

# Expeditionary Learning Middle School Summer Reading for Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> Graders

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*“The greatest gift is a passion for reading. It is cheap, it consoles, it distracts, it excites, it gives you knowledge of the world and experience of a wide kind. It is an illumination.”*

- Elizabeth Hardwick

Dear Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> Graders and Parents/Guardians,

The Expeditionary Learning Middle School 6th grade teachers wish you all a wonderful summer break. In an effort to provide you summer reading that is both interesting and enjoyable, we have included a list of book titles that appeal to a wide range of interests.

Here at ELMS, we push our students to strive for high achievement and to set new goals for themselves often. One goal is to be college and career ready; therefore, we ask that when choosing summer reading books, students challenge themselves by selecting books that are both high interest and at grade level. We encourage students to read aloud to their parents and have parents read aloud to students as well. Be sure to share thoughts and reactions to the reading with others. Great literature should be discussed and shared!

We challenge each student to read one book this summer. Of course, we encourage all students to continue to read on a regular basis and to discover new authors and books to enjoy over your summer break!

The attached list includes grade appropriate options, but you are welcome to find a book for your student that is not on the list. Our goal is to help students find what they love to read.

Please complete the novel outline (attached). In September, your new ELA teacher will be collecting these outlines for extra credit and prizes.

Sincerely,

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teachers

## **6th Grade Summer Reading Recommendations**

Adamson, Joy. Born Free

A Kenya game warden and his wife adopted a baby lioness, kept it as a household pet and, when it was full-grown, set it free, after teaching it to fend for itself.

Alexander, Lloyd. The High King (or any in series or by same author)

In this fifth and final chronicle of Prydain the forces of good and evil meet in ultimate confrontation.

Allison, Jennifer. Gilda Joyce, Psychic Investigator

Gilda Joyce invites herself to visit a distant cousin in San Francisco where she uses her psychic abilities to solve the mystery of the mansion's boarded up tower.

Anderson, Laurie Halse. Fever 1793

Fourteen-year-old Mattie Cook is ambitious with plans. But life in Philadelphia is about to change as sickness grips the area. Her fight to build a better life gives way to a fight just to live.

Armstrong, Alan. Whittington

Whittington, a feline descendant of Dick Whittington's famous cat, appears at a rundown barnyard, restores harmony among the residents and helps a boy learn to read.

Avi. Something Upstairs

When he moves to Providence, RI, Kenny discovers his new house is haunted by the spirit of a black slave boy who asks Kenny to time travel back to the 1800's to prevent his murder by slave traders.

Balliet, Brett. Chasing Vermeer

When a book of unexplainable occurrences brings Petra Andalee and Calder Pillay together, strange things start to happen. Before they know it, the two find themselves at the center of an international art scandal.

Bellairs, John. The Curse of the Blue Figurine

Johnny Dixon is plunged into a terrifying mystery-adventure when he removes a blue figurine called a shawabti from church.

Blume, Judy. Iggie's House

When a black family with three children moves into the white neighborhood, eleven-year-old Winnie learns the difference between being a good neighbor and being a good friend.

Boyce, Frank Cottrell. Framed

A few good things to know about Dylan: he is the only boy in his entire town, his best friends are his two pet chickens, criminal instincts run in his family, and the

crime of the century has just fallen into his lap.

Byars, Betsy Cromer. Cracker Jackson

After attempting to save his ex-babysitter from wife abuse, Cracker Jackson gains an adult insight into the sadness of failed heroics.

Choldenko, Gennifer. Notes from a Liar and Her Dog

Twelve-year-old Ant, stuck in a family that she does not like, copes by pretending that her “real” parents are coming to rescue her.

Clements, Andrew. Things Not Seen

When fifteen-year-old Bobby wakes up and finds himself invisible, he and his parents and his new blind friend Alicia try to find out what caused his condition and how to reverse it.

Coerr, Eleanor. Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes

Hospitalized with the dreaded atom bomb disease, leukemia, a child in Hiroshima races against time to fold one thousand paper cranes to verify the legend that by doing so a sick person will become healthy.

Colfer, Eoin. Artemis Fowl (or any in series)

A genius, criminal mastermind, and a millionaire, Artemis Fowl is crafty. His plot to steal the richest treasure the world has ever known, is matched by Captain Holly Short – an elf from Special Forces.

Cooper, Susan. The Grey King

In this fourth book of *The Dark is Rising* sequence, Will Stanton, visiting in Wales, is swept into a desperate quest to find the golden harp and to awaken the ancient sleepers.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. Bud, Not Buddy

Ten-year-old Bud, a motherless boy living in Flint, Michigan, during the Depression, escapes a bad foster home and sets out in search of the man he believes to be his father-the renowned band leader, H.E. Calloway of Grand Rapids.

