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SIXTH GRADE RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2019-2020 | OPPL.ORG/KIDS

FICTION

Alexander, Kwame. **Booked.** Twelve-year-old 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.

Blejwas, Emily. **Once You Know This.** Fifth-grader Brittany struggles to plan, or even imagine, a future away from her mother's abusive boyfriend and the poverty and crime of Chicago's West Side.

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 seventh grade English teacher.

Chokshi, Roshani. **Aru Shah and the End of Time.** Telling fibs in order to fit in better with her wealthier peers, 12-year-old Aru Shah 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.

Clarke, Cat. **The Pants Project.** Liv fights to change the middle school dress code requiring girls to wear a skirt and, along the way, finds the courage to tell his moms he is meant to be a boy.

Draper, Sharon M. **Stella by Starlight.** When a burning cross set by the Klan causes panic and fear in 1932 Bumblebee, North Carolina, fifth-grader Stella must face prejudice and find the strength to demand change in her segregated town.

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.

Fox, Janet. **The Charmed Children of Rookskill Castle.** In 1940, Kat Bateson is sent to a school in a Scottish castle that is said to be haunted by dark magic from the past, but when some of her classmates disappear, she wonders if the magic exists very much in the present.

Gerber, Alyson. **Braced.** When Rachel learns that she will need to wear a back brace, she is afraid that she won't be able to play soccer and hide her condition from her friends and classmates.

Hashimi, Nadia. **One Half From the East.** When Obayda's father loses one of his legs in a bomb explosion, the family is forced to relocate from Kabul to a small village, where Obayda's aunt decides to invite good luck by dressing Obayda up as a boy, a bacha posh.

Howard, Greg. **The Whispers.** Riley's mom has disappeared and it is up to him to ask the Whispers for help. During his journey, Riley begins to learn the truth about his mother, the Whispers, and his identity.

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.

Khan, Hena. **Amina's Voice.** A Pakistani-American Muslim girl struggles to stay true to her family's vibrant culture while simultaneously blending in at school after tragedy strikes her community.

Lim, Celeste. **Crystal Ribbon.** Li Jing, the daughter of a poor tea farmer, is sold as a bride to a wealthy family that treats her poorly until she is forced, with the help of animal friends, to run away.

Reynolds, Jason. **Ghost.** Ghost, a naturally talented runner and troublemaker, is recruited for an elite middle school track team. He must stay on track, literally and figuratively, to reach his full potential.

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.

Sachar, Louis. **Fuzzy Mud.** Tamaya Dhilwaddi and Marshall Walsh walk to and from school together since elementary school. But their routine is disrupted when bully Chad Wilson starts a fight with Marshall. To avoid Chad, Marshall and Tamaya take a shortcut home through the off-limits woods. They are soon lost, and they find trouble. More trouble than anyone could imagine.

Schwartz, Ellen. **Heart of a Champion.** Ten-year-old Kenny is secretly practicing despite a suspected heart condition so he can spend time with his baseball star brother, until his world is shattered by his family's placement in a Japanese internment camp in the aftermath of the Pearl Harbor attacks.

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FICTION CONT.

Shabazz, Ilyasah. *Betty Before X*. Raised as a child by her aunt, Betty, who will later marry Malcolm X, joins her mother and stepfamily in 1940s Detroit, where she learns about the civil rights movement.

Turnage, Sheila. *Three Times Lucky*. 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 co-parent of Mo with his cook, Miss Lana, 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.

NONFICTION

Claybourne, Anna. *Don't Read This Book Before Bed: Thrills, Chills, and Hauntingly True Stories* (133.1 CLA).

Grandin, Temple. *Calling All Minds: How to Think and Create Like an Inventor* (507.8 GRA).

Herrera, Juan Felipe. *Portraits of Hispanic American Heroes* (973.046 HER).

Larson, Margaret. *Wood Shop: Handy Skills and Creative Building Projects for Kids* (684.08 LAR).

Latham, Irene. *Can I Touch Your Hair? Poems of Race, Mistakes, and Friendships* (811 LAT).

Montgomery, Heather L. *Something Rotten: A Fresh Look at Roadkill* (591.714 MON).

Wallace, Sandra Neil. *First Generation: 36 Trailblazing Immigrants and Refugees Who Make America Great* (305.906 WAL).

GRAPHIC NOVELS

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.

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!

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.

Gill, Joel Christian. *Tales of the Talented Tenth: True Adventures of Amazing African Americans* (series). The amazing stories of Bass Reeves, an escaped slave who became one of the most successful lawmen of the Old West, and Bessie Stringfield, the woman who became The Motorcycle Queen of Miami!

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.

Larson, Hope. *Goldie Vance* (series). Goldie Vance lives at a Florida resort with her dad. Her mom works as a live mermaid at a club downtown. Goldie herself has an insatiable curiosity and dreams of becoming the hotel's in-house detective.

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.

Tynion, James IV. *The Backstagers* (series). When Jory transfers to an all-boys private high school, he's taken in by the only ones who don't treat him like a new kid, the stage crew. Soon Jory is introduced to an entire magical, underground world that lives beyond the curtain.