

Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Grade 6 Summer Reading Assignment 2015

All fifth grade students entering sixth grade are expected to **read ONE** of the following books from the Nutmeg selections from 2011-2016. We encourage students to read more than one book over the summer; however, students will complete a written response on one of the following books listed below during the second week of school.

Our middle school library has sent copies of many of the titles from previous Nutmeg Intermediate Award lists to the elementary schools for students to borrow for summer reading. Our wonderful town library has many copies available, and Barnes and Noble has a shelf devoted to our selections.

Please take notes on the book using the signposts bookmark. Any notes found to have been influenced by unattributed outside sources, such as Internet websites like SparkNotes.com, will automatically receive a zero. Bring the bookmark and book to school on the first day.

2016 Intermediate Nominees

***The Blossoming Life of Violet Diamond* by Brenda Woods** Violet is biracial, but she lives with her white mother and sister, attends a mostly white school in a white town, and sometimes feels like a brown leaf on a pile of snow. Now that she's eleven, she feels it's time to learn about her African American heritage, so she seeks out her paternal grandmother. When Violet is invited to spend two weeks with her new *Bibi* (Swahili for "grandmother") and learns about her lost heritage, her confidence in herself grows and she discovers she's not a shrinking Violet after all. From a Coretta Scott King Honor-winning author, this is a powerful story about a young girl finding her place in the world.

***Elvis and the Underdogs* by Jenny Lee and Kelly Light** All his life Benji, now ten, has been sickly and he has long been targeted by the school bully, but after a seizure Benji gets a therapy dog that is not only big enough to protect him, it can also talk.

***Ghost of Tupelo Landing* by Sheila Turnage** When Miss Lana winds up the mortified owner of an old inn with an unidentified ghost in the fine print, Mo's itching to take the case. Plus, a *historical* ghost might make for some much needed Extra Credit in history. Who's haunting the old inn? And why? Mo and Dale set out to solve their second big case—only to find the inn might not be the only thing in Tupelo Landing haunted by the past.

***The Great Trouble* by Deborah Hopkinson** Eel, an orphan, and his best friend Florrie must help Dr. John Snow prove that cholera is spread through water, and not poisonous air, when an epidemic sweeps across their London neighborhood in 1854.

***Flora and Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventures* by Kate DiCamillo & K.G. Campbell** A girl named Flora and a squirrel named Ulysses, whose life was saved by Flora after he was involved in an incident with a vacuum cleaner, team up to use Ulysses' superpowers to conquer villains and protect the weak.

***Liesl & Po* by Lauren Oliver** After her father's death, Liesl is locked away in a tiny attic room by her stepmother, where she meets Po, a lonely ghost, and Will, an alchemist's apprentice who bungles an important delivery and enlists Liesl and Po's help in setting things right.

***The One and Only Ivan* by Katherine Applegate** When Ivan, a gorilla who has lived for years in a down-and-out circus-themed mall, meets Ruby, a baby elephant that has been added to the mall, he decides that he must find her a better life.

***One Dog and His Boy* by Eva Ibbotson** When lonely, ten-year-old Hal learns that his wealthy but neglectful parents only rented Fleck, the dog he always wanted, he and new friend Pippa take Fleck and four other dogs from the rental agency on a trek from London to Scotland, where Hal's grandparents live.

***Pie* by Sarah Weeks** Alice's Aunt Polly passes away and entrusts the recipe for her world-famous pie crust to her cat, which she leaves in Alice's care, and as everyone, including Alice, tries to discover the secret ingredients, Alice learns some important lessons about faith, love, and family.

***Winterling* by Sarah Prineas** Spirited young Fer travels through the Way to a magical world in which beings part human and part animal serve an evil ruler known as the Lady, and where she hopes to learn about her long-lost parents and her own identity.

2015 Intermediate Nominees

***Walls Within Walls* by Maureen Sherry:** When the Smithfork children move into a Manhattan apartment, they discover clues to a hidden fortune behind the walls of their new home. Unraveling the mystery leads to a race through New York City to uncover hidden secrets of the past.