Cushman, Karen. The Midwife's Apprentice

In medieval England, a nameless, homeless girl is taken in by a sharp-tempered midwife, and in spite of obstacles and hardship, eventually gains the three things she most wants: a full belly, a contented heart, and a place in this world.

Dahl, Roald. Matilda (or *James and the Giant Peach*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Danny: The Champion of the World*, or *The BFG*)

Matilda applies her untapped mental powers to rid the school of the evil, childhating headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, and restore her nice teacher, Miss Honey, to financial security.

DiCamillo, Kate. Because of Winn-Dixie

Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni describes her first summer in the town of Naomi, Florida, and all the good things that happen to her because of her big ugly dog Winn-Dixie.

DiCamillo, Kate. The Tiger Rising (or *The Tale of Desperaux*)

Rob, who passes the time in his rural Florida community by wood carving, is drawn by his spunky but angry friend Sistine into a plan to free a caged tiger.

Engdahl, Sylvia. Enchantress from the Stars

Three civilizations from different planets in widely varying stages of development clash in what could be either a mutually disastrous or beneficial encounter.

Filipovic, Zlata. Zlata's Diary

A young girl relates her experience growing up in an upper-middle class family in Sarajevo to increased circumstances of violence and danger, and the inhumanity of war.

Fox, Paula. One-Eyed Cat (or *Monkey Island*, *The Slave Dancer*, or *Blowfish Live in the Sea*)

An eleven-year-old shoots a stray cat with his new air rifle, suffers from guilt, and eventually takes responsibility for it.

Gantos, Jack. Joey Pigza Swallows the Key (or any in series)

To the disappointment of his mother and his teachers, Joey has trouble paying attention or controlling his mood swings when his prescription medications wear off and he starts getting worked up and acting wired.

Gauthier, Gail. A Year With Butch and Spike

Jaspar Gordon loves school. Cousins Butch and Spike Couture do not love school Jasper's heard all about the "Cootches". Everyone has. Jasper's teacher seats him between the notorious cousins hoping some of his goodness will rub off on them. She never dreamed that the opposite could happen.

George, Jean Craighead. On the Far Side of the Mountain

Sam's peaceful existence in his wilderness home is disrupted when his sister runs away and his pet falcon is confiscated by a conservation officer.

Gipson, Fred. Old Yeller

Fourteen-year-old Travis tells the story of Old Yeller, a thieving yellow dog that turned up the summer his dad was away on a cattle drive in Kansas.

Hale, Shannon. Princess Academy

Fourteen-year-old Miri discovers unexpected talents and connections to her homeland while attending an academy for potential princesses with other girls from her mountain village.

Howe, James. Bunnacula (or any in series)

Though scoffed at by Harold the dog, Chester the cat tries to warn his human family that their foundling baby bunny must be a vampire.

Ibbotson, Eva. Dial-a-Ghost

After spending most of his life in a London orphanage, Oliver Smith is horrified to discover he is the sole master of a grand old mansion. He soon finds himself ensconced in a spooky tower bedroom under the care of his cruelly calculating cousins, the Snodde-Brittles.

Jacques, Brian. Redwall (any in series)

The hero Matthias, a young mouse who must rise above his fears and failures to save his friends at Redwall Abbey, seeks his true destiny in a journey that will lead through danger and despair to true wisdom.

Hahn, Mary Downing. All the Lovely Bad Ones

While spending the summer at their grandmother's supposedly haunted Vermont Inn, two prankster siblings decide to give the guests a real scare but accidentally awaken the ghosts from a distant past.

Konigsburg, E.L. From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler

Eleven-year-old Claudia Kincaid decided to run away from home and live at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Korman, Gordon. Maxx Comedy.

Eleven-year-old Max Carmody has wanted to be a stand-up comedian since he was five, so when a contest is held to find the "world's funniest kid," he goes through all kinds of craziness to win.

LeGuin, Ursula K. A Wizard of Earthsea

A boy grows to manhood while attempting to subdue the evil he unleashed on the world as an apprentice to the Master Wizard.

Lewis, C.S. Chronicles of Narnia (any book in the series)

Four English schoolchildren find their way through the back of a wardrobe into the magic land of Narnia...

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. Boys In Control

Play Ball!! That's what the sixth-grade Buckman Badgers baseball team plans on doing. But the Hatford Brothers and the Malloy sisters find themselves pitted against each other when embarrassing pictures of the boys turn up in the girls' basement and the boys try to figure out how to get them back.

Paulsen, Gary. Molly McGinty Has A Really Good Day

When supremely organized seventh-grader, Molly McGinty, loses the notebook she relies on to keep her life organized, she spends the day in chaos. This light

breezy romp is humorous and unpredictable.

Park, Barbara. Skinnybones

Alex's active sense of humor helps him get along with the school braggart, make the most of his athletic talents, and simply get by in a hectic world.

