

John F. Ryan Elementary Grades 5 & 6 Summer Reading 2025



June 2025

Dear Parents/Guardians of Students Entering Grades 5 and 6:

Welcome to our Summer Reading Program! We encourage our students to continue reading during the summer months! We are requiring all students to read a minimum of **three (3) books**. We have included a suggested summer reading list. Audiobooks are a great way to help students engage in text, and graphic novels are a great alternative to comprehending text. The visual context provided by the illustrations helps readers grasp the storyline and character motivations more easily, which can be particularly beneficial for struggling readers or those learning a second language.

Please help your child complete their "Summer Reading Log" and at least one activity from the choice board assignment. The log and activity are due September 2, 2025. Additionally, your student will have access to Lexia, an on-line reading platform, to continue to develop skills.

Keep your child engaged throughout the summer with reading, discovering new books, fun activities, and special events by visiting **Tewksbury Public Library**. The Librarians are available to help choose titles and help you get set up for online services (ex. **Hoopla**) which gives you **free access to ebooks and e-audiobooks**. Visit www.tewksburypl.org.

It is so important to keep our students engaged in summer reading to help their academic success when we resume school. Please encourage your child to read for at least 30 minutes each day. Thank you in advance for your assistance and support of the Tewksbury Public Schools Summer Reading Program.

Sincerely,

John F. Ryan Elementary ELA & Literature Teachers

Homeroom: _____



Summer Reading Log

Please list all of the books you have read this summer.
Remember--a minimum of three (3) books is required!

[illegible]

Fiction Choice Board

Directions: If one of your books is fiction, choose one of the following activities to complete after you finish reading it.

Story Extension

Create a story extension that is 3-5 paragraphs long. The story extension should include sensory details, character dialogue, and figurative language. The story extension could be from a specific scene, or chapter, or creating a new ending to the book.

Story Extension Exemplar

Character Report Card

Complete a report card for two of the main characters in the book.

Exemplar Template
Blank Template

Movie Poster

Create a movie poster related to the book without giving away the whole story. After creating your poster, complete the report template provided which includes a summary, list of characters, story setting, and moral.

Exemplar
Template

Design Trading Cards

Create four trading cards, each depicting a different character from your book. Each card will include a picture of the character along with their traits, likes, dislikes, and wants.

Exemplar
Template

(Different sizes provided, your choice!)

Nonfiction Choice Board

Directions: If one of your books is nonfiction, choose one of the following activities to complete after you finish reading it.

Biography

Write a biography about one of the individuals in your book. Your biography should be 3-5 paragraphs long and contain information about his/her birthdate, childhood, family members, accomplishments, and interesting relevant facts.

Biography Exemplar
Biography Graphic Organizer

Timeline

Create a timeline about the major events that occur in the book. Your timeline should include five major events. Each event should be labeled, described in two to three sentences, and illustrated with a picture. Your events should be listed in chronological order.

Timeline Exemplar
Timeline Template

Comprehension Test

Create a test based on your book that includes a variety of questions. Your test should include the title and author of the book, eight multiple choice questions, and two short answer questions. You should include an answer key.

Comprehension Test Exemplar
Comprehension Test Template

Vocabulary

Choose five words from your text that are new to you or important to the main idea of the text. For each word, define it, provide synonyms, write the word in a new sentence, and sketch it. Use the attached template or draw your own.

Vocabulary Exemplar
Vocabulary Template

Suggested Summer Reading List for Students Entering Grades 5 and 6

Fiction



The Crossover Series by Kwame Alexander *

Josh and Jordan are twins who are basketball phenoms. Told in verse by Josh, we see him learning to deal with his brother growing away from him, his father becoming seriously ill, and the fallout that happens with a family in crisis in an urban environment, all framed by the action on the basketball court.



The Big Time by Tim Green

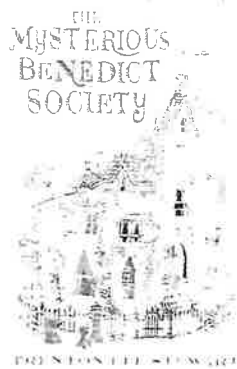
Things couldn't be going better for Troy White. The Atlanta Falcons' football genius is at the top of his game, helping the team get to the playoffs. While Troy celebrates with his friends, a person comes knocking—and he says, "I think I'm your father."

