



2020 Coach's Manual

The Reading Olympics is a collaboration between Philadelphia READS and The Free Library of Philadelphia

Welcome to the 2020 Reading Olympics

Coach's Manual – Grades 4, 5, 6, 7, and 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. Please read through this resource to ensure that you are prepared to coach a team to success!

Basic Requirements of a Reading Olympics Coach:

- **Form a team**
 - No more than 12 students
 - Intermediate teams: grades 4, 5, and 6
 - Middle school teams: grades 6, 7, and 8
 - Your school may register *no more* than 2 teams at each level.
- **Purchase entire book list**
- **Schedule a regular meeting time**
- **Ensure students are prepared for competition**
 - Once the teams are formed, each Intermediate team collectively reads all of the 20 books on the official book list and each Middle School team collectively reads all 15 of the books on their list.
 - An award ceremony is held immediately after the competition. All participants are awarded ribbons. Everyone is a winner in this academic competition!
- **Pick up T-shirts**
- **Coordinate transportation to competition**
 - Ensure students, parents, and the school are aware of your date/location.
 - All students must have signed permission slips to participate.
 - 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.
- **Chaperone group to and from competition while being actively engaged during competitions and award ceremony**
- **Complete all surveys sent out by the Reading Olympics office**

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 callahanp@freelibrary.org or call us at 215-686-5372.

Check our website frequently for the most up-to-date information: freelibrary.org/readingolympics

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 from different parts of the city to local college campuses.

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

Table of Contents

The Basics

Timeline	3
General Guidelines & Coach Responsibilities	4
Support: Coaches Meeting & Ambassador Program	5
Frequently Asked Questions	6-8
Recommendations from Past Coaches	9

Sample Meeting Plans

Introductory Session & Subsequent Sessions.	10
Teambuilding Activities	11
Literature Activities	12-13
Coaching Tips	13

Down to the Wire: Preparing for the Competition

Protocol & The Award Ceremony.	14
Don't Forget	15

Forms/Resource Materials

Reading List Tracking Form	16-17
Book Summaries Intermediate	18-21
Book Summaries Middle School	22-24
Book Notes Form	25
Parent Information Letter	26
Parent/Guardian Invitation Letter	27
Student/Parent Contract	28
Intermediate Book List	29
Middle School Book List	30
Release Form	31
Sample Questions	32

THE BASICS

Reading Olympics Timeline

- December**
- Registration opens in early December and closes in early 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 16)
 - Hold introductory meeting (see page 10) and set dates for further sessions
 - Choose a team name (Try to keep the team name to 3 words or fewer)
 - 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 29-30)
- 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 11)
 - Review conduct and rules
 - Practice Olympics protocol (see page 14)
 - 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 the 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!

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 15-20 books. Intermediate teams (4th grade through 6th grade) answer 20 questions. Middle School teams (6th grade through 8th grade) 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 14).

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 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 your 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 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 and 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 Reading Olympics staff as required.
- Accompanies the team to the Reading Olympics event and supervises the team participants.
- Encourages parents to support at-home reading, serve as escorts, and to attend the event.
- Prepares the team by practicing the competition protocol (see page 14).
- Previews all resources before you use them with your students to be sure that they are appropriate for your particular group.

Support

Coaches Meeting

We are asking all coaches to attend a coaches meeting to ensure that every team is prepared and set up for success. This meeting will review basic protocols for the Reading Olympics and allow coaches a chance to share ideas on how to support our readers.

The Coaches Meeting will occur in January after school and will run for about an hour and a half. More specific information regarding location and time will be sent out as January approaches.

Ambassador Program

We are excited to offer additional support to coaches through our Ambassador Program! Reading Olympics gurus have volunteered to support new coaches and schools, and schools where teams have earned red/green ribbons in the past. They will meet with coaches to offer advice and attend student meetings to work with the teams.

If you are selected as a participant of the Ambassador Program, we will connect with you in January for more specifics!

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 from different parts of the city to local college campuses.

Getting Started / Registration

How do I register a team?

- A. Registration opens **December 4, 2019**. Whether you are registering an **Intermediate Team** (grades 4-6) or a **Middle School Team** (grades 6-8) you register online. Email callahanp@freelibrary.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 Reading Olympics 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 6, 2020** 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, while 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 2020, 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.

Creating a Team

How many students can be on a team?

- A. No more than 12 students
- Intermediate teams: grades 4, 5, and 6
 - Middle school teams: grades 6, 7, and 8

What type of readers should I have on my team?

- A. 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 4th through 7th graders will be experienced team members next year.

Who reads what?

- A. Once the teams are formed, each Intermediate team collectively reads all of the 20 books on the official book list and each Middle School team collectively reads all 15 of the books on their list. You and your team decide who reads which book and how many books each student reads. We recommend that each book is read by at least 2 students.

The Books

How do I find the book list?

- A. The Intermediate list of 20 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 16 and a list to be sent home to parents on page 29. Please be sure to use the Philadelphia Reading Olympics book list - not the book list other counties use.

Where can I get the books?