Paulsen, Gary. The Haymeadow (or any by author)

Fourteen-year-old John comes of age and gains self-reliance during the summer he spends up in the Wyoming mountains tending his father's herd of sheep.

Pierce, Tamara. Alanna: The First Adventure (or any in *Lioness* series)

Eleven-year-old Alanna, who aspires to be a knight even though she is a girl, disguises herself as a boy to become a royal page, learning many hard lessons along her path to high adventure.

Relf, Pat. A Dinosaur Named Sue

The story of the colossal fossil- the world's most complete T. Rex.

Sachar, Louis. There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom (or any by author)

An unmanageable, but lovable, eleven-year-old misfit learns to believe in himself when he gets to know the new school counselor, who is a sort of misfit too.

Scieszka, Jon. Time Warp Trio (any in series)

Everyone's favorite time travelers..

Sleator, William. The Duplicate

Sixteen-year-old David, finding a strange machine that creates replicas of living organisms, duplicates himself and suffers the horrible consequences when the duplicate turns against him.

Spinelli, Jerry. The Library Card

The lives of four young people in different circumstances are changed by their encounters with books.

Ullman, James Ransey. Banner in the Sky

A young boy feels compelled to conquer the mountain that caused his father's death.

### **Additional 6th grade titles for emerging readers:**

Snowshoe Thompson, by Nancy Smiler Levinson

One winter John Thompson skis across the Sierra Nevada Mountains and creates a path upon which mail and people may travel, thus earning his nickname.

The Bears of Hemlock Mountain, by Alice Dalgliesh

A young boy sent on an errand over Hemlock Mountain is not so sure he likes

going alone, because there may be bears on the mountain.

Abe Lincoln's Hat, by Martha Brenner

Why did Abe Lincoln always wear a tall black hat? Why, to keep his important papers safe!

Courage of Sarah Noble, by Alice Dalgliesh

An eight-year-old girl finds courage to go alone with her father to build a new home in the Connecticut wilderness, and to stay with the Indians when her father goes back to bring the rest of the family.

How to Eat Fried Worms, by Thomas Rockwell

Two boys set out to prove that worms can make a delicious meal.

The Hundred Dresses, by Eleanor Estes

In winning a medal she is no longer there to receive, a tight-lipped little Polish girl teaches her classmates a lesson.

Mr. Popper's Penguins, by R. and F. Atwater

The unexpected delivery of a large crate containing an Antarctic penguin changes the life and fortunes of Mr. Popper, a house painter obsessed by dreams of the Polar regions.

Shoeshine Girl, by Clyde Robert Bulla

Determined to earn some money, ten-year-old Sarah Ida gets a job at a shoe shine stand and learns a great many things besides shining shoes.

The Trumpet of the Swan, by E.B. White

Louis, a voiceless Trumpeter swan, finds himself far from his wilderness home when he determines to communicate by learning to play a stolen trumpet.

Stone Fox, by Marcia Sewall and John Gardine .

Little Willie hopes to pay the back taxes on his grandfather's farm with the purse from a dog sled race he enters.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

ELA

Incoming Grade 6

### Summer Book Choice #1

**Title:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Author:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Genre:**

- Realistic fiction       Mystery       Historical fiction  
 Fantasy       Non-fiction       Biography  
 Science fiction       Adventure

**Choose 3 characters to describe.**

Characters:	Description:

Tell how a **character** has changed over the course of the novel:

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**Setting** (Time and place):

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**Conflict** (Describe the main character's problem):

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**Resolution** (Describe how the problem was solved):

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**Plot** (Describe the main events in the order that they occur in the story):

- 1) 

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- 2) 

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- 3) 

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- 4) 

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- 5) 

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**Theme** (What lesson has the character learned over the course of the novel?):

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**Review:** I do/do not recommend this book because... (Support with details from the text)

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**Rate the book you read on a scale of 1 to 5.**

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<b>Rating</b> (Low 1-5 High)

## Summer Book Choice #2

**Title:**

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**Author:**

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**Genre:**

- Realistic fiction       Mystery       Historical fiction  
 Fantasy       Non-fiction       Biography  
 Science fiction       Adventure

**Choose 3 characters to describe.**

<b>Characters:</b>	<b>Description:</b>

Tell how a **character** has changed over the course of the novel:

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**Setting** (Time and place):

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**Conflict** (Describe the main character's problem):

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**Resolution** (Describe how the problem was solved):

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**Plot** (Describe the main events in the order that they occur in the story):

- 1) 

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- 2) 

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- 3) 

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- 5) 

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**Theme** (What lesson has the character learned over the course of the novel?):

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**Review:** I do/do not recommend this book because... (Support with details from the text)

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**Rate the book you read on a scale of 1 to 5.**

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<b>Rating</b> (Low 1-5 High)