and characters. They can relate the author's and character's viewpoints to their own and see the similarities and differences. Their vocabulary and critical thinking expand. Reading influences their own writing as well.
- Older children still enjoy being read to and reading aloud. Great discussions often follow!

*Working with your children has been my great pleasure. Happy Reading!*

*Cheryl Miller, CTA Library 2021*

Here is only a small selection of the many books available for upper elementary and middle school ages.

### Fiction

*Al Capone Does My Shirts* by Jennifer Choldenko 2007 Newbery Honor Moving to Alcatraz Island, where his dad's a guard, isn't what Moose wants. Enjoy the series.

*Among the Hidden* by Margaret Petersen Haddix 2000 First book in *The Shadow Children* series about a society that allows just 2 children per family. Luke, age 12, is a third child. He can never go outside. His only contacts are his parents and 2 older brothers. Is life fair? *Great Ohio author!*

*Children of Exile* by Margaret Petersen Haddix 2017 -19 Twelve years ago, Earth's children were taken from their homes for better lives away from the war-torn planet. Now, back on Earth, their homes and parents are not as imagined. Sequels: **Children of Refuge & Children of Jubilee**,

*Arcady's Goal* by Eugene Yelchin 2014 From the author of *Breaking Stalin's Nose*, here's another story of Soviet Russia. For Arcady, sent to a children's home after his parents are declared enemies of the state, soccer is a means of survival and, maybe, a chance to leave.

*The Blackbird Girls* by Anne Blankman 2021 In 1986 the Russian nuclear power plant in Chernobyl exploded. Many died or were sick. Others fled to safety, including Jewish Valentina and Ukrainian Oksana. Not really friends, they have to travel together to Valentina's grandmother in Leningrad. Through their stories we see the power of friendship over hatred, intolerance and oppression.

*The Candymakers* by Wendy Mass 2011 Four kids compete to create the most delicious new candy. Sequel: *The Candymakers and the Great Chocolate Chase*.

*Chasing Vermeer* by Blue Balliett 2004 This book “is a puzzle, wrapped in a mystery, disguised as an adventure, and delivered as a work of art”. It revolves around 6<sup>th</sup> graders Petra and Calder and their search for a missing Vermeer painting.

**Classic Stories** for children like *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain; *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll; *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery; *Black Beauty* by Anna Sewell; *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett; *The Swiss Family Robinson* by Johann David Wyss; *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson; *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* by Jules Verne.

**Dear America** series Various authors Written as a diary format, researched from actual letters and diaries, these stories let readers experience the lives of girls from different times in American history. *My Name Is America* is a series that follows the adventures of boys through history

**Echo Mountain** by Lauren Wolk 2021 It's 1934, 12-year-old Ellie and her family lost their home and must move to a mountain cabin. She quickly learns to be an outdoors woman and a healer. But can she help heal her father who had a terrible accident.

**Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library** by Chris Grabenstein 2013 Game maker, Luigi Lemoncello designed a state-of-the-art library and 12 lucky 7<sup>th</sup> graders get to stay the night before its opening. Lock the doors and let the games begin! 5 books - newest, *Mr. Lemoncello and the Titanium Ticket* 2020.

**Esperanza Rising** by Pam Ryan 2002 Esperanza thought she'd always have fancy dresses, a beautiful home, and Mama, Papa, and Abuelita to care for her. But tragedy forces Esperanza and Mama to flee to California and live in a Mexican farm labor camp. Esperanza isn't ready for the hard work and other changes in her life but she knows she must find a way to survive them.

**Fish in a Tree** by Lynda Mullaly Hunt Heartwarming story of Ally's struggle to hide her dyslexia until her quirky friends and a special teacher help her see just how smart she really is.

**From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler** by E.L. Konigsberg 1967 Newbery Medal Twelve-year-old Claudia and her brother run away to live in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. There they get caught up in the mystery of a statue that may, or may not, be the work of Michelangelo.

**Front Desk** by Kelly Yang 2019 Asian/Pacific American Award New to America, 10-year-old Mia Tang lives in a motel that her parents clean and manage. When not at school Mia works the front desk but dreams of being a writer. She uses her talent as a writer to right injustices and help others. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> book, *Three Keys* (2020), Mia, now part owner of the motel, works to make it a success and help immigrants. Last in the trilogy, *Room to Dream*, comes out in Sept. 2021.

**The Girl with the Glass Bird** by Esme Kerr 2015 Knight's Haddon boarding school is for rich kids, not Edie. But she's sent there with a secret task and a mystery to solve! Sequel *Mischief at Midnight*. Two great stories of friendship and mystery!