In an instant, Troy's life is changed.



The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate

This stirring and unforgettable novel from renowned author Katherine Applegate celebrates the transformative power of unexpected friendships. Inspired by the true story of a captive gorilla known as Ivan, this illustrated novel is told from the point-of-view of Ivan himself.



The Mysterious Benedict Society Series (The Mysterious Benedict Society, 1) by Trenton Lee Stewart (Author), Carson Ellis (Illustrator)

"Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?" Dozens of children respond to this peculiar newspaper ad 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.



The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill

One year, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, filling the ordinary child with extraordinary magic. Xan decides she must raise this girl, whom she calls Luna, as her own. As Luna's thirteenth birthday approaches, her magic begins to emerge—with dangerous consequences. Meanwhile, a young man from the Protectorate is determined to free his people by killing the witch. Deadly birds with uncertain intentions flock nearby. A volcano, quiet for centuries, rumbles just beneath the earth's surface. And the woman with the Tiger's heart is on the prowl . . .



Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

The author of the beloved *One for the Murphys* gives readers an emotionally-charged, uplifting novel that will speak to anyone who's ever thought there was something wrong with them because they didn't fit in. "Everybody is smart in different ways. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its life believing it is stupid."



The Last Kids on Earth #1 by Max Brallier

In the first lighthearted and humorous story, a foster child named Jack Sullivan finds himself abandoned in a cartoonish end-of-the-world apocalypse in his hometown of Wakefield, Massachusetts. He thrives on freedom, junk food and video games while working with a team of his classmates to fight off zombies and monsters who have appeared.



***Flora and Ulysses* by Kate DiCamillo**

Flora spends her time reading comic books and trying to understand her parents' recent divorce. Flora's neighbor accidentally runs over a squirrel with a vacuum cleaner. Flora is jolted into action and names the squirrel Ulysses after the vacuum cleaner accident. This book shows the power of love and friendship.



***Rebellion 1776* by Laurie Halse Anderson**

In the spring of 1776, thirteen-year-old Elsbeth Culpepper wakes to the sound of cannons. It's the Siege of Boston, the Patriots' massive drive to push the Loyalists out that turns the city into a chaotic war zone. Elsbeth's father—her only living relative—has gone missing, leaving her alone and adrift in a broken town while desperately seeking employment to avoid the orphanage.



***The Magic in Changing Your Stars* by Leah Henderson**

Eleven-year-old Ailey Benjamin Lane can dance so he is certain that he'll be chosen for the role of the Scarecrow in his school's production of *The Wiz*. Ailey's audition does not go as planned, but his Grandpa believes in Ailey and to encourage him shares a childhood story.



***Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai**

This is a story about a young girl named Kim Ha and her mother and three brothers who were forced to move to the United States because the Vietnam War had reached their home and it was no longer safe. They board a navy ship and flee.



***A Wolf Called Wander* by Rosanne Parry**

This novel is based on a true story of one wolf's incredible journey to find a safe place to call home and contains the themes of family, courage, loyalty, survival and the natural world.



***Three Keys* by Kelly Yang**

The story of Mia Tang and her family and friends continues in this hilarious sequel to the award-winning novel, *Front Desk*. Mia thinks she's going to have the best year ever. She and her parents are the proud owners of the Calivista Motel. Mia gets to run the front desk with her best friend, Lupe, and she's finally getting somewhere with her writing! However, 6th grade will be a roller coaster of challenges and Mia needs all her determination to hang on. If anyone can find the key to getting through turbulent times, it's Mia Tang!



***Ways to Make Sunshine* by Renée Watson**

Ryan Hart has a lot on her mind--school, self-image, and especially family. Her dad finally has a new job, but money is tight. That means some changes, like selling their second car and moving into a new (old) house. But Ryan is a girl who knows how to make sunshine out of setbacks.



***Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* by Grace Lin**

In the valley of Fruitless Mountain, a young girl named Minli lives in a ramshackle hut with her parents. In the evenings, her father regales her with old folktales of the Jade Dragon and the Old Man of the Moon, who knows the answers to all of life's questions. Inspired by these stories, Minli sets off on an extraordinary journey to find the Old Man of the Moon to ask him how she can change her family's fortune.



