



# **2018 Coach's Manual**

The Reading Olympics is a core program of Philadelphia READS

# Welcome to the 2018 Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics



## Coach's Manual – Grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

We are glad you have chosen to participate in our annual citywide celebration of reading. The Reading Olympics program encourages students to share an enthusiasm for reading and promotes collaboration through teamwork in a citywide reading activity.

Your first task as a Reading Olympics coach is to form a team of no more than 12 students from grades 4, 5 and 6 to qualify as an Intermediate team, or grades 6, 7 and 8 to qualify as a Middle School team. Your school may register no more than 2 teams at each level. It is important to have a diverse grade level representation on your team if possible because the reading levels and interest levels of the books cover a wide range. In addition, your 4<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be experienced team members next year. Once the teams are formed, each Intermediate team collectively reads all of the 19 books on the official book list and each Middle School team collectively reads all 15 of the books. Your team will be assigned to one of the Reading Olympics sites for the competition and a site coordinator will contact you with information about the site. The location is determined by geographic considerations and final registration numbers. An award ceremony is held immediately after the competition. All participants are awarded ribbons. Everyone is a winner in this academic competition!

This manual will answer many questions as well as provide several useful forms. If you should need more information please feel free to email us at [programs@philareads.org](mailto:programs@philareads.org) or call us at (215) 279-7450.

Check the website frequently for the most up-to-date information: <http://philareads.org/reading-olympics/>

**The most important thing** is that the Reading Olympics is fun!

Our goals are:

- To foster a love of reading.
- To teach cooperation and teamwork.
- To expose participating children and youth to local college campuses.

*Celebrate your students' efforts, encourage them, model your love of reading, and demonstrate the power of teamwork.*

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## THE BASICS

### Reading Olympics Timeline

- Nov/Dec**
- Registration opens in the fall and closes in January, or when space is full
  - Make plans to purchase book sets
- January**
- Organize books for distribution to team
  - Identify team members
  - Set up reading list tracking form (see page 14)
  - Hold introductory meeting (see page 8) and set dates for further sessions
  - Duplicate book note form for children to use (see page 25)
  - Send home the parent information letter (page 26), student/parent contracts (page 28) and book list (page 29)
- February**
- READ, READ, READ
  - Check in with team members to make sure students are reading
- March**
- Begin holding regular meetings
  - **Practice holding mock competitions**
  - Check in with your site coordinator
  - ***Plan transportation to and from your site*** (you are responsible for permission slips and arranging and paying for a bus)
    - o Suggestion: In the past, some teams located close to each other have joined together to split the cost of a bus. This helps save money, time, and resources.
- April**
- Continue holding mock competitions
  - Choose a team captain(s) (see page 12)
  - Choose a team name
  - Review conduct and rules
  - Practice Olympics protocol (see page 12)
  - Arrange for t-shirt pick-up (watch for email with location and time)
  - Send team name and number of students in your team to your site coordinator
  - Reinforce rules and conduct
  - Collect all release forms to bring along on the day (see page 31)
  - Send home parent/guardian invitation letter
    - o Please include your specific competition date and location (see page 27)
- May**
- Decorate t-shirts
  - Attend Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics (don't forget your Release forms!)
  - Complete Coach and/or Student Surveys
  - Send out press release to your local paper
  - Have a great time – Everyone is a Winner!

## Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics General Guidelines

Teams are made up of 6 to 12 students in grades 4 through 6 and 6 through 8. Teams are encouraged to be inclusive and have a mix of gender, age, and reading ability.

Teams will be asked questions about each of the 15-19 books. Intermediate teams (4<sup>th</sup> grade through 6<sup>th</sup>) answer 20 questions. Middle School teams (6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>) answer 15 questions. Team members collaborate on the answers, and one team member (the team captain or designee) responds. Teams have only 15 seconds to answer the question.

Each team participates in three (3) rounds of 15 or 20 questions each. Each question answered correctly earns one point for the team. If the first team cannot answer their question in 15 seconds, the second team will have an opportunity to do so, earning an additional point for their team (see the protocol on page 12).

Team scores are cumulative for all rounds. Teams are awarded blue, red, or green ribbons based on the total number of points earned.

Grade	Green Ribbon	Red Ribbon	Blue Ribbon
Intermediate	Below 30	30 - 49	50 - 60
Middle School	Below 25	25 - 34	35 - 45

Teams are encouraged to come up with a team name such as “Reading Rascals.” Teams are also encouraged to decorate the back of their official Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics T-shirt with their team name and logo to help create unity and excitement. **These t-shirts must be worn to the competition, usually over school uniforms.** Considerate and courteous behavior is expected from all participants. Your team represents their organization or school. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend the competition as spectators.

### Coach Responsibilities

One of the major responsibilities of the team coach is to set the **appropriate tone** for the competition by **reinforcing the two goals** of the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics:

- **To instill a love of reading in young students and**
- **To teach cooperation and teamwork.**

A team coach:

- Meets with the team periodically to coordinate the books to make sure all books are being read before the competition in May. It is the expectation that teams will practice at their center, library, or school by using practice questions, creating their own questions, and holding book discussions on an ongoing basis.
- Is responsible for arranging and paying for transportation to and from the event.
- Communicates with the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics staff as required.
- Accompanies the team to the Olympics event and supervises the team participants.
- Encourages parents to support at-home reading, offer to serve as escorts, and to attend the event.
- Prepares the team by practicing the competition protocol (see page 12).
- To preview all resources before you use them with your students to be sure that they are appropriate for your particular group.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What are the goals of the Reading Olympics?***

A.: To foster a love of reading, to teach cooperation and teamwork, and to expose children to local college campuses.

### **Getting Started / Registration**

#### ***How do I register a team?***

A.: Registration opens **November 1, 2017**. Whether you are registering an **Intermediate Team** (grades 4-6) or a **Middle School Team** (grades 6-8) you register online. Email [programs@philareads.org](mailto:programs@philareads.org) to get access to the online application.

#### ***How will I know if my registration has been received?***

A.: You will receive an email from the Philadelphia READS office. Registration requires completion of the registration form, payment of the \$25 registration fee, and completion of a contract that must be signed by the team coach and the principal.

#### ***When does registration close?***

A.: January 5, 2018 is our deadline, but registration will close when all slots are filled should that happen sooner.

#### ***Why is grade 6 listed as both Intermediate and Middle School?***

A.: This is because some elementary schools go up to grade 6, but some middle schools start at grade 6.

#### ***What happens if I am put on a waiting list?***

A.: If a team drops out, or more space is secured, you will be called in the order that you registered.

#### ***How many teams may I register?***

A.: For 2018, you may register:

Intermediate teams – 2 teams (12 students + 2 alternates for each team).

Middle School teams – 2 teams (12 students + 2 alternates for each team).

**No more than 14 students per team** may attend the competition in May for either age group.

#### ***If I register an Intermediate team and a Middle School team will they be competing on the same day/place?***

A.: No. The Middle School competition is held on a different day or week. Competition dates are determined by the colleges and universities who host us.

