



# PROVIDENCE SCHOOL

*Boldly Christian. Unquestionably Academic.*

## 2026 MIDDLE SCHOOL REQUIRED SUMMER READING

### ENTERING 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE

Summer novel assignments afford an excellent opportunity to sharpen reading skills during non-academic time and to foster an enjoyment of reading in students. Upon returning to school in August, a test will be administered with the goal of holding students accountable for this assigned work.

Students should view summer reading as independent; they should not expect an extensive review of the assigned text once they return to school but should feel free to email their teacher should they have any questions about the book.

Suggestions for reading and comprehending successfully:

**Annotate:** Make notes in the text as you read. Highlight significant quotations. Ask questions in the margins of the book. Please note there are specific Annotation Guides for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade College Prep classes.

**Note taking:** Record characters, events, plot lines, and details from each chapter.

**Use the audio book:** Many students find success reading along while they listen to the book being read aloud. Many audio books can be found online for free.

**Create the environment:** Do not read while you are distracted or in a noisy environment; do not try to multitask while reading.

**Areas to focus on for the test:**

**Characters:** Be able to match characters with their descriptions or characters with quotations.

**Themes:** Be prepared to express larger themes of the book in writing.

**Plot:** Know details, even those that may seem insignificant, that show you have read the book carefully.

Please look at the chart on the next page to determine which book(s) to read for your course. Please note that some courses require two book selections.

**REQUIRED BOOKS:** Please read the book for your next course level by the first full week of school. The books are available online or at your local retailer.

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>BOOK</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade English Honors	<i>The Bronze Bow</i> by Eliza George Speare (See <i>The Bronze Bow Summer Reading Guide</i> attached.)
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade College Prep	<i>My Life In Dog Years</i> by Gary Paulsen (See <i>My Life In Dog Years Summer Reading Guide</i> attached.)
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade English Honors	<i>The False Prince</i> by Jennifer A. Nielson
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade English College Prep	<i>The False Prince</i> by Jennifer A. Nielson (See <i>The False Prince Summer Reading Guide</i> attached.)
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade English Honors	<i>The Traveler's Gift</i> by Andy Andrews
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade College Prep	<i>The Traveler's Gift</i> by Andy Andrews (See <i>The Traveler's Gift Summer Reading Guide</i> attached.)

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade English Honors

### The Bronze Bow Summer Reading Guide

This guide is designed to help you actively read *The Bronze Bow* over the summer. As you read, you will practice annotation skills, track figurative language, analyze settings, and observe character development.

#### Annotation Guide

! = surprising or important moment

? = confusing part or question

\* = important character moment

FL = figurative language

T = important theme or lesson

S = important setting detail

C = character development or change

#### Questions to Think About While Reading

How does Daniel change throughout the story?

What motivates different characters?

How do the settings affect the mood and events of the novel?

What examples of forgiveness, justice, fear, or courage appear in the story?

What figurative language helps create vivid imagery?

#### Figurative Language Tracker

Page	Type	Quote or Example	Meaning
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#### Character Development Notes

##### Daniel

Traits	Important Actions	Relationships	Character Growth
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## Leah

Traits   Important Actions   Relationships   Character Growth

## Joel

Traits   Important Actions   Relationships   Character Growth

## Thacia

Traits   Important Actions   Relationships   Character Growth

## Simon

Traits   Important Actions   Relationships   Character Growth

## Jesus

Traits   Important Actions   Relationships   Character Growth

## Setting Tracker

Setting   Description   Important Events   Impact on Story

# Summer Reading Guide 6<sup>th</sup> Grade College Prep: *My Life in Dog Years* by Gary Paulsen

Purpose: This is a *while-reading thinking* guide. Your annotations should show your thinking—not just help you find answers later. You may use this 2-page guide as a worksheet and fill out the questions on a separate piece of paper while you read, or you may annotate the answers into your book. Either way, **keep track of the page number of the evidence**. This guide is **not a graded assignment**; it is structured to target your focus to help you build a strong understanding of the key ideas you'll revisit later.

