

June 7, 2021

Dear Parents,

Why read over the summer? It is a known fact that students lose some of their academic skills over the summer. Reading can help slow down this loss. Research has shown a very strong connection between reading levels and academic growth in writing, spelling, and grammar. Students just experienced a difficult educational year due to the pandemic. Hopefully some fun summer reading will help bolster their academics.

There is a summer reading program for rising 5th and 6th graders. Each student is required to read the equivalent of 3 books over the summer and submit book reports when they return to school in the fall. Each book should be more than 150 pages (unless you ask for a special exception). Any book that is over 300 pages will count as 2 books. If you're child wants to read a book that is over 450 pages, that would qualify as fulfilling the 3-book requirement.

All students have been tested in the Fountas and Pinnell System. Research has clearly shown that students will improve their overall reading ability if they are reading books with 98% to 100% accuracy in decoding words and are able to understand the text they are reading.

Students are expected to read books at their tested reading level, or a level below, in the Fountas and Pinnell System. If you do not know your child's independent reading level, please reach out to me. Rising 6th graders will receive an email by June 14th with their most recent tested reading level as well as a few comments about ways they might improve their reading.

How to match the book reading level to the student reading level. First of all, most of the books in our library system have had a reading level identified and placed on the spine of the book. If you are looking for a book in the public library, you might want to do a google search with the following words: "What is the reading level of _____?" You may see an independent reading level and a guided reading level. The levels we are looking for are the independent reading level. If you do not see a reading level, have your child read a few pages to you. Watch to make sure they are not substituting words, omitting words, and reading words incorrectly without realizing it. At the end of a few pages, have them tell you about what they have read to ensure they are really able to understand the story.

Please do not read the following books as they are part of our literature program: *Maniac Magee*, *Detectives in Togas*, *The Egypt Game*, *The Lost Years of Merlin*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, or *The Book of Three*

The key idea here is to read for fun and with great success. When your child has completed a book, please have them write a book report. I have attached a form to this email. Please sign the form when they have completed it.

The Prince George's County Library System has a summer reading program. Your child may want to sign up for the program and earn some fun prizes.

Have a fun summer,

Kim Maxwell