#### ***Why are there limitations on the number of teams and students per team?***

A.: We have limited space at our host colleges and universities. We'd like as many schools/groups to participate as possible.

### **The Books**

#### ***How do I find the book list?***

A.: The Intermediate list of 19 books and the Middle School list of 15 books will be posted on our website when registration opens. A tracking form can be found on page 14 and a list to be sent home to parents on page 29. Please be sure to use the Philadelphia READS book list - not the book list counties use.

***Where can I get the books?***

A.: Teams are responsible for finding their own books. Towne Book Center & Café (townebc.com) is the vendor with whom we are working this year. Books are discounted at 30% and may be ordered as a set or individually. Shipping and handling charges will be \$10.00. All orders are shipped directly to your school via FEDEX. They accept purchase orders (School District of Philadelphia vendor number 1012592), school checks, or credit cards. Please be sure that you let them know which level book collection you need. Individual books may also be found via Scholastic and Amazon.

Often the Philadelphia READS Book Bank has some of the books; stop in on Monday and Wednesday afternoons (2:30 to 6:00 pm) during the school year. ([www.philareads.org](http://www.philareads.org))

***What happens if I am unable to get one of the titles on the list?***

A.: Each team is responsible for having read all the titles on the lists. Each team will be asked questions about each of the books. There are no exceptions.

***Where can I get sample questions for the books?***

A.: Sample questions will be provided on the website in the spring.

***How are the books chosen?***

A.: A committee of librarians and educators carefully choose titles that represent a wide range of interest and ability. The list includes books that reflect the cultures and ethnicities of the city of Philadelphia.

***Some of the books on the list are very easy/hard for my group. Why?***

A.: We recommend that teams are made up of a mix of the three grades and therefore we provide books with a range of reading levels. We hope that teams are composed of a variety of readers and not just the “best readers” in the school. Remember, our goal is to foster a love of reading!

**The Team Coach*****What is the role of the team coach?***

A.: The primary task of the team coach is to “hook” your students on books. The team coach makes sure the team is fully prepared to compete, is responsible for making the books available to the students, arranging transportation for the team to get to and from the competition, and communicating with the Reading Olympics staff as required.

It is also our expectation that you will preview all resources before you use them with your students to be sure that they are appropriate for your particular group. For more information on expectations see page 4 and page 8.

**The Competition*****When will I know the date and location for the competition for my team?***

A.: You will receive an email after registration has closed from a site coordinator.

***What time is the competition?***

A: Check in begins at about 9:30 am. There are 3 rounds of competition. The first round usually begins about 10:00 am. *The actual time depends upon the arrival of teams.* Each round lasts approximately 30 minutes. The award ceremony begins as soon as the third round is completed. We try to begin as early as possible so that we can have everyone back on their buses no later than 12:30 pm.

***Why is the competition in May?***

A.: The colleges and universities that we use to hold our competitions are able to provide the space we need during the week between the spring semester and the first summer session.

***Why aren't lunches or snacks provided?***

A.: Most of the colleges and universities do not allow food in their classrooms and auditoriums. In addition, we have no funds to purchase lunch for the students. Many schools have lunch celebrations for their teams when they return to school.

***Why don't the questioners (moderators) read the books first?***

A.: The moderators and scorekeepers are volunteers. We require about 200 volunteers to run the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics. We rely on businesses, civic groups, and retirees to serve as volunteers. We are grateful for their help and cannot require them to read the books.

***Why don't we have one overall winner?***

A.: Our goal is to foster a love of reading and to teach cooperation and teamwork.

***My students and I love the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics. Is there a way I can help support the Olympics?***

A.: Yes! You can make a donation to Philadelphia READS. Your generous donation supports the Reading Olympics and the other Philadelphia READS core programs.

You can either donate directly on our website [www.philareads.org](http://www.philareads.org) or through **United Way**.



Please quote United Way #12682

If you purchase books from Amazon, visit [www.philareads.org](http://www.philareads.org) first, select the Amazon link, which will take you straight to their website, but a small donation will be paid to us at no extra cost to you.

***If I have any questions about anything to do with the Reading Olympics, who should I contact?***

A.: Call or email our office at [programs@philareads.org](mailto:programs@philareads.org) or (215) 279-7450.



## SAMPLE MEETING PLANS

### Introductory Session

Once you have assembled your team you will need to give an overview of the Reading Olympics and how often you will meet, etc.

- **One of the goals of the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics is to teach children to work together cooperatively.** Therefore, it is advised that you begin with a team building activity and include these types of activities whenever you meet with the team. Some activities are included in this manual (page 9).
- Introduce each of the books. Prepare a short book talk for each of the books. In this manual, you have a synopsis of each book and tips for introducing the book. There is usually a blurb on the back of most of the books, to guide you if you are unfamiliar with them. For more information on each book, the Free Library website ([www.library.phila.gov](http://www.library.phila.gov)) or Amazon ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)) are good sources of information.

You may want to read part of the first chapter of the books to your team to get them interested. It is important to be enthusiastic about the books, and it is helpful to refer a book to a particular student if you know their interests. There are some suggestions for book talks in this manual (page 10). Some of the titles are more appropriate for older readers due to more mature content, and some are geared to the younger reader on your team. There is a range of reading levels as well.

***Remember that one goal of the Olympics is to foster a love of reading!***

- Introduce the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics book notes form (or any system you like) which is included in this manual (remind them that May is a long time off, and they will want to take notes now).
- Explain your procedures for borrowing and returning the books.
- Discuss the number of books that each team member is responsible for reading (a good team building activity is to have the team decide how to divide up the list so that each book is read by more than one person).

### Subsequent Meetings

The number of meetings you hold will increase as you get closer to May. The initial meetings will most likely be borrowing/returning meetings with students providing brief descriptions of what they have read so far.

Included in this manual are several activities you might use at your meetings to enhance your team's understanding of the books.

## Team Building Activities

**Student Interviews:** Pair up your students, have them interview each other (name, age, favorite food, favorite type of book, etc.). Pairs introduce each other to the team.

**Getting to Know You:** The group sits in a circle. Each member gives their name and an animal that describes their mood or personality. Each member repeats what the previous person has said before adding their own information.

**People Hunt:** Using a list of experiences and attributes students try to find students who match the category and sign on the line. See who can fill up the grid. Example:

Loves sports _____	Favorite color is blue _____	Loves science fiction _____	Has been to New York _____
Favorite vegetable is carrots _____	Loves to cook _____	Has 2 brothers _____	Favorite season is winter _____

**4-3-2-1:** (In small groups) students take turns suggesting something they all have in common, such as “Do we all like chocolate ice cream?” If all students do, the person who suggested it writes it next to the 4, if only two do it is recorded next to the 2, etc.