**Hello, Universe** by Erin Entrada Kelly 2018 Newbery Medal Shy Virgil wants the courage to talk to Valencia, who is confident, independent, and deaf. Kaori is a psychic. And Chet Bullens is a bully. One summer day their lives intersect in a race to save one of them.

**Holes** by Louis Sachar 1999 Newbery Medal Unjustly accused of a crime and sent to Camp Green Lake, Stanley Yelnats is forced to dig holes as rehabilitation, or is there another reason?

**Jacky-Ha-Ha** by James Patterson 2016 Twelve-year old Jackie Ha-Ha Hart is the class clown, but her pranks aren't always funny. Read all of the author's hilarious middle school books.

**The Journey of Little Charlie** by Christopher Paul Curtis 2018 12-year-old Charlie is alone and down on his luck. To pay a family debt he agrees to help Cap'n Buck catch fugitives who he claims stole from him. But then he discovers who the people they're hunting really are and must make a big decision.

*The Land of Stories* series by Chris Colfer A magical book takes twins, Alex and Conner, into the fairy tale world. Series includes: ***The Wishing Spell***, ***The Enchantress Returns***, ***A Grimm Warning***, ***Beyond the Kingdoms***, ***An Author's Odyssey***, and ***World's Collide***.

***Lemonade Girls Forever*** Sara Miriam Gross 2014 Chavi, Devorah, Shiffy, and Avigayil are the Lemonade Girls. They're good friends who creatively solve problems. Their motto, "When you have lemons, make lemonade"!

***Lunch Money*** by Andrew Clements 2007 6<sup>th</sup> grader Greg Kenton is great at making money but what happens when his rival, Maura, competes with him. Author of many great "school stories".

***Making Bombs for Hitler*** by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch 2017 Inspired by real life, this story, and its sequels, ***Stolen Girl*** and ***The War Below***, recount the experiences of Ukrainians during WWII.

***Many Points of Me*** by Caroline Gertler 2021 Georgia's late father was an artist. He created asterisms, patterns of stars. One was of her best friend, Theo. He's sure the next one would have been of Georgia. When she finds a sketch, she wonders if he's right. Can she prove it?

***Merci Suárez Changes Gears*** by Meg Medina 2019 Newbery Medal Merci Suarez isn't like other kids at her school. Her family doesn't live in a big house or have a boat. Problems with a "mean girl" at school and concern about her beloved grandfather make this 6<sup>th</sup> grader worry.

***Mimi in the Middle*** by Chani Altein 2015 Two younger brothers, two older sisters and Mimi's always stuck in the middle. She's excited about her summer plans but they fall through, and it looks like she's stuck in the middle again! Sequels: ***Mimi's Big Year*** (2018), ***Mimi's Moment*** (2020)

***My Side of the Mountain*** by Jean Craighead George 1960 Newbery Honor In this modern classic, Sam Gribble leaves his family's crowded New York City apartment to live in the Catskill Mountains. There, with Frightful, his pet peregrine falcon, Sam learns to survive on his own.

***The Mysterious Benedict Society*** by Trenton Lee Stewart 2007 "Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?" Many apply but only four go to the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened. New in 2020, Book 4, ***The Mysterious Benedict Society and the Riddle of the Ages***.

***The New Kid*** by Jerry Craft 2020 Newbery Medal Jordan wanted to go to Art School, but his parents send him to a fancy private school where he's one of a few Black 7<sup>th</sup> graders. How can he be true to his school *and* to his neighborhood friends?

In the 2020 sequel, ***Class Act***, friends Drew, Jordan, and Liam are 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Jordan's no longer the new kid. Liam's family is white and wealthy. Drew is black, comes from a working-class home and worries he won't succeed. Can their friendship withstand their differences? *Graphic Novels*

***Number the Stars*** by Lois Lowry 1990 Newbery Medal On Sept. 29, 1943, word spread in Nazi-held Denmark that Jews would be sent to the death camps. This is a story of a girl whose family hides her best friend's family. Although fiction, it shows how the Danes helped 7,000 Jews escape to Sweden.

***The One and Only Bob*** by Katherine Applegate 2020 Bob takes a journey in search of his long-lost sister with the help of his two best friends, Ivan and Ruby. Sequel to ***The One and Only Ivan***.

