

PILLOW ACADEMY 2019 SUMMER READING

2019 Pillow Academy Summer Reading 6th Grade



Rising 6th graders will read two books this summer: One book is required, and the other selection is a book of choice. A test will be given on the required book on the first full day of school. An assignment (to be completed over the summer) for the book of choice will be due on the first half day of school.

Required book:

Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson

Jess Aarons has been practicing all summer, so he can be the fastest runner in the fifth grade. And he almost is, until the new girl in school, Leslie Burke, outpaces him. The two become fast friends and spend most days in the woods behind Leslie's house, where they invent an enchanted land called Terabithia. One morning, Leslie goes to Terabithia without Jess, and a tragedy occurs. It will take the love of his family and the strength that Leslie has given him for Jess to be able to deal with his grief.

- Read *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson.
- Print and answer the [Questions on Bridge to Terabithia](#). These questions will be used as the basis of discussion the first few days of school.
- A test on the book will be given on the first full day of school in August.

Book of choice:

Choose ONE book of choice from the list below to read. Students should select a book that they have not already read. The assignment for the book of choice is to identify 5 conflicts in the book, explain how each conflict is resolved, and discuss how you would have solved each of the conflicts yourself. This assignment is due the first half day of school in August.

- Select and read your book of choice from the list below.
- Make notes as you read to help you remember what happens in the book.
- The assignment on the book of choice will be due on the first half day of school in August.

6th grade options for book of choice:

Heavy Hitters by Mike Lupica (Sports)

Ben and his friends, the Core Four Plus One, are so excited to play in their town's All-Star Baseball league. But in the first game of the season, Ben gets hit by a pitch. It's never happened to him before, and it shakes him up. Another player on Ben's team, Justin, is acting really weirdly. Ben's known Justin for a while, and they're friendly, but he's not one of Ben's closest "boys." Justin is the team's best hitter, but his behavior on and off the field is erratic. Ben discovers that Justin's parents are getting a divorce, and Justin is thinking about quitting the team. Like good teammates do, Justin helps Ben deal with his issues at bat while Ben is there for his friend while his family is struggling.

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***Two-Minute Drill* by Mike Lupica (Sports)**

Chris Conlan is the coolest kid in sixth grade, the golden-armed quarterback of the football team, and the boy all the others look up to. Scott Parry is the new kid, the boy with the huge brain, but with feet that trip over themselves. These two boys may seem like an odd couple, but each has a secret that draws them together and proves that the will to succeed is even more important than raw talent.

***Travel Team* by Mike Lupica (Sports)**

Danny Walker is cut from his travel basketball team because of his short stature, so his father Richie responds by forming a new travel team made up of players who were cut or did not try out. The novel was a children's chapter book *New York Times* bestseller for three months and was based in part on Lupica's experience when his son was cut from a basketball team.

***The Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin**

The Westing Game is a mystery novel that won the Newbery Medal recognizing the year's most distinguished contribution to American children's literature. The story involves 16 seemingly unrelated heirs of reclusive businessman Sam Westing and his challenge to figure out the secret of his death. The heirs must figure out who killed Westing from clues in his will.

***Cheaper by the Dozen* by Ernestine Gilbreth Carey and Frank B. Gilberth (Semi-Autobiographical)**

Cheaper by the Dozen is a semi-autobiographical novel published in 1948. The novel recounts the authors' childhood lives growing up in a household of 12 children.

***Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott (Realistic Fiction)**

Little Women was originally published in two volumes in 1868 and 1869. Following the lives of the four March sisters—Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy—the novel details their passage from childhood to womanhood and is loosely based on the author and her three sisters. Scholars classify *Little Women* as an autobiographical or semi-autobiographical novel.

***The Bronze Bow* by Elizabeth George Speare (Historical Fiction)**

The Bronze Bow won the Newbery Medal in 1962. This gripping, action-packed novel tells the story of eighteen-year-old Daniel bar Jamin—a fierce, hotheaded young man bent on avenging his father's death by forcing the Romans from his land of Israel. Daniel's palpable hatred for Romans wanes only when he starts to hear the gentle lessons of the traveling carpenter, Jesus of Nazareth. A fast-paced, suspenseful, vividly wrought tale of friendship, loyalty, the idea of home, community . . . and ultimately, as Jesus says to Daniel on page 224: "Can't you see, Daniel, it is hate that is the enemy? Not men. Hate does not die with killing. It only springs up a hundredfold. The only thing stronger than hate is love." A powerful, relevant read in turbulent times.

***Wonder* by R. J. Palacio (Realistic Fiction)**

R. J. Palacio wrote *Wonder* after an incident where her son noticed a girl with a severe facial deformity and started to cry. Fearing he would react badly, Palacio attempted to remove her son from the situation so as not to upset the girl and her family but ended up worsening the situation. Natalie Merchant's song "Wonder" made her realize that the incident could illustrate a valuable

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lesson. Palacio was inspired by Merchant's lyrics and she began writing. She named the book directly after the song and used the song's chorus as the prologue of the first chapter.

***The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo (Fantasy)**

The Tale of Despereaux, a 2003 fantasy book, follows the adventures of a mouse named Despereaux Tilling as he sets out on his quest to rescue a beautiful human princess from the rats. The novel is divided into four "books" and ends with a coda. Each "book" tells the story from a different character's or group of characters' perspective. The book won the 2004 Newbery Medal award.

***King of the Wind* by Marguerite Henry (Fictional Adventure)**

He was named "Sham" for the sun, this golden-red stallion born in the Sultan of Morocco's stone stables. Upon his heel was a small white spot, the symbol of speed. But on his chest was the symbol of misfortune. Although he was swift as the desert winds, Sham's pedigree would be scorned all his life by cruel masters and owners.

***The Swiss Family Robinson* by Johann David Wyss (Fictional Adventure)**

First published in 1812, this novel is about a Swiss family shipwrecked in the East Indies en route to Port Jackson, Australia.

** Please Note: Summer reading selections are chosen based on literary merit and with high academic standards in mind. The books assigned by the English department at Pillow Academy represent a mix of classic and contemporary literature. Many books address complex situations and may contain adult themes and language. The attempt to expose students to challenging topics and issues is intended to serve as opportunities for students to think, theorize, question, and explore.*