**Character Hunt:** Have students work in pairs or small groups to complete a character hunt. For example:

1. Who was frightened by a spider? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who tried to steal Christmas? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Who befriended Wilbur the pig? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who wouldn't eat green eggs and ham? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who had to be home by midnight before the magic wore off? \_\_\_\_\_

**Build Team Identity:** Teams can create team names, handshakes, cheers, and logos.

References: *Cooperative Learning* by Spencer Kagan

Resources:

- <http://www.skillsconverged.com/FreeTrainingMaterials/tabid/258/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/606/Team-Building-Activities-for-Kids.aspx>
- [http://www.teampedia.net/wiki/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://www.teampedia.net/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page)
- <http://wilderdom.com/games/InitiativeGames.html>

*“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”*  
Henry Ford

## Literature Activities

**Book Talks:** Tell one episode, or adopt the accent and mannerisms of a character in the book while describing one of the other characters through his or her eyes; or evoke a mood ("Have you ever felt as if somebody is watching you, even though there's nobody there but you?"). But whatever aspect of the book you select, make sure it's representative of the book. For more information about book talks visit this website:

<http://nancykeane.com/booktalks>

**Musical Books:** This activity is a good way to introduce the books to your team. Have students sit in a circle. Give each student one of the books. Play some music as the students pass the books. Stop the music and have the students look through the book they are holding. Start up the music again after a minute or two and have them pass the books until the music stops.

**Story Webs:** All you need for this game is a ball of string and a story to share. Have your students sit in a circle on the floor. One of the students gives a hint for one of the books. Then the student holds onto the end of a ball of string and rolls the ball to a student who can name the book. This is repeated until the all students have contributed. You will have a web when complete.

**Reader's Bingo:** Brainstorm 25 to 30 words (including characters, setting, author, etc.) that are critical to the different Reading Olympics titles. Give your students 9" x 12" newsprint and have them fold it into nine squares. Then have the students write nine of the Olympics titles into each of the squares on their sheet. Give them markers. Randomly call words. When a student has filled in a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal row, he/she should call out, "Books."

**Book Charades:** Divide your group into two teams. Team members take turns selecting a title and acting out the title for their team. The teacher monitors the time (2- or 3-minute maximum). Students should follow standard charade signs and gestures.

**Picture This:** Have titles of books on index cards. Place the cards in a stack face down. Then divide the group into teams. Give one of the team members a marker and ask him/her to take a card from the top of the stack. Have the student draw pictures or figures on a flip chart to describe the book title (words, letters, or numbers cannot be used) and ask his/her teammates to guess what the title is.

**You Be the Character:** Choose one child to be "It." Tape a paper on the child's back that has the name of a character from one of the Reading Olympics books written on it. Have the child stand in front of the class and turn his/her back so the paper can be read by the other students. The child who is "It" chooses children one at a time to give clues as to the identity of the character, making a guess after each clue. After a designated number of unsuccessful guesses, reveal the character. If the child who is "It" guesses correctly before that number is reached, his/her turn is completed. He/she then chooses another player.

**What's My Line:** Have the students pick out a character from one of the books. They should know the character well enough to be able to answer yes-or-no questions about the character. The person who is "it" stands in front of the class and answers the yes-or-no questions given to them by the other students. A student who thinks he/she knows who the character is can guess. If the student guesses wrong, he/she is out for that session. Whoever guesses correctly gets to be "it."

**Book Jeopardy:** Choose four titles. Write three or four questions and answers about each book. Assign point values to each question/answer. Have students, in teams, choose a book and an answer. They have to come up with a question for that answer.

**Book Cover:** Students can create a cover or a dust jacket for a book.

**Comic Frames:** Students can illustrate the story in a short, concise format. Using a six-paneled comic strip frame students can create a story map, summarizing the book that they've read. Each panel retells a particular detail or explains a literary element (such as setting or character) from the story.

**Book Boosts:** Students give one-minute raves about books they've read. This activity is useful at the beginning or end of a meeting to encourage others to read the book.

**Book Talks:** We recommend doing a book talk to introduce each book. For more information about book talks, please visit <http://nancykeane.com/booktalks>. There may be a review for a particular book you are discussing as additional books are added each month.

**Wikispace:** You can create a Reading Olympics project that all your students can use.

Log onto [www.wikispaces.com](http://www.wikispaces.com) and create an account. As a manager, you can assign your readers a username and password. (They don't even need to register for the site.)

You make pages for each book your group is reading, and you give the kids in your group access to those pages. Everyone who has access to a page can then edit and post questions and answers on that page.

Resources:

Scholastic: <http://www.scholastic.com/>

Read Write Think: <http://www.readwritethink.org/>

**Coach Tips:** Veteran coaches have offered these ideas ...

### Wikispace Ideas

I had the kids initial their posts so I could keep track of everyone's contributions. When we met to discuss the books each week at lunch, we opened the Wikispace to the book we were reading and used the kids' questions and answers to guide our discussions.

As the competition drew closer the kids were able to go back and study the questions and answers to prepare.

*Stacy Schwab – Hancock School*

We set up a Wikispace for the students to share book reviews, view book trailers and discuss books together.

*Kristen Fleming – Calvary Christian Academy*

During meetings, students who had read the same book paired up to create and present a quick (2 minute) skit retelling the book. That had SO much fun preparing, and performing their skits for each other. It helps them focus on the main characters and plot points.

*Cecelia Osowski,  
Logan Hope School*

After children finish their book they work on a poster. We suggest filling it up with lots of stuff: main ideas, main characters and lots of little details. We try to have at least one "expert" for each book. That way everyone can feel involved.

*Peggy Kaplan,  
Christopher Columbus Charter School*

*JoAnn Yaworski-Usher from  
Richard Allen Prep. Charter  
School uses Response  
Journals. The students  
summarize chapters, express  
a feeling and substantiate the  
feeling with a quote from the  
book. "The students really  
liked this format because it  
gave them a vehicle from  
which to discuss the books."*

## DOWN TO THE WIRE – PREPARING FOR THE COMPETITION

As you get closer to the competition you will want to teach your team the protocol for answering the questions as a team. One team member is designated as the team captain (you may have one captain per round or use the same student for all three rounds).

### Protocol

- The team sits in a circle. The team captain is the only one allowed to answer a question for the team.\* When the moderator asks your team a question, the team huddles up, and all students who have read that book and know the answer indicate by a signal (putting their hands in the center of the circle, thumbs up, etc.). The captain hears each response and comes to a consensus on the correct answer. The captain responds by saying, “\_\_\_\_\_ team says the answer is \_\_\_\_\_.”

*\*A captain may designate a particular student to give the answer for him or her, saying “I designate \_\_\_\_ to answer.”*

- Your team will need to practice answering in **15 seconds**. Students need to know they can’t waste time. If they don’t know the answer they should not signal the captain, even if they have read the book.
- Your team will also need to practice answering the other team’s questions using the “**quiet huddle**.” If the other team gives a wrong answer or cannot give an answer, your team can earn an extra point by answering the question correctly immediately after the other team has been ruled incorrect. The “quiet huddle” prepares your team to answer without giving away any information.

### At the Award Ceremony

- After the 3<sup>rd</sup> round (approximately 11:30) you will be directed to the auditorium for the Award Ceremony. Please seat your students as quickly as possible. Space is usually at a premium so help us out by using all the seats in your section.
- School/Organizations will be announced in alphabetical order.
- A representative from the team will be asked to come up and receive the certificates and ribbons for the team. It would be helpful to have that person sitting in an aisle seat.
- To ease congestion at the end of the ceremony please wait to be dismissed from the auditorium.