***White Fur Flying* by Patricia MacLachlan:** Philip, a boy who will not speak, comes to live with his aunt and uncle, next door to Zoe whose dog-loving parents rescue Great Pyrennes. Afraid of the larger dogs Philip befriends, Jack, the newest rescue. Will Jack help Philip find his voice and his way home?

***The Unwanted* by Lisa McMann:** When you become Unwanted you die...everyone knows that. So when Alex is dubbed Unwanted, he expects the same fate. Alex is brought to Artime where creative talent is shaped into magic. Alex and the Unwanted must use their training to protect themselves.

***Tuesdays at the Castle* by Jessica Day George:** Castle is very unusual - it can add rooms or passageways as it wishes. When the King and Queen go missing, the youngest princess, Celie, teams up with her siblings, the servants, and even the castle itself to thwart an evil plot against the royal family.

***Spy School* by Stuart Gibbs:** Ben is a klutzy nerd who is mistakenly accepted into the junior CIA academy where he must uncover a plan that is threatening the school. The stakes are high, the laughs are loud, the twists are many, and the girl is smart.

***Shadow* by Michael Morpurgo:** Shadow, a British bomb-sniffing dog, is separated from Sergeant Brody, a British soldier serving in Afghanistan. Shadow is adopted by Aman, an Afghan boy who ultimately finds refuge in England. This is a touching tale of coincidence, courage, friendship and loyalty.

***Saint Louis Armstrong Beach* by Brenda Woods:** Saint lives in New Orleans and loves the clarinet and the neighborhood dog, Shadow. When Hurricane Katrina roars through New Orleans, it is up to Saint to save Shadow and his elderly neighbor, Miz Moran, but he wonders if he will ever see his parents again.

***King of the Mound* by Wes Tooke:** Recovering from polio, Nick believes he will never play baseball again. He spends his summer helping his father, a minor league baseball coach. A visiting team player, Satchel Paige, one of the greatest pitchers of all time, teaches Nick that the impossible just might be possible.

***Joshua Dread* by Lee Bacon:** The son of supervillains and the daughter of a superhero team up in this action-packed adventure. As the friends begin to realize their own superpowers, they wonder whether they can win the battle against the mysterious smoke monsters.

***Liar & Spy* by Rebecca Stead:** Seventh-grader Georges does not have an easy life. He faces things alone until he meets Safer who "recruits" him to spy on other tenants. While Georges likes the intrigue, he wonders just how far he should go for a friend

From 2014

***The Candymakers* by Wendy Mass:** An obnoxious rich kid, a spy, a child who witnessed a tragic event, and the son of a candy factory owner come together to compete in a national candy competition for best new candy. Mysteries abound. Candy lovers will find this book a sweet read!

***Closed for the Season* by Mary Downing Hahn:** Arthur and Logan tackle the derelict amusement park, The Magic Forest, hoping to solve a murder. The victim was the previous owner of Logan's new home! The park is supposedly closed for the season, so who is in there with them and are they in danger?

***The Fingertips of Duncan Dorfman* by Meg Wolitzer:** To cheat or not to cheat? Duncan Dorfman has a unique power of reading letters without looking, and when Duncan competes at a national Scrabble tournament, he must choose what is right. Duncan and his new friends April and Nate team up and change the competition in unforeseen ways.

***The Great Wall of Lucy Wu* by Wendy Wan-Long Shang:** 11 year-old Chinese-American and basketball player Lucy Wu plans for a great sixth grade year, finally getting her own room and her own life. Things don't turn out as planned when her great-aunt Yi-Po arrives from China to share her space. Will delicious dumplings be enough to fix a tough situation?

***Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai:** Vietnam, 1975. Even though Ha's father has been missing for almost a year, Ha and her family decide to leave Vietnam and start their lives over in the United States. Told in verse, Ha's story describes her new life with humor and hope.

Mike Stellar: *Nerves of Steel* by K.A. Holt: Mike Stellar does NOT want to be on an expedition to colonize Mars with his parents, his nightmare of a teacher, and a cast of suspicious characters. Mike needs nerves of steel and the help of a girl named Larc to clear his parents' name and save the mission.

***Saving Armpit* by Natalie Hyde:** Will the beleaguered Terriers baseball team ever win a game? How can they win without a real coach? Baseball fans will love the fastpaced action as the Terriers use teamwork and imagination to help their town's baseball team survive.

