

## 6th Grade Summer Reading

Dear Incoming 6th graders,

This summer I would like for you to read one novel (required) and 3 additional novels of your own choosing from whatever genre you like. The Colorado Department of Education has a handy two-pager that addresses research around the “summer slide”, which addresses [“the tendency for students... to lose some of the achievement gains they made during the previous school year.”](#) They specifically state research that implies that “Reading just 4 to 6 books over the summer has the potential to prevent a decline in reading achievement scores from the spring to the fall, so even small steps are very beneficial.” With this evidence in mind, have a great summer of reading!

### **Required Reading: *The Last Cuentista* by Donna Barba Higuera**

The philosophy behind reading a shared novel is one that is backed by evidence-based research known as [The Science of Reading which states that “we should see use of a rich, complex text for all the students in a class.”](#) This approach allows students, no matter their background in reading, an opportunity to experience complex literature with their peers. It removes the stigma of feeling out of the loop when it comes to texts and it will give all incoming 6th-graders an opportunity to discuss the text as a class when the new school year begins.

As you read through this document you will see that there are focused discussion questions to familiarize yourself with for the beginning of the school year. I would like you to pick 3 questions from the list of questions below and answer each question in a 3-5 sentence paragraph. These will be used in a class discussion and official writing assignment in the first 3 weeks of school.

Please only pick three (3) questions to respond to, there are no right or wrong choices. As a class, we will get to see what each one of you has to say and what your thinking is in response to the text.

### **Discussion questions to familiarize yourself with:**

- *Cuentista* means storyteller. Why do we need storytellers in our lives?
- Why does Petra want to become a storyteller? (Ch.1)
- Where are Petra and her family going? Why? What do you think is happening to Earth? What details from the story make you think that? (Ch. 2-4)
- Who are the Monitors? Why does Petra’s mom think the Monitors are making a sacrifice? (Ch. 3)
- What is En Cognito? What problems occur with Petra’s En Cognito Cog? How do you think this will influence the rest of the story? (Ch. 3-6)
- What is the Collective? What do they want to do? How can you tell? Use details from the text to support your thinking. (Ch. 6-8)
- Who is the Chancellor? How would you describe Chancellor Nyla? (Ch. 10)

- Ch. 11 gives the origin of Petra's name, why do you think her name is important? Notice what role naming plays throughout the book. (Ch. 11)
- Why do you think Petra tells Zeta-4/Feathers and Rubio a *cuento*? How do they respond? Do you think it was a good idea for Petra to tell the *cuento*? Why or why not? (Ch. 16)
- What is Petra's plan? Do you think it will work? Why or why not? (Ch. 18)
- What happens to Len? Why can't Petra express compassion and kindness to Len? Why do you think the author includes Lita's story of the Conejo and Quetzalcoatl in this chapter? (Ch. 19)
- What are some qualities of Voxy that make him different from the rest of the Collective? (Ch. 20-22)
- What do you think the Conejo/Rabbit represents? Use details from the text to support your thinking. (Ch. 21)
- Who is Epsilon-5? How does Petra discover this? (Ch. 23)
- What do you think Petra's dad meant by, "to achieve their goals— to have no starvation, or war—they are willing to do the worst kind of evil" (p. 225)? Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? (Ch. 24)
- Why is the Collective leaving Sagan? How is Petra able to remind Epsilon-5 that he is her brother Javier? (Ch. 25)
- Why do you think the Collective was willing to give up connections to culture and ancestry? Why is Petra against giving up these connections? (Ch. 26)
- Who is the Librarian? What does Petra discover Ben did for her? (Ch. 27)
- Why do you think Voxy wants to leave the Collective? How did Javier help them leave? (Ch. 29)
- What did Javier mean when he says, "If this small part of my journey is to give everyone else a chance, then that is what will make our parents and ancestors proud" (pp. 313-314)?

### **Choice Novels:**

For the two choice novels, you will need to pick books that you have not read before and pick ones that interest you, not just novels that your friends are reading.

You are welcome to read physical books, read on a device, or listen to audiobooks. This list provides recommendations based on literature that students have often enjoyed. You must log the two books you read and bring your list to class on the first day of school. You DO NOT have to log your reading each night.