### Don't forget...

- Logistics: to plan to get to the site on time, to bring any school required trip slips, to bring the release forms (page 31).
- Comportment: to act courteously and considerately at our host sites. We need to leave the rooms as we found them! Follow the rules; most sites do not permit food in the rooms or auditoriums.
- Release Forms (p.31): **one must be signed for each student.** Collect and give them to your site coordinator when you arrive at the Olympics. You are responsible for making sure that any student without a signed form is not photographed.
- Dress: to have students wear their official **Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics T-shirts** (usually over their school uniforms).
- Sportsmanship: the moderator has the final word, no arguing! Remember that the moderators are volunteers, without whom we would not be able to hold this event. Most likely they have not read the book. Coaches may quietly approach the moderator if she/he feels an answer may indeed be correct.
- Surveys: be prepared to complete a coach and/or student survey.

Have fun!

													Team member ←	Title ↓
														A Long Walk to Water
														Book Scavenger
														Crenshaw
														Fish in a Tree
														Ghetto Cowboy
														Growing Up Pedro
														Invisible Emmie
														Moo
														Morning Girl
														Ms. Bixby's Last Day
														P.S. Be Eleven
														Softball Surprise
														Song of the Trees
														The Fantastic Ferris Wheel: Story Inventor George Ferris
														The Great Shelby Holmes: Girl Detective
														The Mighty Odds
														Three Times Lucky
														What Milly Did
														Who Was Alexander Hamilton?

Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics 2018  
Intermediate (Grades 4 -6) Reading List Tracking form

												Title ↓	Team member ←		
														A Night Divided	
														Anything But Typical	
														Cosmic	
														Freak the Mighty	
														Full Cicada Moon	
														Ghost	
														Hour of the Bees	
														Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard	
														March One	
														Pax	
														Skellig	
														The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind	
														The Duel: The Parallel Lives of Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr	
														War Horse	
														When My Name Was Keoko	

Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics 2018  
Middle School (Grades 6 - 8) Reading List Tracking Form



## Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics 2018

### Intermediate List Book Summaries

*These synopses are **not** meant to be read aloud or given to students, but are provided to help you, the Coach, introduce the books to your students in order to help them choose books appropriate to their interests, age and reading level. We recommend doing a book talk to introduce each book. For more information about booktalks visit this website: <http://nancykene.com/booktalks/>. It is our expectation that you will preview all resources before you use them with your students to be sure that they are appropriate for your particular group.*

#### **A Long Walk to Water** by Linda Sue Park

The New York Times bestseller *A Long Walk to Water* begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about two eleven-year-olds in Sudan, a girl in 2008 and a boy in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two hours' walk from her home: she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the "lost boys" of Sudan, refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay. Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor, and his story goes on to intersect with Nya's in an astonishing and moving way.

#### **Book Scavenger** by Jennifer Chambliss Bertman

For twelve-year-old Emily, the best thing about moving to San Francisco is that it's the home city of her literary idol: Garrison Griswold, book publisher and creator of the online sensation *Book Scavenger* (a game where books are hidden in cities all over the country and clues to find them are revealed through puzzles). Upon her arrival, however, Emily learns that Griswold has been attacked and is now in a coma, and no one knows anything about the epic new game he had been poised to launch. Then Emily and her new friend James discover an odd book, which they come to believe is from Griswold himself, and might contain the only copy of his mysterious new game.

Racing against time, Emily and James rush from clue to clue, desperate to figure out the secret at the heart of Griswold's new game—before those who attacked Griswold come after them, too.

#### **Crenshaw** by Katherine Applegate

The story of a 10-year-old boy whose imaginary friend helps him cope with a family crisis. Jackson, his parents, and his five-year-old sister once again are staring down the barrel of an impending eviction notice. What frustrates Jackson isn't just the lack of money: it's his artistically minded parents' tendency to gloss over their woes with humor and cheer rather than acknowledging the reality of their situation. It's understandably a shock to Jackson when an old friend reappears: Crenshaw, a seven-foot-tall talking cat, who first came into his life several years ago when the boy and his family were living out of their car shortly after his father was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Skeptical Jackson tries to dismiss Crenshaw as a figment of his imagination, but the cat's words of wisdom start to resonate with him.

### **The Fantastic Ferris Wheel: The Story of Inventor George Ferris** by Betsy Harvey Kraft

The World's Fair in Chicago, 1893, was to be a spectacular event: architects, musicians, artists, and inventors worked on special exhibits to display the glories of their countries. But the Fair's planners wanted something really special, something on the scale of the Eiffel Tower, which had been constructed for France's fair three years earlier. At last, engineer George Ferris had an idea—a crazy, unrealistic, gigantic idea. He would construct a twenty-six-story tall observation wheel.

The planners didn't think it could be done. They called it a "monstrosity." It wouldn't be safe. But George fought for his design. Finally, in December 1892, with only four months to go until the fair, George was given permission to build his wheel. He had to fight the tight schedule, bad weather, and general disapproval. Against all odds, the Ferris Wheel turned out to be the talk of the Fair, and proof that dreaming big dreams could pay off. Today, George's Ferris Wheel is an icon of adventure and amusement throughout the world.

### **Fish in a Tree** by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her—and to everyone—than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike.

### **Ghetto Cowboy** by G. Neri

Suddenly, something big and white bumps up against the car, and I jump. I think I must be dreamin', 'cause I just saw a horse run by. When Cole's mom dumps him in the mean streets of Philly to live with the dad he's never met, the last thing he expects to see is a horse - let alone a stable full of them. He may not know much about cowboys, but what he knows for sure is that cowboys ain't black, and they don't live in the 'hood. But here, horses are a way of life, and soon Cole's days of skipping school and getting in trouble in Detroit have been replaced by shoveling muck and trying not to get stomped on.

At first, all Cole can think about is how to ditch these ghetto cowboys and get home, but when the City threatens to shut down the stables - and take away the horse that Cole has come to think of as his own - he knows it's time to step up and fight back. Inspired by the real-life inner-city horsemen of Philadelphia and Brooklyn, Ghetto Cowboy is a timeless urban western about learning to stand up for what's right the Cowboy Way.

### **The Great Shelby Holmes: Girl Detective** by Elizabeth Eulberg

Shelby Holmes is not your average sixth grader. She's nine years old, barely four feet tall, and the best detective her Harlem neighborhood has ever seen--always using logic and a bit of pluck (which yes, some might call "bossiness") to solve the toughest crimes.

When eleven-year-old John Watson moves downstairs, Shelby finds something that's eluded her up till now: a friend. The easy-going John isn't sure of what to make of Shelby, but he soon finds himself her most-trusted (read: only) partner in a dog-napping case that'll take both their talents to crack.

