

# 6th Grade Summer Reading

Dear Future Sixth Graders and Parents,

All of the students at Sutton Middle School will be reading two (2) novels over summer vacation. The incoming sixth graders must read two (2) novels from the list of books found on the following pages and complete the attached worksheets, one for each novel. The worksheets will be checked during the first week, and an in-school assignment will be given.

Students are encouraged to take notes while reading. This may be Post-It Notes to summarize each chapter or to list important events. Students may prefer to keep a journal of important characters and events. These notes are not required, but they may be helpful at the beginning of the school year. These notes may be used for the in-school assignment.

If there are any questions about summer reading, please contact Sutton Middle School at (508) 581-1630.

The Sutton Middle School English Department

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**Choose two (2) books from the following list to be your Summer Reading novels.**

The following synopses are from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

## ***Chasing Vermeer* by Blue Balliett**

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. As Petra and Calder are drawn clue by clue into a mysterious labyrinth, they must use their powers of intuition, their skills at problem solving, and their knowledge of Vermeer. Can they decipher a crime that has left even the FBI baffled?

## ***Counting by 7s* by Holly Goldberg Sloan**

Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions, who finds it comforting to count by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life . . . until now. Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. The triumph of this book is that it is *not* a tragedy. This extraordinarily odd, but extraordinarily endearing, girl manages to push through her grief. Her journey to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read.

## ***Crash* by Jerry Spinelli**

Cocky seventh-grade super-jock Crash Coogan got his nickname the day he used his first football helmet to knock his cousin Bridget flat on her backside. And he has been running over people ever since, especially Penn Webb, the dweeby, vegetarian Quaker kid who lives down the block. Through the eyes of Crash, readers get a rare glimpse into the life of a bully in this unforgettable and beloved story about stereotypes and the surprises life can bring.

### ***The Dark Hills Divide* by Patrick Carman**

Elyon is a land of dark hills, enchanted forests, and great walls that connect and encircle the cities of Lathbury, Turlock, Lunenburg, and Bridewell like spokes in a wagon wheel. On her annual summer trips to Bridewell with her father, the mayor of Lathbury, Alexa Daley spends much of her time dreaming of escape. Having lived within the walls all of her 12 years, she wants nothing more than to explore the uncharted wilderness beyond. But, the walls are heavily guarded, and frightening legends suggest that forests and hills are no place for a child—especially a young girl. When a mysterious conversation and an unfortunate accident put Alexa within reach of a way outside the wall, she must decide—heed the warnings of her elders, or satisfy her curiosity and unravel the mysteries of Elyon.

### ***EI Deafo (Graphic Novel)* by Cece Bell**

Going to school and making new friends can be tough. But going to school and making new friends while wearing a bulky hearing aid strapped to your chest? That requires superpowers! In this funny, poignant graphic novel memoir, author/illustrator Cece Bell chronicles her hearing loss at a young age and her subsequent experiences with the Phonic Ear, a very powerful—and very awkward—hearing aid. The Phonic Ear gives Cece the ability to hear—sometimes things she shouldn't—but also isolates her from her classmates. She really just wants to fit in and find a true friend, someone who appreciates her as she is. After some trouble, she is finally able to harness the power of the Phonic Ear and become “EI Deafo, Listener for All.” And more importantly, declare a place for herself in the world and find the friend she’s longed for.

### ***Firegirl* by Tony Abbott**

Tom, a seventh grader, tells about the arrival of Jessica, a new student who was badly burned in a fire and is attending St. Catherine's while she gets treatments at a local hospital. The students in Tom's class are afraid of her because of her appearance but little by little he develops a friendship with her that changes his life. Through realistic settings and dialogue, and believable characters, readers will be able to relate to the social dynamics of these adolescents who are trying to handle a difficult situation. The students who shy away from Jessica are at a loss as to what to say. Tom begins to look beyond her exterior and realizes that his life will not be the same after she leaves, just three weeks later. The theme of acceptance is presented in a touching story of friendship that is easy to read yet hard to forget.

### ***Fish in a Tree* by Lynda Mullaly Hunt**

Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you

cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the troublemaker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself, and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her—and to everyone—than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike.