***The Sasquatch Escape (Series)* by Suzanne Selfors**

When Ben Silverstein is sent to the rundown town of Buttonville to spend the summer with his grandfather, he's certain it will be the most boring vacation ever. That is, until his grandfather's cat brings home what looks like . . . a baby dragon?

This book delivers a wild journey filled with mythical creatures and zany adventures that are anything but imaginary.

LISA FIPPS



Starfish by Lisa Fipps

Ever since Ellie wore a whale swimsuit and made a big splash at her fifth birthday party, she's been bullied about her weight. To cope, she tries to live by the Fat Girl Rules—like "no making waves," "avoid eating in public," and "don't move so fast that your body jiggles." And she's found her safe space—her swimming pool—where she feels weightless in a fat-obsessed world. In the water, she can stretch herself out like a starfish and take up all the room she wants. It's also where she can get away from her pushy mom, who thinks criticizing Ellie's weight will motivate her to diet. Fortunately, Ellie has allies in her dad, her therapist, and her new neighbor, Catalina, who loves Ellie for who she is. With this support buoying her, Ellie might finally be able to cast aside the Fat Girl Rules and starfish in real life—by unapologetically being her own fabulous self.



Restart by Gordon Korman

Chase's memory just went out the window.

Chase doesn't remember falling off the roof. He doesn't remember hitting his head. He doesn't, in fact, remember *anything*. He wakes up in a hospital room and suddenly has to learn his whole life all over again . . . starting with his own name.



I Survived (Series) by Lauren Tarshis

Each book in this series tells a terrifying and thrilling story from history, through the eyes of a child who lived to tell the tale.

Graphic Novels – Fiction



New Kid Series by Jerry Craft

This humorous graphic novel tells the story of a 12-year-old boy, Jordan Banks, who is enrolled in a prestigious private school and needs to learn to navigate his new school culture while staying true to himself.



Invisible Emmie by Terri Libenson

This is the story of two totally different girls—quiet, shy, artistic Emmie and popular, outgoing, athletic Katie—and how their lives unexpectedly intersect one day, when an embarrassing note falls into the wrong hands.

...

All the crushes, humiliations, boredom, and drama of middle school are compressed into one surprising day in this extraordinary novel.



Amulet Series by Kazu Kibuishi

After the tragic death of their father, Emily and Navin move with their mother to the home of her deceased great-grandfather, but the strange house proves to be dangerous. Before long, a sinister creature lures the kids' mom through a door in the basement. Em and Navin, desperate not to lose her, follow her into an underground world inhabited by strange creatures, robots, and talking animals. Will they be able to help save someone they love?



Zita the Spacegirl by Ben Hatke

Zita's life took a cosmic left turn in the blink of an eye.

When her best friend is abducted by an alien doomsday cult, Zita leaps to the rescue and finds herself a stranger on a strange planet. Humanoid chickens and neurotic robots are shocking enough as new experiences go, but Zita is even more surprised to find herself taking on the role of intergalactic hero. Before long, aliens in all shapes and sizes don't even phase her. Neither do ancient prophecies, doomed planets, or even a friendly con man who takes a mysterious interest in Zita's quest.



***Frizzy* by Claribel A. Ortega (Author), Rose Bousamra (Illustrator)**

Marlene loves three things: books, her cool Tía Ruby and hanging out with her best friend Camila. But according to her mother, Paola, the only thing she needs to focus on is school and "growing up." That means straightening her hair every weekend so she could have "presentable", "good hair".

But Marlene hates being in the salon and doesn't understand why her curls are not considered pretty by those around her. With a few hiccups, a dash of embarrassment, and the much-needed help of Camila and Tia Ruby—she slowly starts a journey to learn to appreciate and proudly wear her curly hair.



***Pashmina* by Nidhi Chanani**

Priyanka Das has so many unanswered questions: Why did her mother abandon her home in India years ago? Who is her father, and why did her mom leave him behind? But Pri's mom avoids these questions--the topic of India is permanently closed. For Pri, her mother's homeland can only exist in her imagination. That is, until she finds a mysterious pashmina tucked away in a forgotten suitcase. When she wraps herself in it, she is transported to a place more vivid and colorful than any guidebook or Bollywood film. But is this the real India? To learn the truth, Pri must travel farther than she's ever dared and find the family she never knew.