***Wild Girl* by Patricia Reilly Giff:** Lidie leaves Mexico to join her father and brother in New York where they train racehorses. She never thought her new life would be so difficult and unfamiliar. Can a special horse help her feel at home?

***Wildfire Run* by Dee Garretson:** The President's son Luke and his friends Theo and Callie enjoy their vacation at Camp David, the safest place in the US. When a raging wildfire threatens to turn Camp David into a death trap, they race to override security systems and save the Secret Service agents who are supposed to keep them safe.

From 2013

***Baseball Great* by Tim Green:** When the school paper calls him "*Grant Middle's best hope for its first-ever city-wide championship*," Josh feels like he's starting to get noticed—in good *and* bad ways. Seeing Josh's talent, his father drags him out of the school baseball tryouts and gets him in the running for the Titans, the local youth championship team coached by Rocky Valentine. All Josh really wants to do is play ball, but now Rocky wants him to gulp down protein shakes and other supplements. Suspicious, Josh and his new friend, Jaden, uncover a dangerous secret—and catch the attention of one man who will do *anything* to keep them from exposing it.

***A Tale Dark and Grimm* by Adam Gidwitz:** Hansel and Gretel walk out of their own story and into eight other classic Grimm (and Grimm-inspired) fairy tales. An irreverent, witty narrator leads us through encounters with witches, warlocks, dragons, and the devil himself. As the siblings roam a forest brimming with menacing foes, they learn the true story behind the famous tales, as well as how to take charge of their destinies and create their own happily ever after. Because once upon a time, fairy tales were *awesome*.

***The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg* by Rodman Philbrick:** Twelve-year-old orphan Homer runs away from Pine Swamp, Maine, to find his older brother, Harold, who has been sold into the Union Army. With laugh-aloud humor, Homer outwits and outruns a colorful assortment of civil War-era thieves, scallywags, and spies as he makes his way south, following clues that finally lead him to Gettysburg. Even through a hail of gunfire, Homer never loses heart—but will he find his brother? Or will it be too late?

***Powerless* by Matthew Cody:** Twelve-year-old Daniel, new kid in town, learns the truth about his nice—but odd—new friends: one can fly, another can turn invisible, yet another controls electricity. The superkids use their powers to secretly do good in the town, but they're haunted by the fact that the moment they turn thirteen, their abilities will disappear—along with any memory that they ever had them. Is a memory-stealing supervillain sapping their powers? The answers lie in a long-ago meteor strike, a World War II-era comic book (the greenflamed Witch Fire, a hidden Shroud cave, and—possibly—“powerless” regular-kid Daniel himself.

***My Life as a Book* by Janet Tashjian:** Summer's finally here, and Derek Fallon is looking forward to pelting the UPS truck with water balloons, climbing onto the garage roof, and conducting silly investigations. But when his parents decide to send him to Learning Camp, Derek's dreams of fun come to an end. Ever since he's been labeled a “reluctant reader,” his mom has pushed him to read “real” books—something other than his beloved *Calvin & Hobbes*. As Derek forges unexpected friendships and uncovers a family secret involving himself (in diapers! no less), he realizes that adventures and surprises are around the corner, complete with curve balls.

***The Wonder of Charlie Anne* by Kimberly Fusco:** Charlie Anne is devastated when her father goes north to work after the Depression hits. She and her siblings are left with their cousin, Mirabel, and a farm full of chores. The only solace Charlie Anne finds is by the river, where the memory of her mother is strongest. Then her neighbor Mr. Jolly brings home a new wife, Rosalyn, who shows up in pants the color of red peppers. With her arrives Phoebe, an African American girl who has also lost her mother. Phoebe is the perfect antidote to Charlie Anne's loneliness. The girls forge a friendship and learn from each other in amazing ways. But hatred turns the town ugly, and it's up to the girls to prove that our hearts are always able to expand.