### **Growing Up Pedro** by Matt Tavares

Before Pedro Martínez pitched the Red Sox to a World Series championship, before he was named to the All-Star team eight times, before he won the Cy Young three times, he was a kid from a place called Manoguayabo in the Dominican Republic. Pedro loved baseball more than anything, and his older brother Ramon was the best pitcher he'd ever seen. He'd dream of the day he and his brother could play together in the major leagues—and here, Matt Tavares tells the story of how that dream came true. In a fitting homage to a modern day baseball star, the acclaimed author-illustrator examines both Pedro Martínez's improbable rise to the top of his game and the power that comes from the deep bond between brothers.

### **Invisible Emmie** by Terri Libenson

This is the story of two totally different girls -- quiet, shy, artistic Emmie and popular, outgoing, athletic Katie – and how their lives unexpectedly intersect one day, when an embarrassing note falls into the wrong hands.

All the crushes, humiliations, boredom, and drama of middle school are compressed into one surprising day in this extraordinary novel.

This graphic novel by Terri Libenson, creator of the internationally syndicated, Reuben Award-winning comic strip *The Pajama Diaries*, is perfect for fans of Raina Telgemeier and Jennifer L. Holm.

### **The Mighty Odds** by Amy Ignatow

Martina, Nick, Farshad, and Cookie are classmates who barely know one another. After a field trip to Philadelphia, the four students end up on the same bus back to school. Disaster strikes when the bus gets in a bad accident. Nick is flung from the vehicle while Martina, Farshad, and Cookie are trapped. The tweens manage to save one another and their substitute teacher, Mr. Friend, in the nick of time, with the help of a local Amish boy. Unfortunately, the accident is only the beginning of trouble for this quartet. After getting out of the hospital, each notices that something is different. Martina's eyes change colors. Cookie can read minds when it involves directions. Farshad has incredible strength...in his thumbs. Nick can teleport but only four inches to the left. What actually happened in the crash, and why is their substitute teacher after them? Ignatow brings humor and a big dose of silliness to this new series. Superpowers always seem tempting, but, as these four tweens discover, there's a downside that comes with their new abilities.

### **Moo** by Sharon Creech

Following one family's momentous move from the city to rural Maine, an unexpected bond develops between twelve-year-old Reena and one very ornery cow. Now available in paperback, this uplifting tale reminds us that if we're open to new experiences, life is full of surprises.

When Reena, her little brother, Luke, and their parents first move to Maine, Reena doesn't know what to expect. She's ready for beaches, blueberries, and all the lobster she can eat. Instead, her parents "volunteer" Reena and Luke to work for an eccentric neighbor named Mrs. Falala, who has a pig named Paulie, a cat named China, a snake named Edna—and that stubborn cow, Zora.

This heartwarming story, told in a blend of poetry and prose, reveals the bonds that emerge when we let others into our lives.

### **Morning Girl** by Michael Dorris

A peaceful, tropical world is the setting for *Morning Girl*, a simple yet rich glimpse into the lives of a young sister and brother. *Morning Girl* and *Star Boy* grapple with timeless, universal issues such as experiencing simultaneous anger and love toward family members and the quest to discover the true self. As all siblings do, these children respond to, play off of, and learn from each other. Precisely where *Morning Girl* and *Star Boy* are growing up is not revealed, but it's clearly a place where the residents have no modern amenities. Living in harmony with nature is a necessary priority here, and--given the descriptive names of the characters--a Native Indian culture seems likely. But not until the epilogue do readers discover that the story takes place in 1492. Suddenly we realize that the strange-looking visitors *Morning Girl* welcomes to shore are not as harmless as they may appear. The excerpt from Christopher Columbus's journal provides an ominous footnote: these gentle people, who seem so very much like us, will not be permitted their idyllic existence much longer.

### **Ms. Bixby's Last Day** by John David Anderson

Everyone knows there are different kinds of teachers. The boring ones, the mean ones, the ones who try too hard, the ones who stopped trying long ago. The ones you'll never remember, and the ones you want to forget. Ms. Bixby is none of these. She's the sort of teacher who makes you feel like school is somehow worthwhile. Who recognizes something in you that sometimes you don't even see in yourself. Ms. Bixby is one-of-a-kind.

Topher, Brand, and Steve know this better than anyone. And so when Ms. Bixby unexpectedly announces that she won't be able to finish the school year, they come up with a risky plan, more of a quest, really, to give Ms. Bixby the last day she deserves. Through the three very different stories they tell, we begin to understand what Ms. Bixby means to each of them—and what the three of them mean to each other.

### **P.S. Be Eleven** by Rita Williams-Garcia

After spending the summer in Oakland, California, with their mother and the Black Panthers, Delphine, Vonetta, and Fern arrive home with a newfound streak of independence. The sisters aren't the only ones who have changed. Now Pa has a girlfriend. Uncle Darnell returns from Vietnam a different man. But Big Ma still expects Delphine to keep her sisters in line. That's much harder now that Vonetta and Fern refuse to be bossed around. Besides her sisters, Delphine's got plenty of other things to worry about—like starting sixth grade, being the tallest girl in her class, and dreading the upcoming school dance. The one person she confides in is her mother, Cecile. Through letters, Delphine pours her heart out and receives some constant advice: to be eleven while she can.

### **Softball Surprise** by Jake Maddox and Katie Wood

Jo can't wait for the summer softball league to start. She knows this will be the year she's on a winning team. But when she finds out some surprising information, Jo has to decide between the team that wins and the team she's come to love.

### **Song of the Trees** by Mildred Taylor

With the depression bearing down on her family, there isn't much that Cassie Logan can count on anymore. But there is one thing that hasn't changed—the whispering trees outside her window. Cassie's trees, which have stood for centuries, are a great source of comfort to her. But they are also worth a lot of money. With Cassie's daddy gone to lay tracks for the railroad, it seems like no one can stop Mr. Andersen from forcing Big Ma to sell their valuable trees. How can Cassie sit by and watch them disappear? The beloved heroine of "Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry" enchants us again in this story of strength and pride.

### **Three Times Lucky** by Sheila Turnage

Rising sixth grader Miss Moses LoBeau lives in the small town of Tupelo Landing, NC, where everyone's business is fair game and no secret is sacred. She washed ashore in a hurricane eleven years ago, and she's been making waves ever since. Although Mo hopes someday to find her "upstream mother," she's found a home with the Colonel—a café owner with a forgotten past of his own—and Miss Lana, the fabulous café hostess. She will protect those she loves with every bit of her strong will and tough attitude. So when a lawman comes to town asking about a murder, Mo and her best friend, Dale Earnhardt Johnson III, set out to uncover the truth in hopes of saving the only family Mo has ever known. Full of wisdom, humor, and grit, this timeless yarn will melt the heart of even the sternest Yankee.

### **What Milly Did: The Remarkable Pioneer of Plastics Recycling** by Elise Moser and Scot Ritchie

Milly Zantow wanted to solve the problem of her town's full landfill and ended up creating a global recycling standard — the system of numbers you see inside the little triangle on plastics. This is the inspiring story of how she mobilized her community, creating sweeping change to help the environment.