- A. Teams are responsible for finding their own books. **Please be sure that you know which level book collection you need.**
- **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.
 - We encourage you to host fundraisers or ask your Home & School Associations or the community to support your efforts to purchase the books. You could also create an Amazon Wish List with the books and ask people to buy them from there or create a DonorsChoose campaign. Please plan enough time and set deadlines so that you can ensure your team has the books to practice (no later than mid-January).
 - Individual books may also be found via Scholastic, Amazon, or the First Book Market Place.
 - Often The Jacoby Book Bank (run by Reading Recycled) has some of the books; stop in on Wednesday afternoons (3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.) during the school year. (www.philareads.org/bookbank)

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 our 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 Philadelphia.

Some of the books on the list are very easy/hard for my group to read. 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 a.m. There are 3 rounds of competition. The first round usually begins about 10:00 a.m. *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 p.m.

What should I do when my team is competing?

A. Your job is to watch and support your team. Please be engaged during the entire competition. You should monitor student behavior and support any students struggling to act appropriately. Please do not be on your phone while your students are competing.

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 do not have the funds to purchase lunch for all the student participants. 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 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.

What if a moderator or score keeper messes up?

A. Please support our volunteers. We could not run these competitions without them. They are not teachers and have not read the books, so there is a chance they may not know if an answer is acceptable if it's not explicitly written on the card. If you think your team's answer was correct, please feel free to explain that to the volunteers. If a point was missed or something went wrong, use it as a learning experience for the students in good sportsmanship. Sometimes things go wrong, but your response is what matters.

Why don't we have one overall winner?

A. Our goal is to foster a love of reading and to teach cooperation and teamwork. This should be stressed to the students throughout the entire process! Please remind them that it is about working together as a team and becoming better readers – not about winning.

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

A. Call or email our office at **215-686-5372** or email **callahanp@freelibrary.org**.

Recommendations from Past Coaches

Purchasing Book Lists:

- I would strongly recommend purchasing more than one set of books.
- Organize with your school's Home and School Association to try and get funding.
- Use the public library for extra copies of books.
- Create a DonorsChoose page – be sure to do this ASAP so you can ensure you get the books before January.
- Create Amazon Wish Lists with all the titles and share on Social Media.

Teams:

- I usually started with a team of 16-18 students, so that I would still have a full team if students backed out or were absent.

Tracking Books System:

Option A:

- The child would sign out the book by writing the date it was picked up (using tracker provided on pages 16 and 17).
- When the book was completed, the child would mark an X over the date. The child would erase the date if they did not like the book and/or didn't complete it.
- I would periodically check the sign-out sheet to see if a book wasn't signed out yet or only 1 person had read it and would encourage someone to read it.
- I required that each child read 12 books for the Intermediate level. Children should read 8 or 9 from the Middle School book list.
- This method would help me figure out the students who weren't doing much reading and then we would have "the talk."
- Everything was done in pencil. I am sure other coaches have sign out suggestions that worked for them.

Option B:

- I get book pockets and cards, but I have seen similar book pockets at the dollar store and you can use index cards.
- The student signs out the book to read with the current date and when they return it, they cross out their name. Next, they put the questions in the binder, go to the spreadsheet that shows all the team members and the names of the books, and make a mark in the box of the completed book.
- Every child on the team is encouraged to read all the books, but each child must read at least five books. We don't let the students choose these five books randomly. After we have the book talk at the initial meeting, we let them write down their top five. We try to give everyone one or two of their favorites while still making sure each book gets read by 3-4 people. It's a bit of a puzzle at first, but it works well.

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 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 10).
- Introduce each of the books, by preparing 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, as a guide if you are unfamiliar with them. For more information on each book, you can use the Free Library website (www.freelibrary.org) or Amazon (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 11). Some of the titles are more appropriate for older readers due to more mature content, and some are geared toward the younger reader on your team. There is a range of reading levels as well.

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

- Introduce the 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 times when students will borrow or return books and provide 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. During March and April, you should be developing practice questions with your team as a way of discussing the books. Use the questions provided online as samples for what these questions should look like.

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’s 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.

Resources:

- <http://www.skillsconverged.com/FreeTrainingMaterials/tabid/258/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/606/Team-Building-Activities-for-Kids.aspx>
- <http://wilderdom.com/games/InitiativeGames.html>

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

References: *Cooperative Learning* by Spencer Kagan

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 <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 with markers. Randomly call out 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 them 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 their 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 their back so the paper can be read by the other students. The child who is "It" chooses other children one at a time to give clues 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, their turn is completed and they can then choose 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 they know who the character is can guess. If the student guesses wrong, they are out for that session. Whoever guesses correctly gets to be "it" next.

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.

Resources:

- Scholastic: <http://www.scholastic.com/>
- Read Write Think: <http://www.readwritethink.org/>

Coach Tips: Veteran coaches have offered these ideas:

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*

During meetings, students who have read the same book get paired up to create and present a quick (2 minute) skit retelling the story. They 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*

*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 everyone the protocol for answering the questions as a team. One team member will be 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 them, saying “I designate _____ to answer.”*

- Your team will need to practice answering within **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 third round (approximately 11:30 a.m.), 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.32): **One must be signed for each student.** Collect and give them to your site coordinator when you arrive at the Reading Olympics. You are responsible for making sure that any student without a signed form is not photographed.
- Dress: To have students wear their official **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 they feel an answer may indeed be correct.
- Surveys: Be prepared to complete a coach and/or student survey.