***The Potato Chip Puzzles* by Eric Berlin:** Winston and two friends are sent to represent their school in a puzzle competition sponsored by the owner of Simon's Snack Foods. Their teacher, Mr. Garvey, is determined to win the \$50,000 prize for their school and chides the boys to take the day seriously. The boys scramble to track clues and solve riddles but are waylaid by a saboteur they suspect is one of the competing schools. Ethical questions arise: Is it okay to bend the rules to win? Winston and Mr. Garvey face a moral dilemma and emerge with a better understanding of one another.

***Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* by Grace Lin:** In the valley of Fruitless Mountain, a young girl named Minli lives in a ramshackle hut with her parents. In the evenings, her father regales her with old folktales of the Jade Dragon and the Old Man on the Moon, who knows the answers to all of life's questions. Inspired by these stories, Minli sets off on an extraordinary journey to find the Old Man on

the Moon to ask him how she can change her family's fortune. She encounters an assorted cast of characters and magical creatures along the way, including a dragon who accompanies her on her quest for the ultimate answer.

***Born to Fly* by Michael Ferrari:** Ever since she can remember, eleven-year-old tomboy Bird has loved flying in small prop planes with her mechanic dad. When the local airstrip is turned into a military flight school, Bird is in heaven. A young Japanese American named Kenji Fujita joins Bird's class and the school is convinced he's a spy. Bird is wary of Kenji, not just because he's Japanese, but because he steals her flight-related topic for a school report and leaves her to write about boring marsh weed. But on a trip to the marsh, she and Kenji discover *real* spy activity. She and Kenji begin an adventure that shakes the town and may even change the future of the United States.

From 2012

***Deep and Dark and Dangerous* by Mary Downing Hahn:** Ali is excited to spend the summer with her aunt and cousin at the lake. Life is great until her cousin meets a young girl. Why does she act so nasty? Will Ali's summer warm up or will the cold and icy lake claim another victim?

***Dying to Meet You* by Kate Klise:** I.B. Grumply, a children's book author, moves into a Victorian mansion in Ghastly, IL to write a new book and meets with some unusual obstacles. He finds an 11 year old boy and a ghost already there. Of course Grumply doesn't believe in real ghosts, so he blames the boy and his cat for all the ghostly deeds. Will Grumply become a believer, or will the ghost have the last laugh?

***Extra Credit* by Andrew Clements:** Abby needs to do well on the extra credit pen pal assignment. But to Sadeed, her assigned pen pal in the hills of Kabul, Afghanistan, the project is just extra work. Although their cultures and lifestyles are vastly different, Abby and Sadeed develop a friendship that is based on their similarities. Not everyone is happy with the relationship, and they are forbidden to continue writing letters; can their friendship possibly survive?

***The Gollywhopper Games* by Jody Feldman:** The Golly Toy and Game Company is having a competition and Gil Goodson is determined to be the grand prize winner. He finds that the puzzles and stunts are only half the challenge: his teammates and his father's history as a Golly employee drive the stakes even higher.

***Herbert's Wormhole* by Peter Nelson:** Alex is forced to spend the day at his super geeky next door neighbor Herbert's house. The day takes a surprising twist when Alex and Herbert fall through a wormhole to 100 years in the future. Returning home will be an adventure they won't forget.

***The Key to Rondo* by Emily Rodda:** Leo and his cousin Mimi use their aunt's ancient music box to travel to the magical world of Rondo, where fairy tale characters behave in unexpected ways. The children must stick together if they hope to rescue Mimi's dog from the frighteningly powerful Blue Queen.

***Masterpiece* by Elise Broach:** Did you know that beetles can draw? Well, Marvin can! James' 'roommate' Marvin draws an intricate, museum-quality sketch for a birthday present. It is shown to a curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and before long James and Marvin find themselves caught up in a world of mystery and art theft. Can the two friends find ways to communicate and save priceless works of art?

***Savvy* by Ingrid Law:** Special supernatural powers are part of the lives of the Beaumont family. As Mibs approaches her 13th birthday, she eagerly anticipates her uniquely personal savvy. Her brother controls electricity, her grandpa moves mountains, and her mother is perfect. What will Mibs be able to do, and how will it change her life?

***Signal* by Cynthia DeFelice:** Owen has lost his mother and his father doesn't seem to care. So, when he meets a girl named Campion claiming to be an alien in need of help getting back to her own planet he believes the story she tells. This book follows Owen as he decides whether he should keep her secret and help her get "home".

