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## Sixth Grade Recommended Reading List 2021-2022 | [oppl.org/kids-lists](http://oppl.org/kids-lists)

### Fiction

Alexander, Kwame. *Booked*. Nick loves soccer and hates books, but soon learns the power of words as he wrestles with problems at home, stands up to a bully, and tries to impress the girl of his dreams.

Behar, Ruth. *Lucky Broken Girl*. This semi-autobiographical story about a multicultural girl's coming-of-age in the 1960s describes how Cuban-Jewish Ruthie emigrates from Castro's Cuba to New York, where a devastating accident challenges her perceptions about mortality and strength.

Bowles, David. *They Call Me Güero: A Border Kid's Poems*. Twelve-year-old Guero, a red-headed, freckled Mexican-American border kid, discovers the joy of writing poetry, thanks to his English teacher.

Chokshi, Roshani. *Aru Shah and the End of Time* (series). Telling fibs in order to fit in better with her wealthier peers, Aru spends her school break at the Museum of Ancient Indian Art and Culture, where her decision to light a cursed lamp unwittingly releases an ancient demon.

Dumas, Firoozeh. *It Ain't So Awful, Falafel*. Eleven-year-old Zomorod, originally from Iran, tells her story of growing up in Southern California during the 1970s Iranian Revolution and hostage crisis.

Farquhar, Polly. *Itch*. Ohio sixth-grader Isaac "Itch" Fitch strives to fit in, but everything seems to be going wrong, even before a school lunch trade sends his best friend, Sydney, to the hospital.

Heidicker, Christian McKay. *Scary Stories for Young Foxes*. When fox kits Mia and Uly are separated from their litters, they discover a dangerous world full of monsters. In order to find a den to call home, they must venture through field and forest, facing unspeakable things that dwell in the darkness: a zombie who hungers for their flesh, a witch who tries to steal their skins, a ghost who hunts them through the snow . . . and other things too scary to mention.

Jung, Mike. *The Boys in the Back Row*. Best friends Matt and Eric are hatching a plan for one big final adventure together before Eric moves away: during the marching band competition at a Giant Amusement Park, they will sneak away to a nearby comics convention and meet their idol, a famous comic creator.

Keller, Tae. *The Science of Breakable Things*. Middle schooler Natalie's year-long assignment to answer a question using the scientific process leads to truths about her mother's depression and her own cultural identity.

Kelly, Lynne. *Song for a Whale*. Iris and her grandmother, both deaf, drive from Texas to Alaska armed with Iris's plan to help Blue-55, a whale unable to communicate with other whales.

Kim, Jessica. *Stand Up, Yumi Chung!* When eleven-year-old Yumi Chung stumbles into a kids' comedy camp she is mistaken for another student, so she decides to play the part.

Lester, Julius. *Day of Tears*. Emma has taken care of the Butler children since Sarah and Frances's mother, Fanny, left. Emma wants to raise the girls to have good hearts, as a rift over slavery has ripped the Butler household apart. Now, to pay off debts, Pierce Butler wants to cash in his "assets" of enslaved people, possibly including Emma.

LeZotte, Ann Clare. *Show Me a Sign*. It is 1805 and Mary Lambert has always felt safe among the deaf community of Chilmark on Martha's Vineyard, where practically everyone communicates in a shared sign language, but now she's been kidnapped to use as a living specimen!

Maldonado, Torrey. *What Lane?* Biracial sixth-grader Stephen questions the limitations society puts on him after he notices the way strangers treat him when he hangs out with his white friends and learns about the Black Lives Matter movement.

Marks, Janae. *From the Desk of Zoe Washington*. Receiving an unexpected letter on her 12th birthday from the incarcerated father she has never met, a courageous young baker prepares for a cooking-show competition while scrambling to determine her father's innocence.

McManis, Charlene Willing. *Indian No More*. When Regina's Umpqua tribe is legally terminated and her family must relocate from Oregon to Los Angeles, she goes on a quest to understand her identity as an Indian despite being so far from home.

Ortega, Claribel A. *Ghost Squad*. Casting a spell that accidentally awakens malicious spirits that wreak havoc throughout St. Augustine, Lucely and Syd team up with the latter's grandmother and tabby cat to break the curse and save Lucely's firefly spirits.

Pasternack, Sofiya. *Any and the Dragon*. In an alternate ninth century, twelve-year-old Anya and a new friend face a Viking and a Tsar to protect the water dragon that saved her life, putting her family's home at risk.

Reynolds, Jason. *Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks*. Ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings. A wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.

Roy, Jennifer. *Playing Atari With Saddam Hussein: Based on a True Story*. For forty-two days in 1991, eleven-year-old Ali Fadhil and his family struggle to survive as Basra, Iraq, is bombed by the United States and its allies.

Turnage, Sheila. *Three Times Lucky* (series). Washed ashore as a baby in tiny Tupelo Landing, North Carolina, Mo LoBeau, now eleven, and her best friend Dale turn detective when the amnesiac Colonel, owner of a cafe and also Mo's parent, seems implicated in a murder.

Woods, Brenda. *The Unsung Hero of Birdsong, USA*. Gabriel, twelve, gains new perspective when he becomes friends with Meriwether, a Black World War II hero who has recently returned to the unwelcoming Jim Crow South.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Harbor Me*. Six students are brought together for a week to share their hopes and fears. They soon develop a bond and understanding about themselves and their community.



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### Nonfiction

Chambers, Veronica. *Finish the Fight!: The Brave and Revolutionary Women Who Fought for the Right to Vote* (324.623 CHA). Celebrate the names and stories of the diverse heroines whose courage in fighting for the 19th amendment helped change the fabric of America.

