

# WARDLAW + HARTRIDGE

## Middle School Summer Reading

## Entering Grade Six Reading Assignment

***“Books break the shackles of time – proof that humans can work magic.” – Carl Sagan***

Summer Reading is a valued part of The Wardlaw-Hartridge School experience. Students are exercising their minds and preparing for the year ahead.

This list of required reading for each grade has been created by the teachers in grades 6-8 and is designed both to challenge and engage. The books will be used in the first weeks of classes.

It is important to remember that these required books represent a minimum reading commitment. We encourage our students to go beyond the minimum and read additional books that will broaden their perspectives, their knowledge, and their ability to share in the life experiences of others.

### Entering Grade Six Reading Assignment

With this Summer Reading, as well as through their reading and work throughout the upcoming school year, students entering Grade Six are to consider the essential question, ***“What does it mean to be an individual?”***

#### 1. All students read TWO of the titles from the following list:

##### **Kimchi & Calamari, Rose Kent**

Joseph Calderaro has a serious problem. His social studies teacher has given him an impossible assignment: an essay about ancestors. Ancestors, as in dead people you're related to.

Joseph was adopted, but the only sure thing he knows about his birth family is that they shipped his diapered butt on a plane from Korea and he landed in New Jersey. How do you write about a family you've never known and at the same time manage all the other hassles that middle school mixes in the pot?

##### **First Test, Tamora Pierce**

Ten years after knighthood training was opened to both males and females, no girl has been brave enough to try. But knighthood is Keladry's one true desire, and so she steps forward to put herself to the test.

Up against the traditional hazing of pages and a grueling schedule, Kel faces challenges that seem insurmountable. Set apart from her fellow trainees by her gender, Kel's path to knighthood is difficult.

But she is determined to try, and she's making friends in the most unlikely places. One thing is for sure, Kel is not a girl to underestimate.

### **Uglies, Scott Westerfield**

Tally is almost 16 and breathlessly eager: On her birthday, like everyone else, she'll undergo extensive surgery to become a Pretty. She's only known life as an Ugly (everyone's considered hideous before surgery), whereas after she "turns," she'll have the huge eyes, perfect skin, and new bone structure that biology and evolution have determined to be objectively beautiful. New Pretties party all day long. But when friend Shay escapes to join a possibly mythical band of outsiders avoiding surgery, Tally must make a choice: who will she be?

### **El Deafo, CeCe Bell**

Cece loses her hearing from spinal meningitis, and takes readers through the arduous journey of learning to lip read and decipher the noise of her hearing aid, with the goal of finding a true friend. This warmly and humorously illustrated full-color graphic novel set in the suburban '70s has all the gripping characters and inflated melodrama of late childhood: a crush on a neighborhood boy, the bossy friend, the too-sensitive-to-her-Deafness friend, and the perfect friend, scared away. The characters are all rabbits. The antics of her hearing aid connected to a FM unit (an amplifier the teacher wears) are spectacularly funny. When Cece's teacher leaves the FM unit on, Cece hears everything: bathroom visits, even teacher lounge improprieties. It is her superpower. She deems herself El Deafo!

### **So B. It, Sarah Weeks**

You couldn't really tell about Mama's brain just from looking at her, but it was obvious as soon as she spoke. She had a high voice, like a little girl's, and she only knew 23 words. I know this for a fact, because we kept a list of the things Mama said tacked to the inside of the kitchen cabinet. Most of the words were common ones, like good and more and hot, but there was one word only my mother said: soof.

Although she lives an unconventional lifestyle with her mentally disabled mother and their doting neighbor, Bernadette, Heidi has a lucky streak that has a way of pointing her in the right direction. When a mysterious word in her mother's vocabulary begins to haunt her, Heidi's thirst for the truth leads her on a cross-country journey in search of the secrets of her past.

### **Call it Courage, Armstrong Sperry**

Mafatu has been afraid of the sea for as long as he can remember. Though his father is the Great Chief of Hikueru - an island whose seafaring people worship courage - Mafatu feels like an outsider. All his life he has been teased, taunted, and even blamed for storms on the sea.

Then at age fifteen, no longer willing to put up with the ridicule and jibes, Mafatu decides to take his fate into his own hands. With his dog, Uri, as his companion, Mafatu paddles out to sea, ready to face his fears. What he learns on his lonesome adventure will change him forever and make him a hero in the eyes of his people.

### **Chinese Cinderella, Adeline Yen Mah**

A Chinese proverb says, "Falling leaves return to their roots." In Chinese Cinderella, Adeline Yen Mah returns to her roots to tell the story of her painful childhood and her ultimate triumph and courage in the face of despair. Adeline's affluent, powerful family considers her bad luck after her mother dies giving birth to her. Life does not get any easier when her father remarries. She and her siblings are subjected to the disdain of her stepmother, while her stepbrother and stepsister are spoiled. Although Adeline wins prizes at school, they are not enough to compensate for what she really yearns for -- the love and understanding of her family.

### **Jefferson's Sons, Kimberly Brubaker**

Beverly, Harriet, Madison, and Eston are Thomas Jefferson's children by one of his slaves, Sally Hemings, and while they do get special treatment – better work, better shoes, even violin lessons – they are still slaves, and are never to mention who their father is. The lighter-skinned children have been promised a chance to escape into white society, but what does this mean for the children who look more like their mother? As each child grows up, their questions about slavery and freedom become tougher, calling into question the real meaning of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

**2. All students also need to read one book of choice. Students are invited to choose books that are both challenging and interesting to them. You can read another book on the list above or one listed on these two websites: [www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com) or <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook>.**