On a trip to Japan in 1978, Milly noticed that people were putting little bundles out on the street each morning. They were recycling — something that hadn't taken hold in North America. When she returned to Sauk City, Wisconsin, she discovered that her town's landfill was nearing capacity, and that plastic made up a large part of the garbage. No one was recycling plastics.

### **Who Was Alexander Hamilton?** by Pam Pollock and Meg Belviso

Born in the British West Indies and orphaned as a child, Alexander Hamilton made his way to the American Colonies and studied to become a lawyer. He joined a local militia during the American Revolution, rose to the rank of Major General, and became the chief aide to General George Washington. After the war, he became the first U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. He founded the Bank of New York and The New York Post newspaper. He served as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention and is also celebrated as a co-author of The Federalist Papers, a series of essays that are still used today to interpret the U.S. Constitution.

The end of his life became a national scandal when he was shot and killed in a duel with then-Vice President Aaron Burr.

## Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics 2018

### Middle School List Book Summaries

*These synopses are **not** meant to be read aloud or given to students, but are provided to help you, the Coach, introduce the books to your students in order to help them choose books appropriate to their interests, age and reading level. We recommend doing a book talk to introduce each book. For more information about booktalks visit this website: <http://nancykene.com/booktalks/>. It is our expectation that you will preview all resources before you use them with your students to be sure that they are appropriate for your particular group.*

#### **A Night Divided** by Jennifer Nielsen

With the rise of the Berlin Wall, twelve-year-old Gerta finds her family suddenly divided. She, her mother, and her brother Fritz live on the eastern side, controlled by the Soviets. Her father and middle brother, who had gone west in search of work, cannot return home. Gerta knows it is dangerous to watch the wall, to think forbidden thoughts of freedom, yet she can't help herself. She sees the East German soldiers with their guns trained on their own citizens; she, her family, her neighbors and friends are prisoners in their own city.

But one day, while on her way to school, Gerta spots her father on a viewing platform on the western side, pantomiming a peculiar dance. Then, when she receives a mysterious drawing, Gerta puts two and two together and concludes that her father wants Gerta and Fritz to tunnel beneath the wall, out of East Berlin. However, if they are caught, the consequences will be deadly. No one can be trusted. Will Gerta and her family find their way to freedom?

#### **Anything But Typical** by Nora Raleigh Baskin

Jason Blake is an autistic 12-year-old living in a neurotypical world. Most days it's just a matter of time before something goes wrong. But Jason finds a glimmer of understanding when he comes across PhoenixBird, who posts stories to the same online site as he does. Jason can be himself when he writes, and he thinks that PhoenixBird (her name is Rebecca) could be his first real friend. But as desperate as Jason is to meet her, he's terrified that if they do meet, Rebecca will only see his autism and not who Jason really is.

#### **The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind** by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer

When a terrible drought struck William Kamkwamba's tiny village in Malawi, his family lost all of the season's crops, leaving them with nothing to eat and nothing to sell. William began to explore science books in his village library, looking for a solution. There, he came up with the idea that would change his family's life forever: he could build a windmill. Made out of scrap metal and old bicycle parts, William's windmill brought electricity to his home and helped his family pump the water they needed to farm the land.

Retold for a younger audience, this exciting memoir shows how, even in a desperate situation, one boy's brilliant idea can light up the world.

**Cosmic** by Frank Cottrell Boyce

Liam has always felt a bit like he's stuck between two worlds. This is primarily because he's a twelve-year-old kid who looks like he's about thirty. Sometimes it's not so bad, like when his new principal mistakes him for a teacher on the first day of school or when he convinces a car dealer to let him take a Porsche out on a test drive. But mostly it's just frustrating, being a kid trapped in an adult world. And so he decides to flip things around. Liam cons his way onto the first spaceship to take civilians into space, a special flight for a group of kids and an adult chaperone, and he is going as the adult chaperone. It's not long before Liam, along with his friends, is stuck between two worlds again—only this time he's 239,000 miles from home.

**The Duel: The Parallel Lives of Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr** by Judith St. George

In curiously parallel lives, Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr were both orphaned at an early age. Both were brilliant students who attended college—one at Princeton, the other at Columbia—and studied law. Both were young staff officers under General George Washington, and both became war heroes. Politics beckoned them, and each served in the newly formed government of the fledgling nation. Why, then, did these two face each other at dawn in a duel that ended with death for one and harsh criticism for the other?

Judith St. George's lively biography, told in alternating chapters, brings to life two complex men who played major roles in the formation of the United States.

**Freak The Mighty** by Rodman Philbrick

Maxwell Kane, a lumbering eighth grader who describes himself as a "butthead goon," has lived with grandparents Grim and Gram ever since his father was imprisoned for murdering his mother. Mean-spirited schoolmates and special ed (for an undetermined learning disability) haven't improved his self-image, so he is totally unprepared for a friendship with Kevin, aka Freak, a veritable genius with a serious birth defect that's left him in braces and using crutches. Max is uplifted by Freak's imagination and booming confidence, while Freak gets a literal boost--hoisted onto Max's shoulders, he shares Max's mobility. Together they become Freak the Mighty, an invincible duo.

**Full Cicada Moon** by Marilyn Hilton

It's 1969, and the Apollo 11 mission is getting ready to go to the moon. But for half-black, half-Japanese Mimi, moving to a predominantly white Vermont town is enough to make her feel alien. Suddenly, Mimi's appearance is all anyone notices. She struggles to fit in with her classmates, even as she fights for her right to stand out by entering science competitions and joining Shop Class instead of Home Ec. And even though teachers and neighbors balk at her mixed-race family and her refusals to conform, Mimi's dreams of becoming an astronaut never fade—no matter how many times she's told no. This historical middle-grade novel is told in poems from Mimi's perspective over the course of one year in her new town, and shows readers that positive change can start with just one person speaking up.

**Ghost** by Jason Reynolds

Ghost. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. But they are also four kids chosen for an elite middle school track team – a team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose, but they also have a lot to prove, not only to each other, but to themselves.

**Hour of the Bees** by Lindsay Eager

While her friends are spending their summers having pool parties and sleepovers, twelve-year-old Carolina – Carol -- is spending hers in the middle of the New Mexico desert, helping her parents move the grandfather she's never met into a home for people with dementia. At first, Carol avoids prickly Grandpa Serge. But as the summer wears on and the heat bears down, Carol finds herself drawn to him, fascinated by the crazy stories he tells her about a healing tree, a green-glass lake, and the bees that will bring back the rain and end a hundred years of drought. As the thin line between magic and reality starts to blur, Carol must decide for herself what is possible, and what it means to be true to her roots. Readers who dream that there's something more out there will be enchanted by this captivating novel of family, renewal, and discovering the wonder of the world.

**Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard (Book 1 The Sword of Summer)** by Rick Riordan

Magnus Chase has seen his share of trouble. Ever since that terrible night two years ago when his mother told him to run, he has lived alone on the streets of Boston, surviving by his wits, staying one step ahead of the police and truant officers.