***All's Faire in Middle School* by Victoria Jamieson**

Eleven-year-old Imogene (Impy) has grown up with two parents working at the Renaissance Faire, and she's eager to begin her own training as a squire. First, though, she'll need to prove her bravery. Luckily Impy has just the quest in mind—she'll go to public school after a life of being homeschooled! But it's not easy to act like a noble knight-in-training in middle school. Impy falls in with a group of girls who seem really nice (until they don't) and starts to be embarrassed of her thrift shop apparel, her family's unusual lifestyle, and their small, messy apartment. Impy has always thought of herself as a heroic knight, but when she does something really mean in order to fit in, she begins to wonder whether she might be more of a dragon after all.



Raina Telgemeier Graphic Novel Series

Smile

The true story of how Raina severely injured her two front teeth when she was in the sixth grade, and the dental drama that followed!

Drama

Callie is the set designer for her middle school's spring musical and is determined to create a set worthy of Broadway. Both onstage AND offstage drama ensues!

Sisters

Raina can't wait to be a big sister. Amara is cute, but she's also cranky and mostly prefers to play by herself. Their relationship doesn't improve much over the years... can they figure out how to get along?



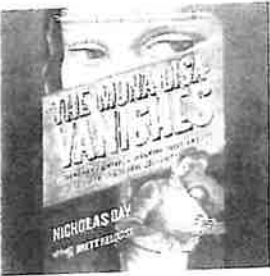

Ghosts

Catrina and her family move to a new town because her sister, Maya, is sick. When they learn there are ghosts there, Maya wants to meet one, and Cat must put aside her fears for Maya's sake -- and her own.

Guts

Raina has tummy trouble, and it seems to coincide with her worries about food, school, family, and changing friendships. A thoughtful, charming, and funny true story about growing up and gathering the courage to face -- and eventually conquer -- fear.

Nonfiction

	<p><i>Lost on a Mountain in Maine</i> by Donn Fendler</p> <p>In this true survival story, 12-year-old Donn steps away from his Boy Scout troop while climbing Mount Katahdin in Maine and is instantly lost in the fog. He spends 9 days lost on the mountain, trying to find his way down, becoming increasingly hungry and delirious.</p>
	<p><i>Chasing Lincoln's Killer</i> by James Swanson</p> <p>You might know that James Wilkes Booth shot Abraham Lincoln, but do you know what happened next? A manhunt that lasted for 12 days to find the assassins followed, and this exciting account of the bad guys, their evil plot, and their attempt to flee to safety will keep readers riveted.</p>
	<p><i>Mona Lisa Vanishes: A Legendary Painter, a Shocking Heist, and the Birth of a Global Celebrity</i> by Nicholas Day</p> <p>On a hot August day in Paris, just over a century ago, a desperate guard burst into the office of the director of the Louvre and shouted, <i>La Joconde, c'est partie!</i> The <i>Mona Lisa</i>, she's gone! No one knew who was behind the heist. Was it an international gang of thieves? Was it an art-hungry American millionaire? Was it the young Spanish painter Pablo Picasso, who was about to remake the very art of painting?</p>
	<p><i>Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers Who Changed the World Hardcover</i> by Rachel Ignotofsky</p> <p>It's a scientific fact: Women rock! This fascinating, educational collection features 50 illustrated portraits of trailblazing women in STEM throughout history. Full of striking, singular art, <i>Women in Science</i> also contains infographics about relevant topics such as lab equipment, rates of women currently working in STEM fields, and an illustrated scientific glossary. The trailblazing women profiled include such pioneers as primatologist Jane Goodall and mathematician Katherine Johnson, who calculated the trajectory of the 1969 Apollo 11 mission to the moon.</p>



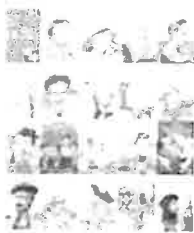
***The Keeper: The Unguarded Story of Tim Howard (Young Readers' Edition)* by Tim Howard**

In this heartwarming and candid memoir, US national soccer team goalkeeper, Tim Howard, opens up for the first time about how a hyperactive kid from New Jersey with Tourette syndrome defied the odds to become one of the world's premier goalkeepers.