Have fun!

Reading Olympics 2020
Intermediate (Grades 4 -6) Reading List Tracking Form

												Team member ↓	Title ↓
													<i>Circus Mirandus</i>
													<i>Click</i>
													<i>Finding Langston</i>
													<i>Flying the Dragon</i>
													<i>Front Desk</i>
													<i>Fuzzy Mud</i>
													<i>Mr. Lincoln's Way</i>
													<i>Patina</i>
													<i>Restart</i>
													<i>Ribsy</i>
													<i>Saving Winslow</i>
													<i>Sergeant Reckles: The True Story of the Little Horse. . .</i>
													<i>Short</i>
													<i>Space Case</i>
													<i>Stella Diaz Has Something to Say</i>
													<i>The First Rule of Punk</i>
													<i>The Real McCoys</i>
													<i>The Search for WondLa</i>
													<i>The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street</i>
													<i>Tight</i>

													Title ↓	Team member ↑		
															<i>A Million Shades of Gray</i>	
															<i>Amal Unbound</i>	
															<i>Booked</i>	
															<i>Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora</i>	
															<i>Finding Mighty</i>	
															<i>Harbor Me</i>	
															<i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</i>	
															<i>Keeper of the Lost Cities</i>	
															<i>Marti's Song for Freedom</i>	
															<i>Masterminds</i>	
															<i>New Kid</i>	
															<i>The Beloved World of Sonia Sotomayor</i>	
															<i>The Girl Who Drank the Moon</i>	
															<i>The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl</i>	
															<i>The Season of Styx Malone</i>	

Reading Olympics 2020

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 book talks, visit <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.

Circus Mirandus by Cassie Beasley

Even though his awful Great-Aunt Gertrudis doesn't approve, Micah believes in the stories his dying Grandpa Ephraim tells him of the magical Circus Mirandus: the invisible tiger guarding the gates, the beautiful flying birdwoman, and the magician more powerful than any other – the Man Who Bends Light. Finally, Grandpa Ephraim offers proof. The Circus is real. And the Lightbender owes Ephraim a miracle. With his friend Jenny Mendoza in tow, Micah sets out to find the Circus and the man he believes will save his grandfather. The only problem is, the Lightbender doesn't want to keep his promise. And now it's up to Micah to get the miracle he came for.

Click by Kayla Miller

Olive wants to get in on the act . . . Any act! Olive "clicks" with everyone in the fifth grade – until one day she doesn't. When a school variety show leaves Olive stranded without an act to join, she begins to panic, wondering why all her friends have already formed their own groups . . . without her. With the performance drawing closer by the minute, will Olive be able to find her own place in the show before the curtain comes up? Author-illustrator Kayla Miller has woven together a heartfelt and insightful story about navigating friendships, leaning on family, and learning to take the stage in the most important role of all.

Finding Langston by Lesa Cline-Ransome

It's 1946. Langston's mother has just died, and now they're leaving the rest of his family and friends. He misses everything – Grandma's Sunday suppers, the red dirt roads, and the magnolia trees his mother loved. In the city, they live in a small apartment surrounded by noise and chaos. It doesn't feel like a new start, or a better life. At home he's lonely, his father always busy at work; at school he's bullied for being a country boy. But Langston's new home has one fantastic thing. Unlike the whites-only library in Alabama, the Chicago Public Library welcomes everyone. There, hiding out after school, Langston discovers another Langston – a poet whom he learns inspired his mother enough to name her only son after him.

Flying the Dragon by Natalie Dias Lorenzi

The story of two cousins in alternating chapters: American-born Skye is a good student and a star soccer player who never really gives any thought to the fact that her father is Japanese, while her cousin, Hiroshi, lives in Japan, and never really gives a thought to his uncle's family living in the U.S. Their lives are thrown together when Hiroshi's family, with his grandfather (who is also his best friend), have to move to the U.S. suddenly. Skye resents that she is now "not Japanese enough," and yet the friends she's known forever abruptly realize she is "other." Hiroshi has a hard time adjusting to life in a new culture, and resents Skye's intrusions on his time with Grandfather. Through all of this is woven Hiroshi's expertise, and Skye's growing interest in kite making and competitive kite flying, culminating in a contest at the annual Washington Cherry Blossom Festival.

Front Desk by Kelly Yang

Mia Tang has a lot of secrets. Number 1: She lives in a motel, not a big house. Every day, while her immigrant parents clean the rooms, ten-year-old Mia manages the front desk of the Calivista Motel and tends to its guests. Number 2: Her parents hide immigrants. And if the mean motel owner, Mr. Yao, finds out they've been letting them stay in the empty rooms for free, the Tangs will be doomed. Number 3: She wants to be a writer. But how can she when her mom thinks she should stick to math because English is not her first language? It will take all of Mia's courage, kindness, and hard work to get through this year. Will she be able to hold on to her job, help the immigrants and guests, escape Mr. Yao, and go for her dreams?

