



Grade 6: Heroes & Community

Summer Reading and Experience List

"Any topic you want to be able to read about is a topic you must become knowledgeable about." ~E.D. Hirsch Jr. and Lisa Hansel

"...what students already know about the content is one of the strongest indicators of how well they will learn new information relative to the content." (Marzano) Building background knowledge both helps students engage with complex texts and ensures that learning sticks. Independently selecting and reading texts, along with engaging in dynamic experiences connected to upcoming topics or themes builds this important content knowledge. When students head into the school year armed with knowledge about upcoming content, they are better able to access and develop a deeper understanding of complex texts in curriculum.

Tips for Summer Reading

- Encourage active engagement by participating in a local library's [summer reading incentive](#).
- Get your child hooked onto a [great series](#). Entertaining, or suspenseful, series are often the launchpad for a lasting love of reading.
- Reading with your child sets a powerful example and is a great way to connect.
- Take advantage of literacy apps. Interactive, engaging research-based programs can offer additional ways for students to rack up minutes reading.



This compilation of texts and experiences is designed to provide students with guided choices as they engage in independent summer reading. Lists include a range of genres, "reading levels" and types of experiences; students should be encouraged to read texts that are interesting and explore exciting opportunities in DC.

Course Overview

Course Theme

In their 6th grade ELA class, students study texts about individuals who either embody heroism, are raised to be heroes, or are heroes because of the ways that they and their families handled themselves in times of adversity. By the end of this course, students will be able to describe what it means to be a hero today. They will know that heroes come from all walks of life and that being a hero looks very different for every person, depending on their culture and their community.



GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Unit 1: Courageous Contributors

How do individuals persevere in the face of challenge and struggle?

Unit 2: Growing Up

How can growing up be a cause for sadness and celebration?

Unit 3: Embracing Heritage

What is America's promise to immigrants, and does the country live up to that promise?

Unit 4: What Makes a Hero?

What is the hero's journey?



Suggested Summer Reading and Experience List

Students should research all suggested (optional) texts and select a few interesting texts to read over the summer!

	Suggested Texts	Suggested Experiences
Unit 1: Courageous Contributors	<i>All American Boys</i> by Jason Reynolds (F) <i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i> by Jacqueline Woodson (F) <i>Amina's Voice</i> by Hena Khan (F) <i>March Trilogy</i> by John Lewis (NF) <i>I, Too, Sing America</i> by Langston Hughes (P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Making a Way Out of No Way ○ Mobilizing Communities ▪ Newseum: Make Some Noise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Change Makers
Unit 2: Growing Up	<i>Tight</i> by Torrey Maldonado (F) <i>Miracle's Boys</i> by Jacqueline Woodson (F) <i>Fish in a Tree</i> by Lynda Mullaly Hunt (F) <i>Facing the Lion</i> by H. Viola and J. Lekuton (NF) <i>Ego Tripping and Other Poems for Young People</i> by Nikki Giovanni (P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Youth Leadership Summit ▪ Smithsonian Natural Museum of History: Eternal Life ▪ Monthly Youth Bus Boy and Poets Open Mic
Unit 3: Embracing Heritage	<i>Girl Rising</i> by Tanya Stone (F) <i>Finding My Hat</i> by John Son (F) <i>Sun is Also a Star</i> by Nicola Yoon (F) <i>Distance Between Us: A Memoir</i> by Reyna Grande (NF) <i>New Kids in Town</i> by Janet Bod (NF) <i>Ink Knows No Borders:</i> by Patrice Vecchione (P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Smithsonian Museum of Natural History: Hart-Celler Act ▪ Bittersweet Harvest ▪ Home Safe and Sound: Storytelling Night @ Bus Boy and Poets ▪ Smithsonian Museum Virtual Experience: Latino Stories
Unit 4: What Makes a Hero?	<i>I am Princess X</i> by Cherie Priest (790L) <i>Guys Read: Heroes and Villains</i> by Jon Scieszka (F) <i>Ahimsa</i> by Supriya Kelkar (F) <i>Hero</i> by Mike Lupica (F) <i>Teen Trailblazers: 30 Fearless Girls Who Changed the World Before They Were 20</i> by Jennifer Calvert (NF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Smithsonian Museum American History Museum: Superheroes ▪ Ted Talk: What Make a Hero? ▪ Harris' Heroes ▪ My Hero: Inspiring Stories

*Fiction (F), Non-Fiction (NF), Poetry (P)

Talk About It!

Consider using any of the following questions to spur discussion:

- Unit 1: What obstacles has this individual, or group, faced and how have they persevered?
- Unit 2: Who is responsible for standing up to injustice? What are some of the challenges that come along with growing up? How do different people deal with these challenges?
- Unit 3: What challenges, and opportunities, do immigrants and refugees in American encounter?
- Unit 4: How far should someone be willing to go to make a difference?