### ***Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins**

In the first novel of the New York Times bestselling series, young Gregor falls through a grate in the laundry room of his apartment building and hurtles into the dark Underland. This strange world is on the brink of war, and Gregor's arrival is no accident. A prophecy foretells that Gregor has a role to play in the Underland's uncertain future. Gregor wants no part of it -- until he realizes it's the only way to solve the mystery of his father's disappearance. Gregor embarks on a dangerous adventure that will change both him and the Underland forever.

### ***Hidden Talents* by David Lubar**

Martin Anderson and his friends don't like being called losers. But they've been called that for so long even they start to believe it. Until Martin makes an incredible discovery: each of his friends has a "hidden" talent. Edgeview Alternative School was supposed to be end of the road, but it just might be a new beginning.

### ***Lost Trail: Nine Days Alone in the Wilderness (Graphic Novel)* by Donn Fendler**

Based on the true account of a boy's harrowing journey through the vast wilderness of the Katahdin Mountains, this is a survival story for all ages. Twelve-year-old Donn Fendler steps away from his Boy Scout troop for only a minute, but in the foggy mountains of Maine, a minute is all it takes. After hours of trying to find his way back, a nervous and tired Donn falls down an embankment, making it impossible for him to be found. One sleepless night goes by, followed by a second...and before Donn knows it, almost two weeks have passed, leaving him starving, scared, and delirious. With rainstorms, black bears, and his fear of being lost forever, Donn's journey is a physically, mentally, and emotionally charged story told from the point of view of the boy who lived it.

### ***The Magician's Nephew* by C.S. Lewis**

Digory and Polly discover a secret passage that links their homes, and they are taken into the World of Charn, where they wake up the evil Queen Jadis. There, they witness the creation of the Land of Narnia as it is sung into being by the Great Lion, Aslan. When Digory and Polly attempt to send the wicked witch, Jadis, back to her own world, the magic gets mixed up and they all land in Narnia, where they witness Aslan blessing the animals with human speech.

### ***A Mango-Shaped Space* by Wendy Mass**

Thirteen-year-old Mia Winchell appears to be a typical eighth grader. But Mia is keeping a secret from everyone who knows her: sounds, numbers and words appear in color for her. Mia has synesthesia, the mingling of perceptions whereby a person can see sounds, smell colors, or taste shapes. *A Mango-Shaped Space* is a poignant, coming-of-age novel spiced with wit and humor that chronicles Mia's developing appreciation of her gift.

### ***Million-Dollar Throw* by Mike Lupica**

Nate Brodie is nicknamed 'Brady' not only for his arm, but also because he's the biggest Tom Brady fan. He's even saved up to buy an autographed football. And when he does, he wins the chance for something he's never dreamed of: to throw a pass through a target at a Patriots game for one million dollars. Nate should be excited. But things have been tough lately. His dad lost his job and his family is losing their home. It's no secret that a million dollars would go a long way. So all Nate feels is pressure, and just when he needs it most, his golden arm begins to fail him. Even worse, his best friend Abby is going blind, slowly losing her ability to do the one thing she loves most: paint. Yet Abby never complains, and she is Nate's inspiration. He knows she'll be there when he makes the throw of a lifetime.

### ***Schooled* by Gordon Korman**

Capricorn Anderson doesn't exactly fit in at Claverage Middle School (dubbed C Average Middle School by the kids). He has long, ungroomed hair, wears hemp clothes, and practices Tai Chi out on the lawn. His weirdness basically makes him the biggest nerd in school. This is great news for Zach Powers, big man on campus. He can't wait to instate the age-old tradition in C Average School: The biggest nerd is nominated for class president--and wins. So when "Cap" becomes president, he is more puzzled than ever. But as "Cap" begins to take on his duties, the joke starts to turn on Zach. Will "Cap" turn out to be the greatest President in the history of C Average School or the biggest punchline?

### ***A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park**

Set in 12<sup>th</sup> century Korea, Tree-ear, a 13-year-old orphan, lives under a bridge in Ch'ulp'o, a potter's village famed for delicate celadon ware. He has become fascinated with the potter's craft; he wants nothing more than to watch master potter Min at work, and he dreams of making a pot of his own someday. When Min takes Tree-ear on as his helper, Tree-ear is elated – until he finds obstacles in his path: the backbreaking labor of digging and hauling clay, Min's irascible temper, and his own ignorance. But Tree-ear is determined to prove himself – even if it means taking a long, solitary journey on foot to present Min's work in the hope of a royal commission...even if it means arriving at the royal court with nothing to show but a single celadon shard.