Grandin, Temple. *Calling All Minds: How to Think and Create Like an Inventor* (507.8 GRA). Delve into the science behind inventions, the steps various people took to create and improve upon ideas as they evolved, and the ways in which young inventors can continue to think about and understand what it means to tinker, to fiddle, and to innovate.

Herrera, Juan Felipe. *Portraits of Hispanic American Heroes* (973.046 HER). An inspiring tribute to Hispanic Americans who have made a positive impact on the world.

Larson, Margaret. *Wood Shop: Handy Skills and Creative Building Projects for Kids* (684.08 LAR). Come on, kids: grab a hammer, step up to the workbench, and get ready to measure, saw, drill, and make cool things! *Wood Shop* is an exciting introduction for today's kids to an ages-old tradition: building with wood.

Latham, Irene and Charles Waters. *Can I Touch Your Hair? Poems of Race, Mistakes, and Friendships* (811 LAT). Irene Latham, who is white, and Charles Waters, who is black, present paired poems about topics including family dinners, sports, recess, and much more.

Lowry, Lois. *On the Horizon* (940.54 LOW). The human stories behind World War II's Pearl Harbor attack and Hiroshima bombing help us to contemplate what victims share in common and the importance of bridging cultural divides.

Montgomery, Heather L. *Something Rotten: A Fresh Look at Roadkill* (591.714 MON). From biologists who use the corpses of Tasmanian devils to investigate cures for a contagious cancer, to a scientist who discovered a whole new species of bird from a single wing left behind, to a boy rebuilding animal bodies from the bones up, to a restaurant that serves up animal remnants, death is just the beginning for these creatures.

Nye, Naomi Shihab. *Cast Away: Poems for Our Time* (811 NYE). Young People's Poet Laureate Nye shines a spotlight on the things we cast away, from plastic water bottles to those less fortunate. A deeply moving, sometimes funny, and always provocative poetry collection.

Soontornvat, Christina. *All Thirteen: The Incredible Cave Rescue of the Thai Boys' Soccer Team* (796.525 SOO). Firsthand interviews alongside scientific and cultural insights tell the story of the 2018 Thai cave rescue of the Wild Boars soccer team and the critical, sophisticated engineering operation that saved the lives of thirteen young people.

Thunberg, Greta. *No One is Too Small to Make a Difference* (363.7 THU). The groundbreaking speeches of Greta Thunberg, the young climate activist who has become the voice of a generation.

Wallace, Sandra Neil. *First Generation: 36 Trailblazing Immigrants and Refugees Who Make America Great* (305.906 WAL). Celebrate the genius, diversity, and grit of immigrants and refugees. The men and women in this book represent nations from Somalia to Germany, from Syria to China, from Mexico to Sweden, and more.

Weatherford, Carole Boston. *Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library* (B SCHOMBURG). Amid the scholars, poets, authors, and artists of the Harlem Renaissance stood an Afro-Puerto Rican named Arturo Schomburg. This law clerk's life's passion was to collect books, letters, music, and art from Africa and the African diaspora and bring to light the achievements of people of African descent through the ages.

### Graphic Novels

Andrews, Ryan. *This Was Our Pact*. Ben and his friends are determined to find out where the paper lanterns of the annual Autumn Equinox Festival go, so they follow the river as far as they can.

Bagieu, Pénélope. *Brazen: Rebel Ladies Who Rocked the World*. Feisty female role models, some world famous, some little known. From Nellie Bly to Mae Jemison or Josephine Baker to Naziq al-Abid, each woman's story comes alive.

Billet, Julia. *Catherine's War*. As France buckles under the Nazi regime, budding photographer Rachel Cohen must change her name, go into hiding, and bear witness to the atrocities of World War II.

Broskol, Vera. *Be Prepared*. All Vera wants to do is fit in—but that's not easy for a Russian girl in the suburbs. There's one summer camp in her single mother's price range—Russian summer camp. Nothing could prepare her for all the "cool girl" drama, endless Russian history lessons, and outhouses straight out of nightmares!

Chmakova, Svetlana. *The Weirn Books: Be Wary of the Silent Woods* (series). In the Night Realm, supernatural things passing for human prowling the streets... but they still have to go to school! Ailis and Na'ya are pretty average students, but when a shadow starts looming and a classmate gets all weird, they are the first to notice.

Gardner, Whitney. *Fake Blood*. In order to get the attention of Nia, the girl he likes, eleven-year-old A.J. pretends to be a vampire, unaware that she intends to be a slayer.

Hansen, Dustin. *My Video Game Ate My Homework*. Dewey Jenkins wants to have the top science project in class to win a state-of-the-art virtual reality video game, but after his friend accidentally breaks the console, they trigger the device, finding themselves transported inside a video game.

Jamieson, Victoria. *All's Faire in Middle School*. Homeschooled by Renaissance fair enthusiasts, 11-year-old Imogene has a hard time fitting in when her wish to enroll in public school is granted.

Johnson, Varian. *Twins*. Twins Maureen and Francine distinguish themselves for the first time by pursuing separate interests at the beginning of the sixth grade.

Leyh, Kat. *Snapdragon*. When Snap's dog goes missing and turns up at the town witch's house, Snap will have to confront her. But is she really a witch? How does she know so much about Snap's family?

Ostertag, Molly Knox. *The Witch Boy* (series). In Aster's family, all the girls are raised to be witches, while boys grow up to be shapeshifters. Unfortunately for Aster, he still hasn't shifted, and he's still fascinated by witchery, no matter how forbidden it might be.

Venable, Colleen A. F. *Katie the Catsitter* (series). Twelve-year-old Katie is dreading the boring summer ahead until she realizes the mysterious neighbor who hired her to catsit is one of the city's greatest supervillains.