***Parker Inheritance*** by Varian Johnson 2018 Coretta Scott King Honor Candice found a letter written to her grandmother. It describes a young woman and an injustice that happened in the 1950s. It involves a mystery and a prize. Can she and her friend, Brandon, solve the puzzle?

***Prairie Lotus*** by Linda Sue Park 2020 The story of a half-Asian girl's determination to get an education, become a dressmaker in her father's shop and make at least one friend despite the overwhelming prejudice she faces in small town 1880.

***Rick Riordan series*** Beginning with his first series ***Percy Jackson and the Olympians*** the author has thrilled fans of fantasy and mythology series. Greek series: ***Heroes of Olympus*** and ***Trials of Apollo***. Other series: ***Kane Chronicles*** - set in Ancient Egypt and ***Magnus Chase*** - Norse mythology.

***Refugee*** by Alan Gratz 2017 The stories of a Jewish boy from Germany during World War II, a Cuban girl in the 1990s and a Syrian boy in 2015 connect as all three refugees flee their homelands. Another great book by this author is 2021's ***Ground Zero***, historical fiction about 9/11. ***Popular author***

***Save Our School*** by Sara Wiederblank 2006 Meet Class 6A, the funniest and most caring group of girls you can imagine. Their projects usually end in disaster but now their mission is to save their school!

***Short*** by Holly Goldberg Sloan 2017 Julia is tiny for her age and lacks confidence but she's decided to get over it. But at an audition for Wizard of Oz, she's cast as a munchkin! How does that work out?

***Stargazing*** by Jen Wang 2019 Moon is everything Christine isn't. Though both grew up in the same Chinese-American suburb, Moon is unlike anyone Christine's ever known. And they become best friends. ***Graphic Novel***

***Unteachables*** by Gordon Korman 2019 What happens when the worst class is paired with the most burnt-out teacher? The kids thought they'd never find a teacher with a worse attitude than theirs, and the teacher never thought he'd care about teaching again. ***Popular author***

***Three Times Lucky*** by Sheila Turnage 2013 Newbery Honor 6<sup>th</sup> grader Mo washed up ashore eleven years ago and lives with the Colonel and Miss Lana. When a lawman asks about a crime, Mo and her best friend set off to solve it. Sequels: ***The Ghosts of Tupelo Landing*** & ***The Odds of Getting Even***

***Travel Team*** by Mike Lupica 2005 Danny, though the smallest kid on the basketball team, plays with heart. When cut from the team his dad made famous, he finds a way to follow his own basketball dreams. Read ***Million Dollar Throw*** and this author's other sports fiction.

***The War That Saved My Life*** by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley 2015 Ada was born with a twisted foot and doesn't go out. But, because of the bombings in London, she takes her brother and leaves for the countryside. There her life changes in ways she never dreamed of. Sequel: ***The War I Finally Won*** 2017

***When You Reach Me*** by Rebecca Stead 2010 Newbery Medal As her mother practices for the 1980's TV show, "The \$20,000 Pyramid," a 12 year old New York girl tries to make sense of mysterious notes.

***When the Sea Turned to Silver*** by Grace Lin 2016 Pinmei's loving grandmother is a great storyteller. The Emperor kidnaps her when his search for the Luminous Stone fails so Pinmei searches to free her. Also read ***Where the Mountain Meets the Moon***, 2011 Newbery Honor & ***Starry River of the Sky*** 2012.

***When You Trap a Tiger*** by Tae Keller 2021 Newbery Honor When Lily and her family move in with her sick grandmother, a magical tiger like in her halmoni's Korean folktales arrives. What does it want?

***Wonder*** by R.J. Palacio 2012 August Pullman was born with a facial deformity. He has always been homeschooled but now he's starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep and wants to be treated like any other kid.

***Words on Fire*** by Jennifer A. Nielsen 2019 There's danger when the Russian Cossacks invade Lithuania. Everyone must speak Russian. Lithuanian books are banned and burned. As danger nears, her parents give Audra an important package to deliver. Three of Nielsen's many other books are ***Rescue (2021)***, ***Resistance (2018)***, and ***A Night Divided (2015)***.

### **Nonfiction**

***Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream*** by Tanya Lee Stone 2009 To be an astronaut it takes expert flying, courage, intelligence, top physical shape, and, in 1958, being a man! The Mercury 13 women proved they had what it takes but were blocked by prejudice from achieving their dream.

***A Black Hole is Not a Hole*** by Carolyn Cinami DeCristofano 2013 Discover black holes and what causes them.

***Blizzard*** by Jim Murphy 2000 Learn about the massive storm of March 1888 and how it paralyzed the Northeastern part of the U.S. The story is told through first person and newspaper accounts.