One day, he's tracked down by an uncle he barely knows—a man his mother claimed was dangerous. Uncle Randolph tells him an impossible secret: Magnus is the son of a Norse god. The Viking myths are true. The gods of Asgard are preparing for war. Trolls, giants, and worse monsters are stirring for doomsday. To prevent Ragnarok, Magnus must search the Nine Worlds for a weapon that has been lost for thousands of years. When an attack by fire giants forces him to choose between his own safety and the lives of hundreds of innocents, Magnus makes a fatal decision. Sometimes, the only way to start a new life is to die . . .

**March One** by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin

Congressman John Lewis is an American icon, one of the key figures of the civil rights movement. His commitment to justice and nonviolence has taken him from an Alabama sharecropper's farm to the halls of Congress, from a segregated schoolroom to the 1963 March on Washington, and from receiving beatings from state troopers to receiving the Medal of Freedom from the first African-American president.

March One is the first book of a trilogy. It is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights. Rooted in Lewis' personal story, it also reflects on the highs and lows of the broader civil rights movement. Book One spans John Lewis' youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with Martin Luther King, Jr., the birth of the Nashville Student Movement, and their battle to tear down segregation through nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins, building to a stunning climax on the steps of City Hall.

**Pax** by Sara Pennypacker

A beautifully wrought, utterly compelling novel about the powerful relationship between a boy and his fox.

Pax and Peter have been inseparable ever since Peter rescued him as a kit. But one day, the unimaginable happens: Peter's dad enlists in the military and makes him return the fox to the wild. At his grandfather's house, three hundred miles away from home, Peter knows he isn't where he should be— with Pax. He strikes out on his own despite the encroaching war, spurred by love, loyalty, and grief, to be reunited with his fox. Meanwhile Pax, steadfastly waiting for his boy, embarks on adventures and discoveries of his own.



**Skellig** by David Almond

When a move to a new house coincides with his baby sister's illness, ten-year-old Michael's world seems suddenly lonely and uncertain. Then he stumbles into the old, ramshackle garage and finds something magical, a strange creature – part owl, part angel – a being who needs Michael's help if he is to survive. With his new friend Mina, Michael nourishes Skellig back to health, while his baby sister languishes in the hospital. But Skellig is far more than he at first appears, and, as he helps Michael breathe life into his tiny sister, Michael's world changes forever.

**War Horse** by Michael Morpurgo

In 1914, Joey, a beautiful bay-red foal with a distinctive cross on his nose, is sold to the army and thrust into the midst of the war on the Western Front. With his officer, he charges toward the enemy, witnessing the horror of the battles in France. But even in the desolation of the trenches, Joey's courage touches the soldiers around him and he is able to find warmth and hope. But his heart aches for Albert, the farmer's son he left behind. Will he ever see his true master again?

**When My Name Was Keoko** by Linda Sue Park

Sun-hee and her older brother, Tae-yul, live in Korea with their parents. Because Korea is under Japanese occupation, the children study Japanese and speak it at school. Their own language, their flag, the folktales Uncle tells them – even their names – are all part of the Korean culture that is now forbidden. When World War II comes to Korea, Sun-hee is surprised that the Japanese expect their Korean subjects to fight on their side. But the greatest shock of all comes when Tae-yul enlists in the Japanese army in an attempt to protect Uncle, who is suspected of aiding the Korean resistance. Sun-hee stays behind, entrusted with the life-and-death secrets of a family at war.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics Book Notes

Fill out this form for each book you read so you can remember the details for the competition!

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Characters: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Page number where answer can be found \_\_\_\_\_

Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Page number where answer can be found \_\_\_\_\_



Dear Parent/Guardian,

This year we will be involved in a wonderful activity called the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics. Philadelphia READS is a non-profit organization with a mission to raise a city of readers through quality, out of school programs focused on getting children to read on or above grade level by grade 4. The Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics is one of their biggest events, and the goal of this activity is to increase students' reading for enjoyment. Students collaborate with their teammates to read 15-19 books that have been selected by a committee of reading specialists, librarians, and classroom teachers. Teams from all over Philadelphia will meet in May to take part in the Olympics event. The Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics is primarily a celebration of reading. All participants are awarded ribbons, and, because the teams generate much excitement about this event, the experience is rewarding for everyone involved.

A team of 12 students will divide up the list of books and start reading. The more children who have read each book the better! Attached are the list of the books we will be reading and a contract for you and your child to sign. We ask for your signature as a symbol of your support!

If your child is interested in participating, please return the completed contract with your child as soon as possible.

Meetings will be held: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

Philadelphia READS  
Reading Olympics Coach



Dear Parent/Guardian,

For the past few months your child has been working hard to prepare for the 2018 Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics. We are excited to compete and would like to have your support on the day of the event! During the month of May we will travel to an assigned college campus (date and location listed below) to compete against other schools from around Philadelphia. Throughout the event we will accumulate points for every correct answer we provide during the three rounds of competition. At the end of the event all the teams will come together for a closing ceremony where ribbons will be awarded based on the number of points earned.

Students will travel with their team and coach to and from the event. Please feel free to come cheer us on! Details about our location site and date are listed below.

*You're Invited!*

**Reading Olympics Competition Details**

- **Competition Date:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Arrival time:** 9:30 a.m.
- **Departure time:** Around Noon
- **Competition Site:** \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

Philadelphia READS  
Reading Olympics Coach



**Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics  
Participant Contract 2018**

I understand that, as a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ Reading Olympics Team, I am expected to read \_\_\_\_\_ books by May 2018.