Fuzzy Mud by Louis Sachar

Fifth grader Tamaya Dhilwaddi and seventh grader Marshall Walsh have been walking to and from Woodridge Academy together since elementary school. But their routine is disrupted when bully Chad Hilligas challenges Marshall to a fight. To avoid the conflict, Marshall takes a shortcut home through the off-limits woods. Tamaya, unaware of the reason for the detour, reluctantly follows. They soon get lost. And then they find trouble. Bigger trouble than anyone could ever have imagined. What they uncover might affect the future of the world. An imaginative and suspenseful story of the great lengths we'll go to for friendship and family, the mishaps and breakthroughs that are made in the name of science, and the wonders of mud . . . fuzzy mud.

Mr. Lincoln's Way by Patricia Polacco

Mr. Lincoln is the coolest principal ever! He knows how to do everything, from jumping rope to leading nature walks. Everyone loves him . . . except for Eugene Esterhause. "Mean Gene" hates everyone who's different. He's a bully, a bad student, and he calls people awful, racist names. But Mr. Lincoln knows that Eugene isn't really bad – he's just repeating things he's heard at home. Can the principal find a way to get through to "Mean Gene" and show him that the differences between people are what make them special?

Patina 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. Patina, or Patty, runs like a flash. She runs for many reasons – to escape the taunts from the kids at the fancy-schmancy new school she's been sent to ever since she and her little sister had to stop living with their mom. She runs from the reason WHY she's not able to live with her "real" mom any more: her mom has The Sugar, and Patty is terrified that the disease that took her mom's legs will one day take her away forever. And so Patty's also running for her mom, who can't. But can you ever really run away from any of this? As the stress builds, it's building up a pretty bad attitude as well. Coach won't tolerate bad attitudes. No day, no way. And now he wants Patty to run relay...where you have to depend on other people? How's she going to do THAT?

Restart by Gordon Korman

Chase's memory just went out the window. Chase doesn't remember falling off the roof. He doesn't remember hitting his head. He doesn't, in fact, remember anything. He wakes up in a hospital room and suddenly has to learn his whole life all over again . . . starting with his own name. He knows he's Chase. But who is Chase? When he gets back to school, he sees that different kids have very different reactions to his return. Some kids treat him like a hero. Some kids are clearly afraid of him. One girl in particular is so angry with him that she pours her frozen yogurt on his head the first chance she gets. Pretty soon, it's not only a question of who Chase is – it's a question of who he was . . . and who he's going to be.

Ribsy by Beverly Cleary

Good ol' Ribsy's ever-curious mind has always gotten him into trouble, but this time he may have gone too far. After a comical turn of events, Ribsy finds himself in the wrong station wagon with the wrong children. Ribsy will do anything to find Henry, but there's plenty of excitement to be had along the way—and scoring a touchdown for a local high school team is only part of the fun! For kids looking for a fast, funny dog story, *Ribsy* is a winner.

Saving Winslow by Sharon Creech

Louie doesn't have the best luck when it comes to nurturing small creatures. So when his father brings home a sickly newborn mini donkey, he's determined to save him. He names him Winslow. Taking care of him helps Louie feel closer to his brother, Gus, who is far, far away in the army. Everyone worries that Winslow won't survive, especially Louie's quirky new friend, Nora, who has experienced loss of her own. But as Louie's bond with Winslow grows, surprising and life-altering events prove that this fragile donkey is stronger than anyone could have imagined. Written in the spirit of Creech favorites *Moo* and *Love That Dog*, this standout tale about love and friendship and letting go will tug at the heartstrings.

Sergeant Reckles: The True Story of the Little Horse Who Became a Hero by Patricia McCormick

When a group of US Marines fighting in the Korean War found a bedraggled mare, they wondered if she could be trained to work as a packhorse. They had no idea that the skinny, underfed horse had one of the biggest and bravest hearts they'd ever known. And one of the biggest appetites! Soon Reckless showed herself more than willing to carry ammunition too heavy for the soldiers to haul. As cannons thundered and shells flew through the air, she marched into battle – again and again – becoming the only animal ever to officially hold military rank – becoming Sgt. Reckless – and to receive two Purple Hearts.

Short by Holly Goldberg Sloan

Julia is very short for her age, but by the end of the summer run of *The Wizard of Oz*, she'll realize how big she is inside, where it counts. She hasn't ever thought of herself as a performer, but when the wonderful director of Oz casts her as a Munchkin, she begins to see herself in a new way. As Julia becomes friendly with the poised and wise Olive – one of the adults with dwarfism who've joined the production's motley crew of Munchkins – and with her deeply artistic neighbor, Mrs. Chang, Julia's own sense of self as an artist grows. Soon, she doesn't want to fade into the background – and it's a good thing, because her director has more big plans for Julia! Bubbling over with humor and tenderness, this is an irresistible story of self-discovery and of the role models who forever change us.