**Please read the descriptions of each novel (linked in the title) you are interested in to get an idea of what they are about. These are all middle-grade/young adult books, however, knowing what you are reading and being on the same page as your parents about what the book is about and whether it is appropriate for you is essential to having a positive working and reading relationship.**

\*Please note that the grade recommendation below is based on content, not on reading level.

Have a great summer and enjoy your reading!

Mr. Levine

### **Realistic Fiction-**

<a href="#"><i>Front Desk</i></a>	Kelly Yang	6th and up
<a href="#"><i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i></a>	Jacqueline Woodson	6th and up
<a href="#"><i>Harbor Me</i></a>	Jacqueline Woodson	6th and up
<a href="#"><i>Amal Unbound</i></a>	Aisha Saeed	6th and up
<a href="#"><i>A Good Kind of Trouble</i></a>	Lisa Moore Ramée	6th and up
<a href="#"><i>Starfish</i></a>	Lisa Fipps	6th and up
<a href="#"><i>Red, White, and Whole</i></a>	Rajani LaRocca	6th and up
<a href="#"><i>Taking Up Space</i></a>	Alyson Gerber	6th and up

### **Historical Fiction-**

<a href="#"><i>The Night Diary</i></a>	Veera Hiranandani	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>Stella By Starlight</i></a>	Sharon M. Draper	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>The Crystal Ribbon</i></a>	Celeste Lim	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>Words on Fire</i></a>	Jennifer A. Nielsen	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>Wolf Hollow</i></a>	Lauren Wolk	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>Finding Langston</i></a>	Lisa Cline-Ransome	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>Prairie Lotus</i></a>	Linda Sue Park	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>The Wednesday Wars</i></a>	Gary D. Schmidt	6th grade and up

### **Mystery/Thriller-**

<a href="#"><i>When You Reach Me</i></a>	Rebecca Stead	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>The Invention of Hugo Cabret</i></a>	Brian Selznick	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>Firekeeper's Daughter</i></a>	Angeline Boulley	7th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>The Screaming Staircase</i></a>	Jonathan Stroud	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>The Parker Inheritance</i></a>	Varian Johnson	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>Murder Most Unladylike</i> #1 et al</a>	Robin Stevens	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>Enola Holmes</i> #1 et al.</a>	Nancy Springer	6th grade and up
<a href="#"><i>Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus</i></a>	Dusti Bowling	6th grade and up

#### Non-Fiction-

<a href="#"><i>I am Malala (Young Reader's Edition or original)</i></a>	Malala Yousafzai	6th grade or up
<a href="#"><i>Life In Motion</i></a>	Misty Copeland	6th grade or up
<a href="#"><i>The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind (Young Reader's Ed or original)</i></a>	William Kamkwamba	6th grade or up
<a href="#"><i>Just Mercy (Young Reader's Ed or Original)</i></a>	Bryan Stevenson	6th grade or up
<a href="#"><i>Unbroken (Young Reader's Ed or original)</i></a>	Laura Hillenbrand	6th grade or up
<a href="#"><i>Boy's in the Boat (Young Reader's Ed or original)</i></a>	Gregory Mone & Daniel James Brown	6th grade or up
<a href="#"><i>I Will Always Write Back</i></a>	Caitlin Alifranka	6th grade or up
<a href="#"><i>Born a Crime (Young Reader's Ed or original)</i></a>	Trevor Noah	6th grade or up

**Sci-Fi/Fantasy-**

<a href="#"><i>Iron Widow</i></a>	Xiran Jay Zhao	7th and up
<a href="#"><i>The Bone Gap</i></a>	Laura Ruby	7th and up
<a href="#"><i>Scythe</i>, <i>Thunderhead</i>, <i>The Toll</i>, <i>Gleanings</i></a>	Neal Shusterman	7th and up
<a href="#"><i>Warcross</i>, <i>Wildcard</i></a>	Marie Lu	6th and up
<a href="#"><i>Invictus</i></a>	Ryan Graudin	7th and up
<a href="#"><i>Wilder Girls</i></a>	Rory Power	7th and up
<a href="#"><i>All the Crooked Saints</i></a>	Maggie Stiefvater	7th and up