

Summer Reading List for Incoming Sixth Graders Thompson Middle School 2017

Students entering Thompson Middle School as sixth graders in 2017 need to read at least one of the following books over the summer. Students will participate in activities based on these books when school begins.

Things Not Seen Andrew Clements (251 pages) *fantasy*

Fifteen-year-old Bobby thinks he knows what it's like to be invisible—he's used to being ignored by the popular kids at school (especially the girls). Even his parents hardly seem to notice whether he's home or not. Then one morning, Bobby wakes up to find that he IS invisible. For real. He can't stop wondering if he'll ever reappear—especially when his parents wreck their car and wind up in the hospital. Now Bobby is all alone. How can he survive in a world where he can't be seen? One thing's for sure: Bobby's not going to just wait around to see if his body will decide to show up again on its own. He's got to take action. Fast.

Michael Vey: The Prisoner of Cell 25 Richard Paul Evans (352 pages) *science fiction*

To everyone at Meridian High School, fourteen-year-old Michael Vey is nothing special, just the kid who has Tourette's syndrome. But in truth, Michael is extremely special—he has electric powers. Michael thinks he is unique until he discovers that a cheerleader named Taylor has the same mysterious powers. With the help of Michael's friend, Ostin, the three of them set out to discover how Michael and Taylor ended up with their abilities, and their investigation soon brings them to the attention of a powerful group who wants to control the electric teens—and through them, the world.

Fever 1793 Laurie Halse Anderson (251 pages) *historical fiction*

During the summer of 1793, Mattie Cook lives above the family coffee shop with her widowed mother and grandfather. Mattie spends her days avoiding chores and making plans to turn the family business into the finest Philadelphia has ever seen. But then the fever breaks out. Disease sweeps the streets, destroying everything in its path and turning Mattie's world upside down. At her feverish mother's insistence, Mattie flees the city with her grandfather. But she soon discovers that the sickness is everywhere, and Mattie must learn quickly how to survive in a city turned frantic with disease.

Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War II Joseph Bruchac

(231 pages) *historical fiction*

Throughout World War II, in the conflict fought against Japan, Navajo code talkers were a crucial part of the U.S. effort, sending messages back and forth in an unbreakable code that used their native language. They braved some of the heaviest fighting of the war, and with their code, they saved countless American lives. Yet their story remained classified for more than twenty years. But now Joseph Bruchac brings their stories to life for young adults through the riveting fictional tale of Ned Begay, a sixteen-year-old Navajo boy who becomes a code talker. His grueling journey is eye-opening and inspiring. This deeply affecting novel honors all of those young men, like Ned, who dared to serve, and it honors the culture and language of the Navajo Indians. (Challenging Read)

Fish in a Tree Nancy Paulsen (288 pages) *realistic fiction*

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 trouble maker. 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.

Lincoln's Grave Robbers Steve Sheinkin (224 pages) *literary nonfiction*

The action begins in October of 1875, as Secret Service agents raid the Fulton, Illinois, workshop of master counterfeiter Ben Boyd. Soon after Boyd is hauled off to prison, members of his counterfeiting ring gather in the back room of a Chicago saloon to discuss how to free their ringleader. Their plan: grab Lincoln's body from its Springfield tomb, stash it in the sand dunes near Lake Michigan, and demand the release of Ben Boyd and \$200,000 in cash. From here, the action alternates between the conspirators, the Secret Service agents on their trail, and the undercover agent moving back and forth between the two groups. Along the way readers get glimpses into the inner workings of counterfeiting, grave robbing, detective work, and the early days of the Secret Service. The plot moves toward a wild climax as robbers and lawmen converge at Lincoln's tomb on election night: November 7, 1876. (Challenging Read)

Masterminds Gordon Korman (352 pages) *realistic fiction*

Eli Frieden lives in the most perfect town in the world: Serenity, New Mexico. Honesty and integrity are valued above all else. The thirty kids who live there never lie—they know it's a short leap from that to the awful problems of other, less fortunate places. Eli has never left Serenity. Why would he ever want to? Then one day, he bikes to the edge of the city limits and something so crazy and unexpected happens, it changes everything. Eli convinces his friends to help him investigate further, and soon it becomes clear that nothing is as it seems in Serenity. The clues mount to reveal a shocking discovery, connecting their ideal crime-free community to some of the greatest criminal masterminds ever known. The kids realize they can trust no one—least of all their own parents.

Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story about Brain Science John Fleischman (96 pages)

informational nonfiction/biography

Phineas Gage was truly a man with a hole in his head. A railroad construction foreman, Phineas was blasting rock near Cavendish, Vermont, in 1848 when a thirteen-pound iron rod was shot through his brain. Miraculously, he survived another eleven years and became a textbook case in brain science. But he was forever changed by the accident, and what happened inside his brain will tell you a lot about how your brain works and what makes us who we are.

Crossover Kwame Alexander (240 pages) *realistic fiction - verse*

"With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. Cuz tonight I'm delivering," announces dread-locked, 12-year old Josh Bell. He and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse. Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story's heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family.

Jeremy Fink and the Meaning of Life Wendy Mass (304 pages) *realistic fiction*

In one month Jeremy Fink will turn thirteen. But does he have what it takes to be a teenager? He collects mutant candy, he won't venture more than four blocks from his apartment if he can help it, and he *definitely* doesn't like surprises. On the other hand, his best friend, Lizzy, isn't afraid of anything, even if that might get her into trouble now and then. Jeremy's summer takes an unexpected turn when a mysterious wooden box arrives in the mail. According to the writing on the box, it holds the meaning of life! Jeremy is supposed to open it on his thirteenth birthday. The problem is, the keys are missing, and the box is made so that only the keys will open it without destroying what's inside. Jeremy and Lizzy set off to find the keys, but when one of their efforts goes very wrong, Jeremy starts to lose hope that he'll ever be able to open the box. But he soon discovers that when you're meeting people named Oswald Oswald and using a private limo to deliver unusual objects to strangers all over the city, there might be other ways of finding out the meaning of life.

Half a Chance Cynthia Lord (224 pages) *realistic fiction*

When Lucy's family moves to an old house on a lake, Lucy tries to see her new home through her camera's lens, as her father has taught her -- he's a famous photographer, away on a shoot. When she discovers that he's judging a photo contest, Lucy decides to enter anonymously. She wants to find out if her eye for photography is really special -- or only good enough. As she seeks out subjects for her photos, Lucy gets to know Nate, the boy next door. But slowly the camera reveals what Nate doesn't want to see: his grandmother's memory is slipping away, and with it much of what he cherishes about his summers on the lake. This summer, Nate will learn about the power of art to show truth, and Lucy will learn how beauty can change lives . . . including her own.

Football Genius Tim Green (256 pages) *realistic fiction*

Troy White has a phenomenal gift. He can predict football plays before they happen. Any position. Any player. Any team. When Troy's single mom gets a job working in public relations for the Atlanta Falcons, Troy figures it's his chance to prove what he can do. But first he has to *get* to the Falcons—and with tight security and a notoriously mean coach, even his mom's field passes aren't much help. Then Troy and his best friends devise a plan to get the attention of star linebacker Seth Halloway. With Seth's playing and Troy's genius, the Falcons could be unstoppable—if they'll only listen.

Because of Winn-Dixie Kate DiCamillo (182 pages) *realistic fiction*

Although she lives in the Friendly Corners Trailer Park, ten-year-old Opal has no friends. She and her preacher father have moved to Naomi Florida for her father's new job. Here, on an errand to the local grocery store, Opal acquires a unique friend, a large brown stray that she names for the store Winn-Dixie. The dog proves to have exquisite taste in people; Winn-Dixie charms his way into everyone's heart.