Space Case by Stuart Gibbs

Like his fellow lunarnauts – otherrwise known as Moonies – living on Moon Base Alpha, twelve-year-old Dashiell Gibson is famous the world over for being one of the first humans to live on the moon. And he's bored out of his mind. Kids aren't allowed on the lunar surface, meaning they're trapped inside the tiny moon base with next to nothing to occupy their time – and the only other kid Dash's age spends all his time hooked into virtual reality games. Then Moon Base Alpha's top scientist turns up dead. Dash senses there's foul play afoot, but no one believes him. Everyone agrees Dr. Holtz went onto the lunar surface without his helmet properly affixed, simple as that. But Dr. Holtz was on the verge of an important new discovery, Dash finds out, and it's a secret that could change everything for the Moonies – a secret someone just might kill to keep...

Stella Diaz Has Something to Say by Angela Dominguez

Stella Diaz loves marine animals, especially her betta fish, Pancho. But Stella Diaz is not a betta fish. Betta fish like to be alone, while Stella loves spending time with her mom and brother and her best friend Jenny. Trouble is, Jenny is in another class this year, and Stella feels very lonely. When a new boy arrives in Stella's class, she really wants to be his friend, but sometimes Stella accidentally speaks Spanish instead of English and pronounces words wrong, which makes her turn roja. Plus, she has to speak in front of her whole class for a big presentation at school! But she better get over her fears soon, because Stella Díaz has something to say! A story with an infectiously charming new character with relatable writing and adorable black-and-white art throughout. Simple Spanish vocabulary is also integrated within the text, providing a bilingual element.

The First Rule of Punk by Celia C. Perez

There are no shortcuts to surviving your first day at a new school – you can't fix it with duct tape like you would your Chuck Taylors. On Day One, twelve-year-old Malú (María Luisa, if you want to annoy her) inadvertently upsets Posada Middle School's queen bee, violates the school's dress code with her punk rock look, and disappoints her college-

professor mom in the process. Her dad, who now lives a thousand miles away, says things will get better as long as she remembers the first rule of punk: be yourself. The real Malú loves rock music, skateboarding, zines, and Soyrizo (hold the cilantro, please). And when she assembles a group of like-minded misfits at school and starts a band, Malú finally begins to feel at home. She'll do anything to preserve this, which includes standing up to an anti-punk school administration to fight for her right to express herself!

The Real McCoys by Matthew Swanson

Her name's Moxie. Moxie McCoy. Bold, opinionated, and haplessly self-confident, the world's greatest fourth-grade detective faces her biggest challenge! When someone kidnaps beloved school mascot Eddie the Owl, Moxie is on the case – but she's forced to fly solo now that her best friend (and crime-solving partner) has moved away. Moxie must interview her classmates – both as potential new best friends and as possible suspects. She finds clues and points fingers but can't save the owl on her own. Enter Moxie's little brother, Milton. Quiet, cautious, and boring as a butter knife, he's a good listener. Can the Real McCoys form an unlikely alliance and solve the crime of the century?

The Search for WondLa by Tony DiTerlizzi

When a marauder destroys the underground sanctuary that Eva Nine was raised in by the robot Muthr, the twelve-year-old girl is forced to flee aboveground. Eva Nine is searching for anyone else like her: She knows that other humans exist because of an item she treasures – a scrap of cardboard on which is depicted a young girl, an adult, and a robot, with the strange word, "WondLa." Tony DiTerlizzi honors traditional children's literature in this totally original space-age adventure – one that is as complex as an alien planet, but as simple as a child's wish for a place to belong.

The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street by Karina Yan Glaser

The Vanderbeekers have always lived in the brownstone on 141st Street. It's practically another member of the family. So when their reclusive, curmudgeonly landlord decides not to renew their lease, the five siblings have eleven days to do whatever it takes to stay in their beloved home and convince the dreaded Beiderman just how wonderful they are. And all is fair in love and war when it comes to keeping their home.

Tight by Torrey Maldonado

Tight: Lately Bryan's been feeling it in all kinds of ways. He knows what's tight for him in a good way – reading comics, drawing superheroes, and hanging out with no drama. But drama's hard to escape where he's from, and that gets him wound up tight. And now Bryan's new friend Mike is challenging him to have fun in ways that are crazy risky. At first, it's a rush following Mike, hopping turnstiles, subway surfing, and getting into all kinds of trouble. But Bryan never feels right acting wrong. So which way will he go when he understands that drama is so not his style? Fortunately his favorite comic heroes shed light on his dilemma, reminding him that he has power--the power to choose his friends and to stand up for what he believes is right . . .

Reading Olympics 2020

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 book talks, visit <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 Million Shades of Gray by Cynthia Kadohata

Y'Tin is brave. No one in his village denies that – his mother may wish that he'd spend more time on school work than on elephant training, but still she knows that it takes a great deal of courage and calm to deal with elephants the way that Y'Tin does. He is almost the best trainer in the village – and, at twelve-years old, he's certainly the youngest. Maybe he'll even open up his own school some day to teach other Montagnards how to train wild elephants? That was the plan anyway – back before American troops pulled out of the Vietnam War, back before his village became occupied by Viet Cong forces seeking revenge, back before Y'Tin watched his life change in a million terrible ways.