## Before You Begin Reading

- What do you already believe about the relationship between humans and dogs?
  - Why do you think authors are drawn to writing about animals, especially dogs?
  - What kinds of emotions or conflicts might arise in stories about humans and dogs?
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## While Reading: Individual Stories

### Understanding Each Story (Comprehension)

- Who are the main human and animal characters in this story?
  - What is the central situation or conflict?
  - How would you describe the dog's role (companion, protector, burden, symbol, etc.)?
  - What important events shape the relationship between the human and the dog?
  - Draw a plot diagram for each individual story. Identify and record the exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution.
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### Digging Deeper (Analysis)

- How does the human character treat the dog? What does this reveal about them?
  - How does the dog respond to the human? What might this suggest about loyalty, trust, or instinct?
  - Are there moments of tension or misunderstanding? What causes them?
  - How does the relationship change from the beginning to the end of the story?
  - What emotions does the author want you to feel about this relationship?
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### Making Meaning (Interpretation)

- What might the dog symbolize in this story (e.g., loyalty, innocence, survival, unconditional love)?
  - What does this story suggest about human nature?
  - What does the story seem to say about dependence—who depends on whom, and how?
  - Are humans portrayed as deserving of dogs' loyalty? Why or why not?
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### Across Multiple Stories (Synthesis)

- What patterns do you notice in how humans and dogs interact across different stories?
- Are dogs portrayed consistently, or do they serve different purposes in different stories?
- Do the stories show more positive or negative relationships? What might that suggest?
- How do different settings or circumstances affect the human-dog relationship?
- Which story presents the strongest connection? Why?
- Which story challenges your expectations the most?

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## Toward Theme (Big Ideas)

- What messages about loyalty or companionship appear again and again?
- What do the stories suggest about responsibility toward animals?
- How do the stories explore trust between humans and dogs?
- What do these relationships reveal about human strengths and weaknesses?
- What bigger idea about life or relationships could these stories be trying to communicate?

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## Final Reflection (Theme Development)

- Based on all the stories, what is one central message (theme) about the relationship between humans and dogs?
  - Theme is a complete sentence.
    - Example from *Number The Stars*:
      - Theme: Good will toward man and compassion should triumph over man-made divisions and prejudice.
      - Topics Related to Theme: bravery, compassion, hope, true friendship
- How do the multiple stories work together to develop this theme?
- Why do you think the author chose to tell this message through several smaller stories instead of one long narrative?
- How has your thinking about human-animal relationships changed after reading?

## Annotation Guide 7<sup>th</sup> Grade College Prep: *The False Prince* by Jennifer A. Nielsen

**Purpose:** This is a *while-reading thinking guide*. Your annotations should show your thinking—not just help you find answers later. You may use this 3-page guide as a worksheet and fill out the questions on a separate piece of paper while you read, or you may annotate the answers into your book. **Either way, keep track of the page number of the evidence.** This guide is not a graded assignment; it is structured to target your focus to help you build a strong understanding of the key ideas you'll revisit later.

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### Before You Begin Reading

- What makes someone a **true leader or ruler**? Who are examples (**plural**, more than one) of leaders in the Bible? What characteristics make them leaders?
  - Do you think **identity** is something you are born with, or something revealed through your choices and actions? What does the Bible say about identity?
  - What situations might cause someone to **pretend to be someone else**?
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### While Reading

#### Tracking the Story (Comprehension)

- Keep track of where the story takes place and how the **setting influences events**.
  - Identify the **main conflict** early on—what problem is driving the story forward?
  - Notice how the situation begins and what starts to **change the characters' lives**.
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### Characters & Roles

- Pay attention to the different types of characters:
    - Leaders vs. Followers
    - Helpers vs. Manipulators
  - Think about what each character **wants** and how far they are willing to go to get it.
  - Notice how characters are described by others vs. how they actually behave.
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### Motivation & Secrets (Analysis)

- Annotate moments where characters:
    - Hide information
    - Tell partial truths
    - Manipulate situations
  - Ask yourself: *Who can be trusted? Why or why not?*
  - Notice how **secrets and deception** impact relationships.
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## Conflict & Power

- Track different types of conflict:
    - Characters competing with each other
    - Struggles for authority or control
    - Internal struggles (fear, doubt, identity)
  - Notice how power shifts between characters over time.
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## Change Over Time

- Follow how relationships evolve:
    - Who grows closer?
    - Who becomes more suspicious or hostile?
  - Pay attention to how certain characters earn or lose **respect and trust**.
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## Key Moments & Turning Points

- Identify scenes where:
    - A major decision is made
    - A plan changes direction
    - New information changes what characters believe
  - Consider why these moments matter to the overall story.
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## Thinking, Logic, and Evidence

- Notice when characters:
    - Ask questions
    - Challenge what they are told
    - Try to prove something using reasoning
  - Annotate places where **evidence is questioned or reinterpreted**.
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## Appearance vs. Reality