***Bomb: The Race to Build – and Steal – the World's Most Dangerous Weapon*** by Steve Sheinkin 2013 Newbery Honor, Sibert Medal and YALSA Award in Nonfiction The story of the creation, arms race and subsequent espionage involving the atom bomb.

***The Boy on the Wooden Box*** by Leon Leyson 2013 The author was only 10 when Nazis invaded Poland. As the youngest member of Schindler's List, he was able to survive the Holocaust.

***Brown Girl Dreaming*** by Jacqueline Woodson 2015 Newbery Honor Written in verse, this is the author's story. From her birth in Columbus to life in South Carolina and Brooklyn, we learn what life for a black girl growing up in the 1960s was like.

***Courage Has No Color: The True Story of the Triple Nickles*** 2014 YALSA Honor The story of America's first African American Paratroopers and how they fought Hitler's army overseas and segregation at home.

***DK Eyewitness Books*** Various authors More than 100 Eyewitness books support non-fiction interests like Rocket Science, Ancient Egypt, chemistry, Titanic, animals, American Revolution and much more.

***Escape from Iran*** by Shira Yehudit Dijalilmamd 2018 It's dangerous for Jews in 1980s Iran. Twin sisters, Pari and Maheen, have a chance to leave home for a better life in the West. But it means saying goodbye to everyone important to them and taking a dangerous journey. Read this true series.

***The Girl Who Drew Butterflies*** by Joyce Sidman 2019 Sibert Family Award Born in 1647, it is quite an accomplishment that Maria Sibylla Merian became a naturalist and a scientific illustrator. Picture book with detailed text and illustrations.

***Hanna's Suitcase: A True Story*** by Karen Levine 2002 The story of Hanna Brady, who died in Auschwitz, and of a teacher and director of a Holocaust education center in Tokyo. The arrival of Hanna's suitcase and his students' questions led Fumiko Ishioka to unite them with Hanna's brother.

***The Journey that Saved Curious George: The True Wartime Escape of Margaret and H.A. Rey*** by Louise Borden 2010 It's 1940 and the Reys flee Paris and the approaching German army. Among their possessions are the precious manuscripts with the lovable chimp we all know.

***Legends: The Best Players, Games and Teams in Basketball*** by Howard Bryant 2017 From Magic Johnson to Michael Jordan to LeBron James to Steph Curry, the author highlights the best players and teams in basketball. Great for sports fans.

***My Life with Chimpanzees*** by Jane Goodall 1996 Jane always wanted to work with animals. At age 26 she got the chance and went to Africa to observe chimpanzees. This became her life's work!

***Neighborhood Sharks*** by Katherine Roy 2015 Sibert Honor The author visits California's Farallon islands where scientists study great whites living on the islands' rocky coasts.

***Notorious RBG Young Reader's Edition: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg*** by Irin Carmon & Shana Knizhnik 2017 Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was an icon to millions. Her tireless fight for equality for all inspired positive changes in the workforce and impacted our laws.

***Pink and Say*** by Patricia Polacco 1994 Based on true events, this is a Civil War era story of friendship. Sheldon Curtis (Say), a white boy from Ohio, is badly hurt. Pinkus Aylee, a black Union soldier finds him and carries him home to recover. Sadly, Confederate soldiers catch them and take them to a prison camp. *Great place to jumpstart Civil War research.*

***The Right Word: Roget and His Thesaurus*** by Jen Bryant and Melissa Sweet 2014 Read about the life of Peter Roget, a boy who compiled lists, became a successful doctor, and created one of the most important reference books. Wonderfully illustrated and informative.

***Smile*** by Raina Telgemeir 2010 Raina's just a normal 6<sup>th</sup> grade girl until one day a traumatic accident injures her front teeth. Harrowing treatments and the unexpected interrupt her life! *Graphic Novel*

***The Way Things Work Now*** by David Macaulay 2016 The latest developments in technology. Information on how things work from windmills to Wi-Fi and more.

***Weird but True Sports: 300 Wacky Facts About Awesome Athletics*** by National Geographic 2016 Everything has its weird side--even sports! Stats, facts, and stories for the sports lover. Fun and informative series.

***When Stars are Scattered*** by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed 2020 Life is hard for two Somali brothers living in a Kenyan refugee camp. Can Omar temporarily leave his brother and go to school so they will have a future? True story. *Graphic Novel*

*Lots of great nonfiction is available for kids. Let the readers' interests be a guide to making selections.*