

GREAT NECK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Dear Sixth Grade Student:

This coming September you will be attending Great Neck North Middle School, and we are sure you are excited about the three years you will spend in our school. We look forward to working with you.

We want you to feel that you are well prepared when you enter these doors in September. We want you to feel familiar with the building itself and some of the people you will get to know, and we also want you to feel that you are prepared academically for the challenges that await you. That is why we have decided to give all incoming sixth graders a summer reading assignment. We want you to read one book (we know many of you will read much more on your own!) and, when you start school in September, we will ask you to talk and write about the book you have read.

We are asking you to choose one of the novels listed below to read over the summer before entering sixth grade. Review the brief descriptions on the following pages and work with your current teacher to select a book that you will enjoy.

BOOK	AUTHOR	LEVEL
<i>Crenshaw</i>	Katherine Applegate	Q
<i>The Great Gilly Hopkins</i>	Katherine Paterson	S
<i>Almost Home</i>	Nora Raleigh Baskin	T
<i>My Side of the Mountain</i>	Jean Craighead George	U
<i>Counting by 7s</i>	Holly Goldberg Sloan	W
<i>Al Capone Does My Shirts</i>	Gennifer Choldenko	X
<i>Blackbird Fly</i>	Erin Entrada Kelly	Y

Levels Q, S, T = Least Challenging

Level U = Middle

Levels W and X = Middle-Challenging

If you feel that these books are inappropriate for your reading level, you may select another, but only with the approval of your current teacher.

Use the attached Post-it Prompt Worksheet to help you track your thinking and prepare notes in anticipation of a test in September. The test could be multiple-choice, short answer, or extended response. The extended response could ask you to reflect on a theme or specific challenge faced by a character/characters in the novel. You may use your notes during the writing assessment.

Please share this letter with your parents. Have a wonderful summer. Enjoy your book!

Sincerely,

Cinthia Serowik
English Department Chairperson

Post-it Prompt Worksheet

For your Post-it work this summer, you can use the thought-starters found on this worksheet. Each box represents a different category of thought-starters that will help you become a closer and stronger reader.

- As you read your summer reading book, you should always have this list next to you.
- On average you should have at least three or more Post-its per chapter.
- Finally, you should always write the page number (top right corner) that the thought-starter Post-it relates to. In addition, you can underline the thought-starter you are using before completing that thought on the Post-it.

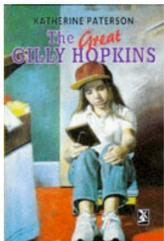
<p><u>Forming Interpretations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What this means to me is... - I think this represents... - The idea I'm getting... 	<p><u>Asking Questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I wonder why... - What if... - How come...
<p><u>Tapping Prior Knowledge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I already know that... - This reminds me of... - This relates to... 	<p><u>Monitoring</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I'm confused because... - I got lost here because... - I need to reread the part when...
<p><u>Revising Meaning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At first I thought _____, but now... - I have a different understanding about _____ because... 	<p><u>Predicting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I'll bet that... - I think... - If _____ happens, then...
<p><u>Making Connections</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This reminds me of... - I experienced this once when... - I can relate to this because... 	<p><u>Reflecting & Relating</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - So, the main idea/theme is... - The conclusion I'm drawing is... - This is relevant to my life because... - The most important message/lesson is... - The character I most identify with is... - I really got into the story when... - I can relate to the narrator here because...
<p><u>Analyzing Author's Craft</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This word/phrase stands out to me because... - I like how the author uses _____ to show... - I wonder why the author mentions... 	<p><u>Vocabulary</u></p> <p>When you come across an unfamiliar word, write it down, put a colon (;) after it, then look up the definition and write it down.</p>
<p><u>Figurative Language</u></p> <p>When you come across an example of figurative language you recognize, copy the example down, label what type of figurative language is being used, and explain the meaning.</p> <p>Ex) similes, metaphors, personification, imagery, hyperbole, alliteration, etc.</p>	<p><u>Effective Words</u></p> <p>Stop at a passage you find vivid or suspenseful and list the specific words/phrases that make it memorable. Explain why the words/phrases hold meaning with you.</p>
<p><u>Symbols</u></p> <p>Good readers notice special attention to items or objects throughout a story or novel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify images or objects that represent deeper meaning or other ideas in life. 	<p><u>Identifying Conflict</u></p> <p>When you come across problems in a book, identify what type of problem(conflict) you are reading about...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Man vs. Man -Man vs. Environment -Man vs. Self -Man vs. Society



Crenshaw
Katherine Applegate

Jackson and his family have fallen on hard times. There's no more money for rent. And not much for food, either. His parents, his little sister, and their dog may have to live in their minivan. Again.