- Pay close attention to moments where:
    - Someone is pretending
    - Someone is misunderstood
    - First impressions are incorrect
  - Ask: *What is real vs. what only appears to be true?*
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## Plot Development

As you read, think about how the story builds:

- What event truly **sets everything in motion**?
  - When do the stakes become more serious?
  - Where does the tension feel highest?
  - How does the story begin to resolve?
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## Big Ideas (Theme Development)

- What does the novel suggest about:
    - Leadership?
    - Identity?
    - Honesty vs. deception?
    - Power and responsibility?
  - How do characters prove who they really are?
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## Vocabulary & Language

- When you encounter unfamiliar words:
    - Use context clues to determine meaning
    - Consider why the author chose that word
  - Pay attention to words that suggest **disguise, emotion** and **judgment**.
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## Putting It All Together

- How do decisions made early in the story affect later events?
  - Which characters truly understand what is happening—and which do not?
  - How do relationships influence the outcome of important situations?
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## Final Reflection (After Reading)


- What does the novel suggest about what it means to be a **true leader**?
- How do characters reveal their true identities over time?
- What message does the story give about **trust, power, or honesty**? The message is the theme, meaning it is written as a full sentence.
  - Example from *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*: Take chances and be brave when moving toward the unknown.

# **The Traveler's Gift** by Andy Andrews Rising 8th Grade – College Prep

## **Summer Annotation Guide**

Purpose: This is a *while-reading thinking* guide. Your annotations should show your thinking—not just help you find answers later. You may use this 2-page guide as a worksheet and fill out the questions on a separate piece of paper while you read, or you may annotate the answers into your book. Either way, **keep track of the page number of the evidence**. This guide is **not a graded assignment**; it is structured to target your focus to help you build a strong understanding of the key ideas you'll revisit later.

**1. Plot & Turning Points:** Pay attention to moments that feel like they *shift* the story.


 As you read, ask:

- When do things start going wrong for David?
- What event changes his path completely?
- When do things begin to improve—or do they?
- Does the ending connect back to the beginning in any way?

 Annotate:

- “This is a turning point because...”
  - “Before this... now...”
- 

**2. Conflict:** Stories are built on conflict—both inside and outside the character.

 As you read, notice and ask:

- When David struggles with his own thoughts
- When problems come from outside forces
- When other characters face challenges
- Is this happening inside the character or outside?
- What is making this situation difficult?

 Annotate:

- “This shows a struggle with...”
  - “The problem here is...”
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**3. Big Ideas About Choices:** This novel focuses heavily on decisions and how they affect life.

 As you encounter important advice or lessons, ask:

- What is this character trying to teach David?
- How might this idea apply to real life?
- Does David believe it right away, or does he struggle?

 Annotate:

- “This seems like an important idea about...”
- “This could help someone who...”

 **Tip:** Pay attention to repeated phrases or ideas—they matter.

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**4. Character Growth:** Track how David changes over time.

 Think about:

- How does he see himself at the beginning?
- What words would you use to describe his mindset early on?
- What experiences challenge that mindset?
- By the end, what does he understand that he didn't before?

 Annotate:

- “At this point, David thinks...”
  - “This shows he is starting to change because...”
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**5. Important People He Meets:** David meets several significant figures. Each encounter matters.

👉 While reading, ask:

- Who is this person?
- Why might the author have chosen them?
- What idea or message do they represent?

✎ Annotate:

- “This person seems important because...”
  - “Their message is about...”
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**6. Theme:** Theme is not stated directly—you have to build it.

👉 Look for patterns:

- What keeps coming up again and again?
- What message is the story sending about success, failure, or life?
- How do David’s experiences connect?

✎ Annotate:

- “This might connect to a bigger idea about...”
  - “The story seems to be saying...”
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**7. Structure & Patterns:** Authors make deliberate choices in how they tell a story.

👉 Notice:

- Does anything repeat? (events, ideas, wording)
- How does the story begin and end?
- Does anything come “full circle”?

✎ Annotate:

- “This connects back to...”
  - “This pattern suggests...”
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**8. Important Lines & Quotes:** When something feels meaningful—pause and reflect.

👉 Ask:

- Why does this line stand out?
- What does it reveal about a character or idea?

✎ Annotate:

- “This means...”
  - “This is important because...”
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💡 **FINAL THINKING CHALLENGE:** As you read, keep this question in mind...

**How do our choices matter in our lives, and how might God be working through those choices?**  
Use your annotations to build your answer.