***I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World (Young Readers Edition)* by Malala Yousafzai and Patricia McCormick**

I Am Malala is the memoir of a remarkable teenage girl who risked her life for the right to go to school. Raised in a changing Pakistan by an enlightened father from a poor background and a beautiful, illiterate mother from a political family, Malala was taught to stand up for what she believed. *I Am Malala* tells her story of bravery and determination in the face of extremism, detailing the daily challenges of growing up in a world transformed by terror.



***Who Was? What Was? and Where Is? Series* by various authors**

Penguins' Who Was? series makes learning history fun! Each Who Was? What Was? and Where Is? book offers a detailed account of a famous figure's life, historical period or place.



***Amelia Lost: The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart* by Candace Fleming**

The author traces the life of female aviator Amelia Earhart from her childhood to her final flight. This book discusses the extensive search for Amelia and her missing plane, and includes photographs, maps, handwritten notes by Amelia, and sidebars.



***The Woman in the Moon: How Margaret Hamilton Helped Fly the First Astronauts to the Moon* by Richard Maurer**

A stunning and intimate biography of Margaret Hamilton, the computer engineer who helped Apollo 11 and mankind get from the Earth to the moon.



***The Boys in the Boat (Young Readers Adaptation): The True Story of an American Team's Epic Journey to Win Gold at the 1936 Olympics* by Daniel James Brown**

For readers of *Unbroken*, out of the depths of the Great Depression comes the astonishing tale of nine working-class boys from the American West who at the 1936 Olympics showed the world what true grit really meant. With rowers who were the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington's eight-oar crew was never expected to defeat the elite East Coast teams, yet they did, going on to shock the world by challenging the German boat rowing for Adolf Hitler.



***Blizzard!* by Jim Murphy**

Based on personal accounts and newspaper articles, follow the riveting story of the massive snow storm that hit the Northeast in 1888, with a focus on the events in New York City.



***The Notorious Benedict Arnold* by Steve Sheinken**

Most people know that Benedict Arnold was America's first, most notorious traitor. Few know that he was also one of its greatest Revolutionary War heroes. Packed with first-person accounts, astonishing American Revolution battle scenes, and surprising twists, this is a gripping and true adventure tale from history.



***Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson**

In vivid poems that reflect the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, an award-winning author shares what it was like to grow up in the 1960s and 1970s in both the North and the South.



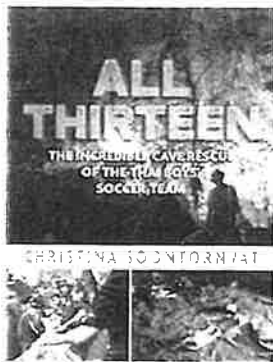
***The Playbook* by Kwame Alexander**

The Playbook is intended to provide inspiration on the court of life. Each rule contains wisdom from inspiring athletes and role models such as Nelson Mandela, Serena Williams, LeBron James, Carli Lloyd, Steph Curry and Michelle Obama. This motivational and inspirational book is just right for graduates of any age and anyone needing a little encouragement.



***Courage to Soar: A Body in Motion, a Life in Balance* by Simone Biles**

This is the official autobiography from four-time Olympic gold-winning and record-setting American gymnast, Simone Biles. Simone shares how her faith, family, passion, and perseverance against tremendous odds made her one of the top athletes and record-breaking gymnasts in the world - and how you too can overcome challenges in your life.



***All Thirteen: The Incredible Cave Rescue of the Thai Boys' Soccer Team* by Christina Soontornvat (Author)**

A unique account of the amazing Thai cave rescue told in a heart-racing, you-are-there style that blends suspense, science, and cultural insight.

On June 23, 2018, twelve young players of the Wild Boars soccer team and their coach entered a cave in northern Thailand seeking an afternoon's adventure. But when they turn to leave, rising floodwaters block their path out. The boys are trapped! Before long, news of the missing team spreads, launching a seventeen-day rescue operation involving thousands of rescuers from around the globe.