Amal Unbound by Aisha Saeed

Amal has big dreams, until a nightmarish encounter . . . Twelve-year-old Amal's dream of becoming a teacher one day is dashed in an instant when she accidentally insults a member of her Pakistani village's ruling family. As punishment for her behavior, she is forced to leave her heartbroken family behind and go work at their estate. Amal is distraught but has faced setbacks before. So she summons her courage and begins navigating the complex rules of life as a servant, with all its attendant jealousies and pecking-order woes. Most troubling, though, is Amal's increasing awareness of the deadly measures the Khan family will go to in order to stay in control. It's clear that their hold over her village will never loosen as long as everyone is too afraid to challenge them – so if Amal is to have any chance of ensuring her loved ones' safety and winning back her freedom, she must find a way to work with the other servants to make it happen.

Booked by Kwame Alexander

In this follow-up to Newbery-winner *The Crossover*, soccer, family, love, and friendship take center stage. Twelve-year-old Nick learns the power of words as he wrestles with problems at home, stands up to a bully, and tries to impress the girl of his dreams. Helping him along are his best friend and sometimes teammate Coby, and The Mac, a rapping librarian who gives Nick inspiring books to read. This electric and heartfelt novel-in-verse by poet Kwame Alexander bends and breaks as it captures all the thrills and setbacks, action, and emotion of a World Cup match!

Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora by Pablo Cartaya

Save the restaurant. Save the town. Get the girl. Make Abuela proud. Can thirteen-year-old Arturo Zamora do it all or is he in for a BIG, EPIC FAIL? For Arturo, summertime in Miami means playing basketball until dark, sipping mango smoothies, and keeping cool under banyan trees. And maybe a few shifts as junior lunchtime dishwasher at Abuela's restaurant. Maybe. But this summer also includes Carmen, a poetry enthusiast who moves into Arturo's apartment complex and turns his stomach into a deep fryer. He almost doesn't notice the smarmy land developer who rolls into town and threatens to change it. Arturo refuses to let his family and community go down without a fight, and as he schemes with Carmen, Arturo discovers the power of poetry and protest through untold family stories and the work of José Martí. Funny and poignant, *The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora* is the vibrant story of a family, a striking portrait of a town, and one boy's quest to save both, perfect for fans of Rita Williams-Garcia.

Finding Mighty by Sheela Chari

Along the train lines north of New York City, 12-year-old neighbors Myla and Peter search for the link between Myla's necklace and the disappearance of Peter's brother, Randall. Thrown into a world of parkour, graffiti, and diamond smuggling, Myla and Peter encounter a band of thugs who are after the same thing as Randall. Can Myla and Peter find Randall before it's too late and their shared family secrets threaten to destroy them all? Drawing on urban art forms and local history, *Finding Mighty* is a mystery that explores the nature of art and the unbreakable bonds of family.

Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson

It all starts when six kids have to meet for a weekly chat--by themselves, with no adults to listen in. There, in the room they soon dub the ARTT Room (short for "A Room to Talk"), they discover it's safe to talk about what's bothering them -- everything from Esteban's father's deportation and Haley's father's incarceration to Amari's fears of racial profiling and Ashton's adjustment to his changing family fortunes. When the six are together, they can express the feelings and fears they have to hide from the rest of the world. And together, they can grow braver and more ready for the rest of their lives.

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets by J. K. Rowling

"There is a plot, Harry Potter. A plot to make most terrible things happen at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry this year." Harry Potter's summer has included the worst birthday ever, doomy warnings from a house-elf called Dobby, and rescue from the Dursleys by his friend Ron Weasley in a magical flying car! Back at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry for his second year, Harry hears strange whispers echo through empty corridors and then the attacks start. Students are found as though turned to stone... Dobby's sinister predictions seem to be coming true.

Keeper of the Lost Cities by Shannon Messenger

Twelve-year-old Sophie has never quite fit into her life. She's skipped multiple grades and doesn't really connect with the older kids at school, but she's not comfortable with her family, either. The reason? Sophie's a Telepath, someone who can read minds. No one knows her secret -- at least, that's what she thinks... But the day Sophie meets Fitz, a mysterious (and adorable) boy, she learns she's not alone. He's a Telepath too, and it turns out the reason she has never felt at home is that, well...she isn't. Fitz opens Sophie's eyes to a shocking truth, and she is forced to leave behind her family for a new life in a place that is vastly different from what she has ever known. But Sophie still has secrets, and they're buried deep in her memory for good reason: The answers are dangerous and in high-demand. What is her true identity and why was she hidden among humans? The truth could mean life or death -- and time is running out.

Marti's Song for Freedom by Emma Otheguy

A bilingual biography of José Martí, who dedicated his life to the promotion of liberty, the abolishment of slavery, political independence for Cuba, and intellectual freedom. Written in verse with excerpts from Martí's seminal work, *Versos sencillos*.

