

**Braintree Middle Schools  
Required Summer Reading  
June 2010**

**Information for Parents of Students Entering Grade 6**

Readers turn to literature for a variety of reasons, perhaps to satisfy their curiosity about the world around them or maybe to find their own fantasies, fears and aspirations imaginatively set before them. They are eager, moreover, to read stories that can help them explore some of the larger issues of life --- past, present and future. Reading is an activity that enriches our lives in many ways.

Equally important, reading has been and will continue to be a significant factor in a child's academic success. Research shows that a child who excels in reading will excel in almost all academic areas while a child who is threatened or bored by reading will underachieve throughout his or her academic life. Acquiring the habit of reading for enjoyment may well separate tomorrow's leaders from their followers.

Reading, like any other skill, can best be improved through participation and practice. We hope parents will become active partners this summer in helping their children become better readers. Together children and parents should consider a reading plan that will allow each child to discover the joy of learning through reading for pleasure. We offer the following suggestions:

1. Parents and children should go to the library or a bookstore several times throughout the summer and browse together. Parents are encouraged to assist their children in making appropriate selections.
2. Regular reading time needs to be set aside on a daily or weekly schedule.
3. Parents should encourage their children to keep up with the written assignments while reading each book. These assignments should not be thought of as "homework" but as an opportunity to help children reflect on what they've read.
4. Parents and children should discuss books together.

All sixth graders are required to read a minimum of **two** books during the summer. (Of course, we hope that students will read many more books than the minimum.)

*One book must be from the attached list, which has been compiled by sixth grade teachers.*

*The second book could be another selection from this list or a book approved by the student's parents.*

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Students must complete a written assignment for each book. They have a choice of two types of assignments - writing a response to one of a selection of prompts or taking notes by answering questions. These assignments are described in detail on the Summer Reading Assignment sheet. In September, the students will participate in a discussion in their English class of the books they read. They will be allowed to use their written assignments during the discussions. After the discussions, these assignments will be collected and kept by the teacher.

## Summer 2010 – Incoming sixth graders should select at least one book from this list

### Sixth Grade Summer Reading List

***Dave at Night*** by Gail Carson Levine

Orphaned Dave is sent to the Hebrew Home for boys where he is treated cruelly. He sneaks out at night and is welcomed into the musical world of the Harlem Renaissance. His hardships and comic escapades create a tale of New York in the 1920s. (historical fiction)

***A Year Down Yonder*** by Richard Peck

In this Newbery Award winner, overbearing feisty Grandma Dowdel scares just about everybody in her small town, but her heart of gold is very much appreciated by Mary Alice, her fifteen-year-old granddaughter. This sequel to Peck's *Long Way from Chicago* is a funny, gentle and outrageous story. (realistic fiction)

***Absolutely Normal Chaos*** by Sharon Creech

Mary Lou Finney grudgingly begins a journal as a summer project for school. Then, her cousin Carl Ray comes to stay, and what started as a dull assignment quickly becomes an amazing record of first love and family intrigue. (realistic fiction)

***Danny, The Champion of the World*** by Roald Dahl

This is the light-hearted tale of Danny and his dad, who share numerous brave and zany adventures. (fiction)

***The Thief Lord*** by Cornelia Funke

Wacky characters bring energy to this translation of an entertaining German novel about thieving children, a disguise-obsessed detective and a magical merry-go-round. (Amazon)

***Esperanza Rising*** by Pam Munoz Ryan

With a hint of magical realism, this robust novel set in 1930 captures a Mexican girl's fall from riches and her immigration to California. (Publishers Weekly)

***Ear, the Eye and the Arm*** by Nancy Farmer

In 2194 in Zimbabwe, General Matsika's three children are kidnapped and put to work in a plastic mine while three mutant detectives--the Ear, the Eye, and the Arm--use their special powers to search for them. (science fiction/fantasy)

***The Shakespeare Stealer*** by Gary Blackwood

A young orphan boy named Widge is ordered by his master to steal Shakespeare's script of the play "Hamlet". So, Widge works his way into the Globe Theatre, where Shakespeare's troupe rehearses and performs. The players take him in and treat him as their own, and Widge has to make a tough decision. Will he betray his new friends? (fiction)

***Immigrant Kids*** by Russell Freedman

This book provides a stunning introduction into the experience of being a young urban immigrant in the early 1900s. (non-fiction)

***The Invention of Hugo Cabret*** by Brian Selznick

Selznick shatters conventions related to the art of bookmaking in this magical mystery set in 1930s Paris. He employs wordless sequential pictures and distinct pages of text to let the cinematic story unfold, and the artwork, rendered in pencil and bordered in black, contains elements of a flip book, a graphic novel, and film. Don't let the size of the book overwhelm you. Many pages are pictures.

If you liked *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, you might also like the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series. If you liked *Esperanza Rising*, the author Pam Munoz Ryan also writes on similar subjects. If you liked *Danny, The Champion of the World*, read any other Roald Dahl books. If you liked *The Thief Lord*, you might like *The Series of Unfortunate Events* books or *The Lightning Thief* series.