By meeting this goal I will have met the Reading Olympics challenge and will be able to participate in the Olympics in May.

~~~~~

I have read the Reading Olympics contract and pledge to fulfill it to the best of my ability.

|                        |                   |       |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| _____                  | _____             | _____ |
| Student Name (printed) | Student Signature | Date  |

|                                |                           |       |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| _____                          | _____                     | _____ |
| Parent/Guardian Name (printed) | Parent/Guardian Signature | Date  |

|                        |                   |       |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| _____                  | _____             | _____ |
| Reading Olympics Coach | Coach's Signature | Date  |

**2018 Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics Book List**  
**Grades 4 - 6**  
**Intermediate List**

| <b>Intermediate School List (19 books)</b> |                                  |                                                                        |                |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                            | <b>Author</b>                    | <b>Title</b>                                                           | <b>ISBN</b>    |
| 1.                                         | Anderson, John David             | <i>Ms. Bixby's Last Day</i>                                            | 978-0062338181 |
| 2.                                         | Applegate, Katherine             | <i>Crenshaw</i>                                                        | 978-1250091666 |
| 3.                                         | Bertman, Jennifer<br>Chambliss   | <i>Book Scavenger</i>                                                  | 978-1250079800 |
| 4.                                         | Creech, Sharon                   | <i>Moo</i>                                                             | 978-0062415264 |
| 5.                                         | Dorris, Michael                  | <i>Morning Girl</i>                                                    | 978-0786813582 |
| 6.                                         | Eulberg, Elizabeth               | <i>The Great Shelby Holmes: Girl Detective</i>                         | 978-1681190532 |
| 7.                                         | Hunt, Lynda Mullaly              | <i>Fish in a Tree</i>                                                  | 978-0142426425 |
| 8.                                         | Ignatow, Amy                     | <i>The Mighty Odds</i>                                                 | 978-1419723711 |
| 9.                                         | Kraft, Betsy Harvey              | <i>The Fantastic Ferris Wheel: The Story of Inventor George Ferris</i> | 978-1627790727 |
| 10.                                        | Libenson, Terri                  | <i>Invisible Emmie</i>                                                 | 978-0062484932 |
| 11.                                        | Maddox, Jake & Katie<br>Wood     | <i>Softball Surprise</i>                                               | 978-1434279293 |
| 12.                                        | Neri, G.                         | <i>Ghetto Cowboy</i>                                                   | 978-0763664534 |
| 13.                                        | Park, Linda Sue                  | <i>A Long Walk to Water</i>                                            | 978-0547577319 |
| 14.                                        | Pollack, Pamela & Meg<br>Belviso | <i>Who Was Alexander Hamilton?</i>                                     | 978-0399544279 |
| 15.                                        | Moser, Elise & Scot Ritchie      | <i>What Milly Did: the Remarkable Pioneer of Plastics Recycling</i>    | 978-1554988938 |
| 16.                                        | Tavares, Matt                    | <i>Growing Up Pedro</i>                                                | 978-0763693114 |
| 17.                                        | Taylor, Mildred                  | <i>Song of the Trees</i>                                               | 978-0142500750 |
| 18.                                        | Turnage, Sheila                  | <i>Three Times Lucky</i>                                               | 978-0142426050 |
| 19.                                        | Williams-Garcia, Rita            | <i>P.S. Be Eleven</i>                                                  | 978-0061938641 |

**2018 Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics Book List**  
**Grades 6 - 8**  
**Middle School List**

| <b>Middle School List (15 books)</b> |                                   |                                                                          |                |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                      | <b>Author</b>                     | <b>Title</b>                                                             | <b>ISBN</b>    |
| 1.                                   | Almond, David                     | <i>Skellig</i>                                                           | 978-0440416029 |
| 2.                                   | Baskin, Nora Raleigh              | <i>Anything But Typical</i>                                              | 978-1416995005 |
| 3.                                   | Boyce, Frank Cottrell             | <i>Cosmic</i>                                                            | 978-0061836886 |
| 4.                                   | Eager, Lindsay                    | <i>Hour of the Bees</i>                                                  | 978-0763691202 |
| 5.                                   | Hilton, Marilyn                   | <i>Full Cicada Moon</i>                                                  | 978-0147516015 |
| 6.                                   | Kamkwamba, William & Bryan Mealer | <i>The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind (Young People's edition)</i>           | 978-0147510426 |
| 7.                                   | Lewis, John & Andrew Aydin        | <i>March One</i>                                                         | 978-1603093002 |
| 8.                                   | Morpurgo, Michael                 | <i>War Horse</i>                                                         | 978-0439796644 |
| 9.                                   | Nielsen, Jennifer                 | <i>A Night Divided</i>                                                   | 978-0545682442 |
| 10.                                  | Park, Linda Sue                   | <i>When My Name Was Keoko</i>                                            | 978-0547722399 |
| 11.                                  | Pennypacker, Sara                 | <i>Pax</i>                                                               | 978-0008158286 |
| 12.                                  | Philbrick, Rodman                 | <i>Freak the Mighty</i>                                                  | 978-0439286060 |
| 13.                                  | Reynolds, Jason                   | <i>Ghost</i>                                                             | 978-1481450164 |
| 14.                                  | Riordan, Rick                     | <i>Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard</i>                               | 978-1423163374 |
| 15.                                  | St. George, Judith                | <i>The Duel: The Parallel Lives of Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr</i> | 978-0425288214 |



My child, \_\_\_\_\_ from  
**(Print Student's Name)**

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**(School / Organization Name)**

has my permission to take part in the **Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics Event on May \_\_\_\_\_, 2018.**

While participating in the Reading Olympics, Philadelphia READS, the School District of Philadelphia, the Free Library of Philadelphia, the City of Philadelphia, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, its sponsors, and collaborating organizations have permission to use images of my child (including but not limited to audio, photo or video), and/or any material produced by my child (including but not limited to drawings or writing) for any purpose.

\_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Print parent/guardian name

\_\_\_\_\_ Print Parent/guardian email address

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

**\*\*\*Please note that parental and family attendance at the event is welcomed and encouraged. We look forward to seeing you there!**



## Sample Questions

You may find questions to use for practice on the internet. Another source for questions is the Accelerated Reader or Reading Counts programs if they are in your school.

The questions asked at the competition are very straightforward, factual questions. They usually relate to the plot, characters or setting, and the answers are easily provable.

The sample questions are meant to give you an idea of the type of question that will be asked. All questions begin: "In the book," followed by the book title.



**Find  
sample questions on  
our website  
in March 2018.**

## Publicity

The Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics committee encourages you to celebrate the success of your teams by seeking out publicity in the local papers. In the past, schools have submitted team photos, with students wearing their official Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics t-shirts, to their neighborhood newspapers. While we think this event is a wonderful opportunity for you to showcase the talents of Philadelphia children, we want to ensure that the same information is being used with every photo submitted and article written. Our sponsors and partners have been very generous with their time and money and deserve recognition. Please share any articles that are published about your participation in the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics.

### In any contact you have with the press you *must* include the following information:

The mission of Philadelphia READS is to "raise a city of readers" through quality out of school time programs focused to get children and youth to read on or above grade level by grade 4.

The Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics is the city's only literacy competition for 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

All final sponsors for the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics will be published on our website and listed on the program t-shirts by May 2018.

Philadelphia READS provides opportunities for individuals, community groups, corporations and foundations to help students build strong literacy skills by Grade 4.

For additional information about our programs, call 215-279-7450 visit our website [PhilaReads.org](http://PhilaReads.org) or email [info@philareads.org](mailto:info@philareads.org).

Before you contact the press, please make sure to follow the chain of commands within your organization. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us at 215-279-7450.

### Sample submission to a local paper:

Team picture with students wearing their Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics shirts

Sample School Scores at the Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics!!!

The Sample School Sample Team Name Team was awarded a blue ribbon at the 2018 Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics when they competed at \_\_\_\_\_ University on \_\_\_\_day, May \_\_\_\_\_. This event was one in a series of competitions in which over 1,800 students, from grades 4-8, competed regionally to answer questions about the Reading Olympic books. This city-wide event, which drew teams from public, parochial, private and charter schools, was a wonderful example of Philadelphia students working hard to showcase their talents. The Philadelphia READS Reading Olympics is a core program of Philadelphia READS. Joining the lead sponsor, \_\_\_\_\_, in supporting the event were (*insert the names of this year's sponsors*). The Sample School team spent several months reading the 19 books and practicing answering questions with their coach, (*insert your name*). Among their favorite books were: \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

If you post on social media, please include us using these handles:

#PhiladelphiaREADS AND #ReadingOlympics