Masterminds by Gordon Korman

Eli Frieden has never left Serenity, New Mexico...why would he ever want to? Then one day, he bikes to the edge of the city limits and something so crazy and unexpected happens, it changes everything. Eli convinces his friends to help him investigate further, and it soon becomes clear that nothing is as it seems in Serenity. The clues mount to reveal a shocking discovery, connecting their ideal crime-free community to some of the greatest criminal masterminds ever known. The kids realize they can trust no one -- least of all their own parents.

New Kid by Jerry Craft

Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds -- and

not really fitting into either one. Can Jordan learn to navigate his new school culture while keeping his neighborhood friends and staying true to himself?

The Beloved World of Sonia Sotomayor by Sonia Sotomayor

Sonia Sotomayor was just a girl when she dared to dream big. Her dream? To become a lawyer and a judge, even though she'd never met one of either and none lived in her neighborhood. Sonia did not let the hardships of her background—which included growing up in the rough housing projects of New York City's South Bronx, dealing with juvenile diabetes, coping with parents who argued and fought personal demons, and worrying about money – stand in her way. Always, she believed in herself. Her determination, along with guidance from generous mentors and the unwavering love of her extended Puerto Rican family, propelled her ever forward. Eventually, all of Sonia's hard work led to her appointment as an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court in 2009, a role that she has held ever since.

The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill

Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest. They hope this sacrifice will keep her from terrorizing their town. But the witch in the Forest, Xan, is kind. She shares her home with a wise Swamp Monster and a Perfectly Tiny Dragon. Xan rescues the children and delivers them to welcoming families on the other side of the forest, nourishing the babies with starlight on the journey. One year, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, filling the ordinary child with extraordinary magic. Xan decides she must raise this girl, whom she calls Luna, as her own. As Luna's thirteenth birthday approaches, her magic begins to emerge – with dangerous consequences. Meanwhile, a young man from the Protectorate is determined to free his people by killing the witch. Deadly birds with uncertain intentions flock nearby. A volcano, quiet for centuries, rumbles just beneath the earth's surface. And the woman with the Tiger's heart is on the prowl . . .

The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl by Stacy McAnulty

Lucy Callahan's life was changed forever when she was struck by lightning. She doesn't remember it, but the zap gave her genius-level math skills, and she's been homeschooled ever since. Now, at 12 years old, she's technically ready for college. She just has to pass one more test--middle school! Lucy's grandma insists: Go to middle school for 1 year. Make 1 friend. Join 1 activity. And read 1 book (that's not a math textbook!). Lucy's not sure what a girl who does calculus homework for fun can possibly learn in 7th grade. She has everything she needs at home, where nobody can make fun of her rigid routines or her super powered brain. The equation of Lucy's life has already been solved. Unless there's been a miscalculation? A celebration of friendship, Stacy McAnulty's smart and thoughtful middle-grade debut reminds us all to get out of our comfort zones and embrace what makes us different.

The Season of Styx Malone by Kekla Magoon

Caleb Franklin and his big brother Bobby Gene are excited to have adventures in the woods behind their house. But Caleb dreams of venturing beyond their ordinary small town. Then Caleb and Bobby Gene meet new neighbor Styx Malone. Styx is sixteen and oozes cool. Styx promises the brothers that together, the three of them can pull off the Great Escalator Trade – exchanging one small thing for something better until they achieve their wildest dream. But as the trades get bigger, the brothers soon find themselves in over their heads. Styx has secrets – secrets so big they could ruin everything.

Name: _____

Reading Olympics 2020 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 Reading Olympics. Run as a collaboration between Philadelphia READS and The Free Library of Philadelphia, it is the City's largest annual reading competition, engaging up to 2,000 students from 4th-8th grade classes from Philadelphia's public, parochial, charter, and independent schools, as well as its afterschool programs. The goal is to increase students' enjoyment of reading and to teach cooperation and teamwork. Students collaborate with their teammates to read 15-20 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 this celebration of reading. All participants of the Reading Olympics 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 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,

Reading Olympics Coach



Dear Parent/Guardian,

For the past few months, your child has been working hard to prepare for the 2020 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 12 Noon
- **Competition Site:** _____

Sincerely,

Reading Olympics Coach



**Reading Olympics
Participant Contract 2020**

I understand that, as a member of the _____ Reading Olympics Team, I am expected to read _____ books by May 2020.

