

Humanities 6 Summer Reading Letter 2024

the Berkeley Carroll School

Dear Rising Sixth Grade Families,

Welcome to sixth grade humanities! We are eagerly awaiting your arrival and are excited to start learning together in the fall. In the meantime, we hope your students enjoy the sixth grade summer reading books. They are fantastic and set up two guiding themes for the year: the power of stories and perspective-taking. Over the summer, we'd like students to read **two books**.

The **first** book is ***Harbor Me* by Jacqueline Woodson**, which we are happy to provide.

For your **second** summer reading book, we'd like you to select one of the following, which you can find at any library or bookstore:

Front Desk by Kelly Yang: Mia Tang has a lot of secrets. Number 1: She lives in a motel, not a big house. Every day, while her immigrant parents clean the rooms, ten-year-old Mia manages the front desk of the Calivista Motel and tends to its guests. Number 2: Her parents hide immigrants. And if the mean motel owner, Mr. Yao, finds out they've been letting them stay in the empty rooms for free, the Tangs will be doomed. Number 3: She wants to be a writer. But how can she when her mom thinks she should stick to math because English is not her first language? It will take all of Mia's courage, kindness, and hard work to get through this year. Will she be able to hold on to her job, help the immigrants and guests, escape Mr. Yao, and go for her dreams?

Blended by Sharon M. Draper: If you're only seen as half of this and half of that--how can you ever feel whole? Eleven-year old Isabella lives in two worlds. She's a double-backpack-carrying child of divorce, so she lives with her mom one week, and her dad the next. In addition, she's bi-racial, and she sees herself as the caramel swirl milkshake that resulted from her mom's vanilla and her dad's chocolate ice cream. Izzy is an accomplished pianist, and as she practices for a crucial recital, the black keys and the white keys of her life combine to create an unexpected symphony of race, terror, and finally peace.

Merci Suarez Changes Gears by Meg Medina: Merci Suárez knew that sixth grade would be different, but she had no idea just how different. For starters, she's not exactly like the other kids at Seaward Pines because she and her older brother, Roli, are scholarship students. At home, Merci's most trusted ally, Lolo, has been acting strangely and no one in her family will tell her anything about what's going on with her grandfather. In a coming of age story that features family, friends, frenemies – and ripped off eyebrows – we look at the confusion and constant change that define middle school and the steadfast connection that defines family.

Amina's Voice by Hena Khan: Amina has never been comfortable in the spotlight. She is happy just hanging out with her best friend, Soojin. Except now that she's in middle school everything feels different. Soojin is suddenly hanging out with Emily, one of the "cool" girls in the class, and even talking about changing her name to something more "American." Does Amina need to start changing too? Or hiding who she is to fit in? While Amina grapples with these questions, she is devastated when her local mosque is vandalized. Amina's Voice brings to life the joys and challenges of a young Pakistani American and highlights the many ways in which one girl's voice can help bring a diverse community together to love and support each other.

The Other Boy by M.G. Hennessey: Twelve-year-old Shane Woods is just a regular boy. He loves pitching

for his baseball team, working on his graphic novel, and hanging out with his best friend, Josh. But Shane is keeping something private, something that might make a difference to his friends and teammates, even Josh. And when a classmate threatens to reveal his secret, Shane's whole world comes crashing down. It will take a lot of courage for Shane to ignore the hate and show the world that he's still the same boy he was before. And in the end, those who stand beside him may surprise everyone, including Shane.

In the first few days of the new school year, students should come prepared to discuss and write about their summer reading.

We encourage everyone to read as much as possible this summer. In addition to being excellent free entertainment, reading improves your life. Seriously! Studies have shown that staying mentally stimulated and engaged prevents your brain from losing power as you age. Just like any other muscle in the body, the brain requires exercise to keep it strong and healthy, so the phrase "use it or lose it" is particularly apt when it comes to your mind. Reading has also been proven to reduce stress, expand your vocabulary, improve memory function, strengthen your analytical thinking skills, improve focus and concentration, and enhance your writing skills. Reading is amazing! To find even more great titles, be sure to check out the awesome [reading guide](#) that our Middle School Librarian, Ms. Hartley-Maneri, created on the Berkeley Carroll library website.

We look forward to meeting all of you soon. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,
Ms. Telford, Mr. Chodakewitz, and Ms. Miller-Gootnick

Ebooks/Audiobooks from the BC Libraries' OverDrive Collection are available all summer!

Use the Sora app to read or listen to books.

You can also read eBooks with a Kindle, Kindle app or in your computer's browser.

Find help and instructions on how to get started on this guide:

<https://libguides.berkeleycarroll.org/how-to-use-sora>

Find additional reading suggestions from your librarians & notable book lists on the guide linked [here](#). Titles available in our digital collection are noted by the Sora symbol. Click on the symbol to go directly to the title in Sora.



(2025) 6 Summer Reading Letter

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Dear Rising Sixth Grade Families,

Welcome to sixth grade humanities! We are eagerly awaiting your arrival and are excited to start learning together in the fall. In the meantime, we hope your students enjoy the sixth grade humanities summer work:

1. **D'aulaires' Book of Greek Myths:** All 6th grade students will begin reading *D'aulaires' Book of Greek Myths* by Ingri and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire this summer; Berkeley Carroll will provide copies of this text. **You will be responsible for reading from the beginning of the book through page 69. We will continue reading in the book together once the school year begins.**
2. **Creative Assignment:** While reading the Greek myths, immerse yourself in the ancient stories and get inspired! When you're done reading, complete one of the following creative assignments. Be ready to share your work when we return to school in September.
 - Create an illustration of the Olympian whose myth you found most interesting. Show a pivotal moment or scene from their myth. Then write a paragraph explaining why you chose that scene.
 - Write a diary entry from the perspective of your chosen Olympian. What does their day-to-day life look like? What issues are on their mind? What might they say about other Olympians? (Aim for 1-2 pages)
 - Write a script for an interview podcast in which you have the opportunity to ask questions of your chosen Olympian. What questions would you ask? How might they answer? As a bonus, you can record your interview to turn it into a real podcast! (Aim for 1-2 pages)
3. **Choice Reading:** In addition, we'd like you to select **two** books to read from the [Berkeley Carroll Middle Library's Summer Reading Libguide](#).

Please fill out the attached sheet to show that you have completed all of the tasks listed above, and please plan to bring your copy of *D'aulaires Book of Greek Myths* and your completed creative assignment on the first day of school. We look forward to meeting all of you soon. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Mr. Chodakewitz, Ms. Miller-Gootnick, and Ms. Telford

Student name: _____

6th Grade Summer Work Checklist	
Task	Checkbox
I read through page 69 of <i>D'aulaires' Book of Greek Myths</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
I completed <u>one</u> of the three creative assignments listed above based on what I read in <i>D'aulaires</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read two books listed in the Berkeley Carroll Middle Library's Summer Reading Libguide . They are: 1. _____ 2. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

FYI: Ebooks/Audiobooks from the BC Libraries' OverDrive Collection are available all summer!

Use the Sora app to read or listen to books.
You can also read eBooks with a Kindle, Kindle app or in your computer's browser.

Find help and instructions on how to get started on this guide:
<https://libguides.berkeleycarroll.org/how-to-use-sora>



Find additional reading suggestions from your librarians & book lists on the guide linked [here](#). Titles available in our digital collection are noted by the Sora symbol. Click on the symbol to go directly to the title in Sora.