

CMS Summer Reading 2023 - Grade Six Book Choices

Nonfiction

Kamkwamba, William & Bryan Mealer

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind (Young Readers Edition), Lexile 860 *

With patience and perseverance, self-taught William Kamkwamba builds a windmill of salvaged metal and bicycle parts in drought-stricken Malawi. Kamkwamba's spirit and voice flow through with his skillful adaptation, as Mealer imparts the inspiring story of a young teen who provides his village with water and electricity, saving them from crop failure and starvation.

Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem

Becoming Kareem: Growing Up On and Off the Court, Lexile 990

At one time, Lew Alcindor was just another kid from New York City with all the usual problems: He struggles with fitting in, with pleasing his strict father, and with overcoming shyness that made him feel socially awkward. But with a talent for basketball, and an unmatched team of supporters, Lew Alcindor was able to transform and to become Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. From a childhood made difficult with racism and prejudice to a record-smashing career on the basketball court as an adult, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's life was packed with "coaches" who taught him right from wrong and led him on the path of greatness. His parents, coaches Jack Donahue and John Wooden, Muhammad Ali, Bruce Lee, and many others played important roles in Abdul-Jabbar's life and sparked him to become an activist for social change and advancement.

Walker, Nikki

Why Do We Fight? Conflict, War, and Peace, Lexile 990

Using real-world examples, *Why Do We Fight?* teaches kids to recognize the structures, factors, and complex histories that go into creating conflicts, whether personal or global — as well as the similarities between both. They'll be given tools to seek out information, enabling them to make informed opinions while learning to respect that others may form different ones. From culture clashes and trade disputes to disagreements about how to govern, *Why Do We Fight?* insists that the key to fulfilling humankind's wish for "world peace" lies in how we choose to deal with conflict and provides a genuine cause for optimism in the face of an at-times frightening world.

Levy, Debbie

The Year of Goodbyes, Lexile 910 *

Like other twelve-year-old girls, Jutta Salzberg enjoyed playing with friends, going to school, and visiting relatives. In Germany in 1938, these everyday activities were dangerous for Jews. Jutta and her family tried to lead normal lives, but soon they knew they had to escape, if they could before it was too late. Throughout 1938, Jutta had her friends and relatives fill her *poesiealbum*-her autograph book-with inscriptions. Her daughter, Debbie Levy, used these entries as a springboard for telling the story of the Salzberg family's last year in Germany. It was a year of change and chance, confusion and cruelty. It was a year of goodbyes.

Mundy, Liza

Code Girls: Young Reader's Edition, Lexile 1050

More than ten thousand women served as codebreakers during World War II, recruited by the U.S. Army and Navy. While their brothers and boyfriends took up arms, these women moved to the nation's capital to learn the top-secret art of code-breaking. Through their work, the "code girls" helped save countless lives and were vital in ending the war. But due to the top-secret nature of their accomplishments, these women have never been able to talk about their story--until now.

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Fiction

Reynolds, Jason

Look Both Ways, Lexile 750

This story was going to begin like all the best stories. With a school bus falling from the sky. But no one saw it happen. They were all too busy. Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.

Draper, Sharon

Out of My Mind, Lexile 700

From multiple award-winning author Sharon Draper comes a story that will forever change how we all look at anyone with a disability. Eleven-year-old Melody is not like most people. She can't walk. She can't talk. She can't write. All because she has cerebral palsy. But she also has a photographic memory; she can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She's the smartest kid in her whole school, but NO ONE knows it. Most people - her teachers, her doctors, her classmates - dismiss her as mentally challenged because she can't tell them otherwise. But Melody refuses to be defined by her disability. And she's determined to let everyone know it...somehow.

Griffin, Paul

When Friendship Followed Me Home, Lexile 590

Ben Coffin has never been one for making friends. As a former foster kid, he knows people can up and leave without so much as a goodbye. Ben prefers to spend his time with the characters in his favorite sci-fi books...until he rescues an abandoned mutt from the alley next-door to the Coney Island Library. Scruffy little Flip leads Ben to befriend a fellow book-lover named Hailey - yes, like the comet - a girl unlike anyone he has ever met. Ben begins thinking of her as "Rainbow Girl" because of her crazy-colored clothes and her laugh, pure magic, the kind that makes you smile away the stormiest day. Rainbow Girl convinces Ben to write a novel with her. But as their story unfolds Ben's life begins to unravel, and Ben must discover for himself the truth about friendship and the meaning of home.

Woodson, Jacqueline

Harbor Me, Lexile 630

It all starts when six kids have to meet for a weekly chat--by themselves, with no adults to listen in. There, in the room they soon dub the ARTT Room (short for "A Room to Talk"), they discover it's safe to talk about what's bothering them--everything from Esteban's father's deportation and Haley's father's incarceration to Amari's fears of racial profiling and Ashton's adjustment to his changing family fortunes. When the six are together, they can express the feelings and fears they have to hide from the rest of the world. And together, they can grow braver and more ready for the rest of their lives.

Balcarcel, Rebecca

The Other Half of Happy, Lexile 570

12-year-old Quijana likes to say that she used to be Pangaea. Unsplit. Not half white or half Latina. But that was before her Guatemalan cousins moved to town and before her dad asked her to speak some Spanish. Now her continents are splitting apart. Let's face it, when you're named after Spain's most famous loser, Don Quixote, you might make a secret escape plan. Join Quijana as she learns to make a tortilla, comes of age in the Guatemalan-American hyphen, and discovers her missing half.