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

**2020 Reading Olympics Book List**  
**Grades 4 - 6**  
**Intermediate List**

| <b>Intermediate School List (20 books)</b> |                       |                                                                               |                |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                            | <b>Author</b>         | <b>Title</b>                                                                  | <b>ISBN</b>    |
| 1.                                         | Beasley, Cassie       | <i>Circus Mirandus</i>                                                        | 978-0147515544 |
| 2.                                         | DiTerlizzi, Tony      | <i>Search for WondLa</i>                                                      | 978-1416983118 |
| 3.                                         | Cleary, Beverly       | <i>Ribsy</i>                                                                  | 978-0380709557 |
| 4.                                         | Cline-Ransome, Lesa   | <i>Finding Langston (Jan. 7, 2020)</i>                                        | 978-0823445820 |
| 5.                                         | Creech, Sharon        | <i>Saving Winslow</i>                                                         | 978-0062570710 |
| 6.                                         | Dominguez, Angela     | <i>Stella Diaz Has Something to Say</i>                                       | 978-1250294104 |
| 7.                                         | Gibbs, Stuart         | <i>Space Case</i>                                                             | 978-1442494879 |
| 8.                                         | Korman, Gordon        | <i>Restart</i>                                                                | 978-1338053807 |
| 9.                                         | Lorenzi, Natalie Dias | <i>Flying the Dragon</i>                                                      | 978-1580894357 |
| 10.                                        | Maldonado, Torrey     | <i>Tight</i>                                                                  | 978-1524740573 |
| 11.                                        | McCormick, Patricia   | <i>Sergeant Reckles: The True Story of the Little Horse Who Became a Hero</i> | 978-0062292599 |
| 12.                                        | Miller, Kayla         | <i>Click</i>                                                                  | 978-1328911124 |
| 13.                                        | Perez, Celia C.       | <i>The First Rule of Punk</i>                                                 | 978-0425290422 |
| 14.                                        | Polacco, Patricia     | <i>Mr. Lincoln's Way</i>                                                      | 978-0425288313 |
| 15.                                        | Reynolds, Jason       | <i>Patina</i>                                                                 | 978-1481450195 |
| 16.                                        | Sachar, Louis         | <i>Fuzzy Mud</i>                                                              | 978-0385370226 |
| 17.                                        | Sloan, Holly Goldberg | <i>Short</i>                                                                  | 978-0399186226 |
| 18.                                        | Swanson, Matthew      | <i>The Real McCoys</i>                                                        | 978-1250098535 |
| 19.                                        | Yan Glaser, Karina    | <i>The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street</i>                                      | 978-1328499219 |
| 20.                                        | Yang, Kelly           | <i>Front Desk</i>                                                             | 978-1338157826 |

**2020 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.                                   | Alexander, Kwame    | <i>Booked</i>                                   | 978-1328596307 |
| 2.                                   | Barnhill, Kelly     | <i>The Girl Who Drank the Moon</i>              | 978-1616207465 |
| 3.                                   | Cartaya, Pablo      | <i>Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora</i>               | 978-1101997253 |
| 4.                                   | Chari, Sheela       | <i>Finding Mighty</i>                           | 978-1419734793 |
| 5.                                   | Craft, Jerry        | <i>New Kid</i>                                  | 978-0062691194 |
| 6.                                   | Kadohata, Cynthia   | <i>A Million Shades of Gray</i>                 | 978-1442429192 |
| 7.                                   | Korman, Gordon      | <i>Masterminds</i>                              | 978-0062299994 |
| 8.                                   | Magoon, Kekla       | <i>The Season of Styx Malone (Dec. 3, 2019)</i> | 978-1524715984 |
| 9.                                   | McAnulty, Stacy     | <i>The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl</i>    | 978-1524767600 |
| 10.                                  | Messenger, Shannon  | <i>Keeper of the Lost Cities</i>                | 978-1442445949 |
| 11.                                  | Otheguy, Emma       | <i>Marti's Song for Freedom(Hardcover)</i>      | 978-0892393756 |
| 12.                                  | Rowling, J.K.       | <i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</i>  | 978-1338299151 |
| 13.                                  | Saeed, Aisha        | <i>Amal Unbound (Jan.7, 2020)</i>               | 978-0399544699 |
| 14.                                  | Sotomayor, Sonia    | <i>The Beloved World of Sonia Sotomayor</i>     | 978-1524771171 |
| 15.                                  | Woodson, Jacqueline | <i>Harbor Me</i>                                | 978-0525518341 |



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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(School / Organization Name)**

has my permission to take part in the **Reading Olympics Event on May \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.**

**THE FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA PHOTO/INTERVIEW RELEASE FORM**

I acknowledge and agree that the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation and their affiliates may use my name, my story, my description, anything promoting my likeness and other print or electronic artistic representations without restriction in order to promote the Free Library of Philadelphia in perpetuity. I also acknowledge and agree that neither the below named person nor I (if signed by minor) have received, nor will receive, compensation in exchange for signing this Release Form. By signing this Release Form, I hereby give the Free Library of Philadelphia and the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation authorization to:

1. Conduct interviews or use submitted materials of the below named person;
2. Take photographs, videos, and other artistic representations of the below named person;
3. Use above representations of the person named below in Library print, electronic and other publicity materials;
4. Make reproductions and derivative works based on said publicity materials.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Subject's Name (please print)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Subject's Date of Birth (xx/xx/xx)*

**READING OLYMPICS**

*Event*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Subject*

***If subject is under 18 years of age, please fill out the lines below:***

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Name of Parent or Guardian (please print)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Parent or Guardian*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Relation to Minor*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date Signed*

*For Library Use Only:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Requested by)*

**Updated 3/2016**



## 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.

As part of the preparation for the competition, your team should be creating their own possible questions for all of the books.



Find  
sample questions on our  
website  
in March 2020.