

June 2020

Dear Stuart Hall 6th Grade Students and Families,

“Reading gives you someplace to go when we have to stay where we are.” - Mason Cooley

A love of reading is one of the greatest gifts we give our children. Reading can be the mirrors of our lives, reflecting family life and childhood familiar to us; and, it can be the windows into people we’ve not met or places we’ve never traveled to. Books inspire our imagination, evoke emotion, propagate ideas and start conversations. Students who invest in summer reading show greater academic gains and also develop a sense of personal identity along with an appreciation and empathy for the lives of others.

We have identified books that are essential reading, along with options for suggested reading, all of which are in development of the literary theme for 6th grade: “**Diverse Perspectives.**” We hope that each student will develop a daily reading habit, and an enjoyment of reading. Additionally, there are writing opportunities that accompany the reading so that students develop an engagement with their reading and reading choices.

Another resource for your summer reading and learning and a chapter within our ever-developing collection of *Cor Unum* resources is our [Anti-Racism Resource List](#). This is shared in support of continuing and deepening dialogue about topics that are challenging, often uncomfortable, and vital to the betterment of ourselves and our society. The [Essentials of Dialogue](#) from Generation Global have helped to guide our school community’s practice of creating safe and brave spaces from which to speak, listen and learn. This list contains multimedia resources for all ages.

Reading Prompts

Essential Summer Reading:

- [Tangerine by Edward Bloor](#)

Twelve-year-old Paul, who lives in the shadow of his football hero brother Erik, fights for the right to play soccer despite his near blindness and slowly begins to remember the incident that damaged his eyesight.

Optional Summer Suggestions (please choose one or more):

- [As Brave as You by Jason Reynolds](#)

Genie, a fan of questions, is sent to spend time with his grandparents; as he and his older brother get to know their grandfather more, they learn about bravery, adventure, and what it means to be a man.

- [The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis](#)

Conscious of the strict limitations imposed by the Taliban rulers of Kabul, Afghanistan, on women's freedom and behavior, eleven-year-old Parvana disguises herself as a boy in order to earn money so that her family can

survive after her father's arrest.

- [*Bud, not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis](#)

Bud shares his amusingly astute rules of life as he hits the road to find the jazz musician he believes is his father. Laugh-out-loud funny with wonderful characters, Bud's story hits the high notes of jazz and sounds the deeper tones of the Great Depression.

- [*The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora* by Pablo Cartaya](#)

Arturo just wants to spend a summer working in his family's restaurant, hanging out with his friends, and maybe talking to the girl who is visiting over the summer; when a shady new developer has schemes to steal the family business, Arturo finds his summer much more complicated than anticipated.

- [*The First Rule of Punk* by Celia C. Pérez](#)

Malú's move and new school put her in the spotlight like never before; while she is used to expressing both sides of herself -- white and Mexican -- how is she to react when students accuse her of not being enough of either?

- [*Refugee* by Alan Gratz](#)

Three kids go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, unexpected connections will tie their stories together in the end.

- [*The Watsons Go To Birmingham* by Christopher Paul Curtis](#)

Enter the hilarious world of ten-year-old Kenny and his family, the Weird Watsons of Flint, Michigan. When his older brother gets to be too much trouble, they head South to Birmingham to visit Grandma, the one person who can shape him up. And they'll be in Birmingham during one of the darkest moments in America's history.

- [*When You Reach Me* by Rebecca Stead](#)

Now that Miranda and her best friend aren't speaking, she has a lot of time on her hands to notice things around her neighborhood, especially the mysterious letters she is receiving...from someone who might be able to see the future? (A must-read for fans of *A Wrinkle in Time*, as it's Miranda's favorite book!)

Writing Prompts for Summer Creativity:

#1–22 are suggested for Gr. K–3; #1–30 are suggestions for Gr. 4–12

“*Pens and books are the weapons that defeat terrorism*,” said Malala Yousafzai. Writers are historians and fortune tellers, entertainers and healers. Over the summer, and on behalf of the School’s commitment to helping you develop a strong, creative and unique voice, we would like you to **keep a handwritten journal of at least six entries** using these prompts or any other of your own. Each journal entry should be **at least a page long**. Write as much as you can about your topics. You can **fictionalize** your entries if you like - pretend to be someone else and write in their voice. You could write in the form of **poetry, song lyrics, or drama** as well. Be honest, be descriptive, be creative.

1. Write about your day from another person's perspective. Choose a person with whom you've interacted. How do you think they'd see you? The day's events?
2. Describe a stranger that you saw today. What did they look like? What do you think they're like? What are they interested in? What do they hate?
3. Imagine that you get to meet a celebrity. Describe your interaction.
4. Write about a time you said something that you regretted.
5. Write about a time that someone said something to you that hurt you.
6. Write about something that you are proud of.
7. Choose an article out of the newspaper. Tape it into your journal. Write about it.
8. If you could live in any book, what book would it be? Why?
9. Write a review of a movie.
10. Write a review of a television show.
11. Pick a random book from your bookshelf. Then, open to a random page and pick a random sentence. Use that sentence as the first line of a story of your own.
12. Imagine that you are singing to yourself, when suddenly, the topic of the song comes true. Describe the scene.
13. Pick a formula you learned in math class. Imagine the story of the mathematician who discovered it. How?
14. Write your high school graduation speech.
15. Write about something from your childhood that you think changed you.
16. Write a story inspired by a recent dream that you had.
17. Write a new ending for your favorite book.
18. Write a poem, short story, or journal entry about a conversation that you've overheard.
19. Write a story inspired by one of your pet-peeves.
20. Write a story from the perspective of someone who does not have one of their major senses (sight, smell, touch, hearing, taste).
21. Write about a time you kept a secret from someone else, or someone else kept a secret from you.
22. Write a story or journal entry about a photograph you have in your house. If you can, tape your photograph into your journal. You may also draw the photograph!
23. Interview a person in your life. Write a transcription of your interview. Try to ask them questions you do not already know the answer to!
24. Write a story inspired by a slogan for an advertising campaign.
25. Write a story inspired by a trending hashtag on Twitter or Instagram.
26. Read the newspaper. Write a poem or short story using a headline as your first line.
27. Use all of the following words in a piece of writing: bit, draw, flex, perilous, bubble, corner, pound, high, open, admonish.
28. You accidentally drink a potion that shrinks you down to two inches tall. Write a story about your day.
29. Pick a random word from the dictionary. Use this word as inspiration for a story.
30. Imagine you find a time traveling machine. Describe how you use it. Where do you go? What happens?

We wish you a healthy and happy summer and look forward to seeing you in the new school year.

On behalf of the Summer Reading Team,

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