***Stolen Children* by Peg Kehret:** 14 year-old Amy is babysitting for a rich family when she and 3 year-old Kendra are kidnapped. Amy uses her cleverness to try and save the day. Will the ransom be paid, will they escape, and will they ever get home?

From 2011

***Elephant Run* by Roland Smith:** Nick Freestone is trying to escape Nazi bombs in London when his mother sends him to stay with his father on a teak plantation in Burma. Unfortunately he arrives in Burma just as the Japanese invade the country and take his father prisoner. Can he and his new friend Mya risk their lives to help POWs escape on elephant back?

Eleven by Patricia Reilly Giff: Just before his eleventh birthday, Sam discovers his own picture in a mysterious newspaper article in his grandfather's attic. Although gifted with woodworking skills, Sam can't read, so he enlists the help of a new girl at school to solve the puzzle of who he really is and where he came from.

First Light by Rebecca Stead: Seven generations ago, a group of people hunted as witches escaped to a sanctuary beneath Greenland's ice cap. When Peter arrives in Greenland with his scientist parents, he discovers Thea and a passage to an underground city. Together the two teenagers must save the underground community and in doing so, discover their hidden connection.

Iron Thunder by Avi: Thirteen-year-old Tom Carroll finds work at the Brooklyn Navy Yard on a secret project that may benefit the Northern armies during the Civil War. Pursued by spies from the South, he ends up in the middle of a sea battle. Will he find the courage to survive?

The Lemonade War by Jacqueline Davies: When Evan's sister Jessie skips third grade and ends up in his fourth grade class, he is worried she will embarrass him with her school smarts. To settle the question of who is smarter, he challenges Jessie to a lemonade war. Which sibling can run the most successful lemonade stand in a five day competition?

Night of the Howling Dogs by Graham Salisbury: What would you do if you were camping on an island beach with your boy scout troop and a huge earthquake woke you? What if a tsunami followed the quake and you were trapped against a cliff? What if a bully, and your least favorite person, was the only hope of rescue?

No Talking by Andrew Clements: How will the teachers and principals react when a normally way-too-talkative class nicknamed the "unshushables" suddenly becomes SILENT? Is it because of a student rebellion? A strange disease? Or is it just the result of a contest between the boys and the girls?

One-Handed Catch by M.J. Auch: Losing a hand doesn't mean losing Norm's dreams. It just means it will take hard work and humor to succeed at everything from everyday tasks to playing baseball.

Swindle by Gordon Korman: Griffin Bing is the "man with a plan." After a collector cheats him out of a valuable baseball card, he recruits his diverse group of friends in an adventure that includes vicious dogs, high-tech security, tall trees, and a frozen turkey.

The Thing About Georgie by Lisa Graff: Everything is a challenge for Georgie, a 42 inch dwarf, including school furniture, running track, and playing an instrument. To add to his worries, his mother is expecting a new baby, he has a fight with his best friend, and he gets paired with "Jeanie the Meanie" for a school project. Can anything else go wrong?



Notice & Note <i>Signposts</i> Bookmark	Notice & Note <i>Signposts</i> Bookmark
Name _____ Book _____	Record page numbers and brief responses to the signposts you see. Try to find two good examples for each signpost.
Signpost Descriptions	
Contrasts and Contradictions When a character does something that contrasts with what you'd expect or contradicts his earlier acts or statements STOP and ask, "Why is the character doing that?"	Contrasts and Contradictions
AHA Moment When a character realizes, understands, or finally figures out something STOP and ask yourself, "How might this change things?"	AHA Moment
Tough Questions When a character asks him or herself a very difficult question, STOP and ask yourself, "What does this question make me wonder about?"	Tough Questions
Words of the Wiser When a character (probably older and wiser) takes the main character aside and offers serious advice, STOP and ask, "What's the point of the lesson and how might it affect the character?"	Words of the Wiser
Again & Again When you notice a word, phrase, or situation mentioned over and over, STOP and ask yourself, "Why does this keep happening over and over again?"	Again & Again
Memory Moment When an author interrupts the action to tell you about a memory, STOP and ask yourself, "Why or how might this memory be important?"	Memory Moment