



2026-2027

Rising 6th Grade Summer Reading

The goal of summer reading for all students is to maintain some of the skills that have been taught in the past years and to allow students and teachers to begin the next school year with a common book to discuss.

All middle school grades will be assigned one common book for English Class and one book of student choice from the provided list for History Class. Students will be held accountable for reading both books through writing, projects, discussions, and activities.

For both English and History class, students will bring their book and their required book assignments on the second day of school, Thursday, September 3.

English Class Grade Level Required Book:

Rising 6th Grade:

***Holes* by Louis Sachar**

1. Assignment for the required reading: After completing the novel, students will complete four activities from the attached choice board and bring them on the first day of school.
2. Reading Choice: Students will keep a list of any books they read for pleasure over the summer and bring the list with them on the first day of school.

History Class Grade Level Required Book:

Students should select **one book from their rising grade-level list** to read over the summer. They are encouraged to choose a book that sounds interesting, readable, and manageable for them.

While all of the books are appropriate for middle school readers, some include historical events or themes that may lead to thoughtful questions or conversations at home. Parents may wish to preview or research a book before their student begins reading.

1. Assignment for the required reading:
 - **Student Reflection**
 - Students will write a one-paragraph reflection on the book they chose. It will contain the title, the author, and the historical time period. In the body of the paragraph students will write about the following:
 - Three things I learned about the time period
 - One character or person I found interesting
 - One question I still have
 - Would I recommend this book? Why or why not?

Focus: Stone Age, Ancient India, Ancient China, Ancient Israel, Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome



***The Boy of the Painted Cave* by Justin Denzel**

Topic: Stone Age / Prehistoric Life

Summary: Tao wants to become a cave painter, even though his clan forbids it. This book helps students imagine life before written history, including hunting, survival, cave art, and early human communities.

***Maroo of the Winter Caves* by Ann Turnbull**

Topic: Stone Age / Ice Age Survival

Summary: Maroo and her family must survive a dangerous journey after disaster strikes. This is a strong survival story that shows how early people depended on family, tools, animals, and the environment.

***The Golden Goblet* by Eloise Jarvis McGraw**

Topic: Ancient Egypt

Summary: Ranofer, a young boy in ancient Egypt, dreams of becoming a goldsmith while dealing with his cruel older brother. Students get a great look at Egyptian craftsmen, social classes, trade, and daily life.

***The Egypt Game* by Zilpha Keatley Snyder**

Topic: Ancient Egypt Influence / Historical Imagination

Summary: A group of kids becomes fascinated with ancient Egypt and creates their own Egyptian world. While it takes place in modern times, it introduces students to Egyptian gods, rituals, symbols, and mythology in a fun, accessible way.

***Hittite Warrior* by Joanne Williamson**

Topic: Ancient Israel / Ancient Near East

Summary: This story takes place during the time of the ancient Israelites and neighboring civilizations. It connects well to Ancient Israel, the Hebrew people, conflict, belief systems, and life in the ancient Near East.

***God King* by Joanne Williamson**

Topic: Ancient Egypt / Ancient Kush / Ancient Israel Connections

Summary: A young Egyptian prince is forced into leadership during a dangerous time. The book connects Egypt, Kush, and the wider ancient world, giving students a sense that ancient civilizations were connected through war, trade, and politics.

***The Bronze Bow* by Elizabeth George Speare**

Topic: Ancient Israel / Roman Rule

Summary: Daniel, a young Jewish boy living under Roman rule, struggles with anger, loyalty, and questions about justice. This is a strong bridge between Ancient Israel and Ancient Rome.

***Detectives in Togas* by Henry Winterfeld**

Topic: Ancient Rome

Summary: A group of Roman schoolboys tries to solve a mystery after one of their classmates is accused of vandalism. It is funny, readable, and sneaks in Roman daily life, education, clothing, and social expectations.



***The Thieves of Ostia* by Caroline Lawrence**

Topic: Ancient Rome

Summary: A group of young friends investigates a mystery in the Roman port city of Ostia. Students get a kid-friendly view of Roman cities, slavery, trade, family life, and Roman culture.

***Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* by Grace Lin**

Topic: Ancient China / Chinese Folklore

Summary: Minli goes on a quest inspired by traditional Chinese folktales. This is not a straight history book, but it pairs beautifully with Ancient China because it introduces values, storytelling traditions, family, honor, and mythology.

Please contact Associate Head of School, K-8 Heather Bosanko (hbosanko@stmartinsmd.org) with any questions.

Have a great summer!