Crenshaw is a cat. He's large, he's outspoken, and he's imaginary. He has come back into Jackson's life to help him. But is an imaginary friend enough to save this family from losing everything?



The Great Gilly Hopkins
Katherine Paterson

Watch out world!

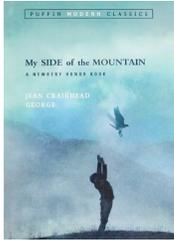
The Great Gilly Hopkins is looking for a home. She's a foster kid who's been angry, lonely, and hurting for so long that she's always ready for a fight. Be on the lookout for her best barracuda smile, the one she saves for well-meaning social workers. Watch out for her most fearful look, a cross between Dracula and Godzilla, used especially to scare shy foster brothers. Don't be fooled by her "Who me?" expression, guaranteed to trick foster parents, teachers, and anyone who gets in her way.

It's Gilly Hopkins vs. the world! And so far, Gilly seems to be winning. But what she doesn't realize is that every time she wins, she really loses, until she discovers a love as formidable as any enemy she's ever known.



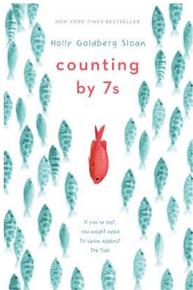
Almost Home
Nora Raleigh Baskin

Leah Baer has been shuffled to and from various parents and households for years, and now she's back at her father's house with his new wife. This latest move seems as though it might be a lasting one, but Leah feels out of place both at home and at school. Then an unconventional boy named Will befriends Leah and persuades her to try acting to express her ideas and feelings. As Leah begins to learn more about herself, she also begins to see how she fits in her family members' lives, and gradually finds out what it means to be home.



My Side of the Mountain
Jean Craighead George

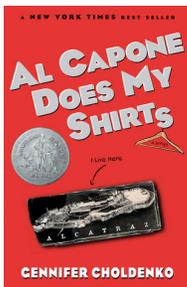
Terribly unhappy in his family's crowded New York City apartment, Sam Gribbley runs away to the solitude and danger of the mountains, where he finds a side of himself he never knew.



Counting by 7s
Holly Goldberg Sloan

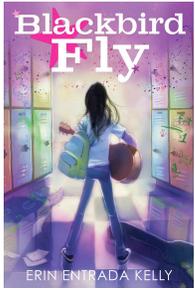
Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions, who finds it comforting to count by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life... until now.

Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. The triumph of this book is that it is *not* a tragedy. This extraordinarily odd, but extraordinarily endearing, girl manages to push through her grief. Her journey to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read.



Al Capone Does My Shirts
Gennifer Choldenko

Today I moved to a twelve-acre rock covered with cement, topped with bird turd, and surrounded by water. I'm not the only kid who lives here. There's my sister, Natalie, except she doesn't count. And there are twenty-three other kids who live on the island because their dads work as guards or cooks or doctors or electricians for the prison, like my dad does. Plus, there are a ton of murderers, rapists, hit men, con men, stickup men, embezzlers, connivers, burglars, kidnappers and maybe even an innocent man or two, though I doubt it. The convicts we have are the kind other prisons don't want. I never knew prisons could be picky, but I guess they can. You get to Alcatraz by being the worst of the worst. Unless you're me. I came here because my mother said I had to.



Blackbird Fly
Erin Entrada Kelly

Future rock star or friendless misfit? That's no choice at all. In this acclaimed novel, twelve-year-old Apple grapples with being different; with friends and backstabbers; and with following her dreams.

Apple has always felt a little different from her classmates. She and her mother moved to Louisiana from the Philippines when she was little, and her mother still cooks Filipino foods and chastises Apple for becoming "too American." When Apple's friends turn on her and everything about her life starts to seem weird and embarrassing, Apple turns to music. If she can just save enough to buy a guitar and learn to play, maybe she can change herself. It might be the music that saves her . . . or it might be her two new friends, who show her how special she really is.