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## GRADE 6 ENGLISH STUDY GUIDE

All incoming sixth grade students will be required to read the following books for English class. Reading must be completed before the first day of school.

*The Giver* by Lois Lowry  
*The Talking Earth* by Jean Craighead George

### STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS

Use the questions that follow to help you understand the books you read this summer. Be sure you can answer all of the questions, as they will form the basis for a test on the summer reading. Your answers, however, will not be collected when school begins.

### TEST ON SUMMER READING

During the first few days of school you will take a test on the summer reading books.

### GRADE FOR SUMMER READING

Your first grade for the year will be based on the effort that you put into your project and the grade on your test on the summer reading.

### STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS

#### *The Giver*

1. Describe Jonas' world.
2. If you were being "chosen" for your lifetime occupation, what would you want it to be? List five qualities or talents that you have that make you particularly suited to that job.
3. What was the first really painful memory shared with Jonas?
4. What happens to people when they are released?
5. What happens to Jonas' memories when he leaves the community?
6. Find an adult to serve for a few minutes as "Giver" while you are the "Receiver." Have the adult give you a memory, relating it to you with as much detail as possible. It can be pleasant or painful. Try to describe that memory on paper. What did it feel like, sound like, etc.

#### *The Talking Earth*

1. How are Billie's ideas different from her sister's?
2. How do alligators create trails?
3. Why are fires necessary in the Everglades?
4. What does Billie mean when she says, "Nature plans ahead for her disasters?"
5. What two poisonous snakes live in the Everglades?
6. What would you do to save your life if you were bitten by these snakes?
7. Billie cries when the pot breaks. For what does she seem to be crying?
8. What are the signs of the "white man?" What comment is the author making?
9. How does Billie prepare for the hurricane?
10. What had Billie's mission taught her?

### PROJECT

Choose **ONE** of the books above for a project. See the Project Guidelines that follow.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading Project Guidelines

Choose one of the **English** summer reading books to be the focus of your project. You will need one sheet of standard-size poster board for this project.

- At the top of your poster board, write the title and author of the story. Now divide the remainder of your poster board into four equal sections.
- From the list below, you must then choose four activities to include on your poster. **Choose two activities from “Column A” and two activities from “Column B”** so that you’ll have one for each section of your poster board.
- **Each activity should be completed neatly, thoughtfully, and thoroughly.**

**Activity Choices:** Choose two activities from “Column A” and two activities from “Column B.” When all four of your activities are finished, mount each onto your poster board to complete your summer reading project. (*Don’t forget to put your name on your project!*)

### Column A

A1. **Important Events** – Of all of the happenings in the story, which three are the **most** important? Name each event, and, in your own words, explain exactly why you chose the event for your list. Your explanation should leave no doubt that your choice is a strong one—be persuasive, use strong verbs, and explain your thinking fully.

A2. **Letter to the Author** – Authors often receive letters from people who read their books, and the best letters reveal some understanding of the author’s career, life, and motives—it’s flattering to have someone know about you personally! Your job then is to compose a letter to the author of the summer reading book. Use correct letter form and tell the author how you liked the book. In your letter, relate not only specific information from the book (so that the author knows you’ve read carefully) but also some biographical information about the author. Hopefully your letter will make an impact on the author and she will write you back!

A3. **Theme Poem** –A theme is a message an author communicates to readers through a story. For this assignment you will write a poem of at least ten lines and at least 75 words that discusses one or more themes from your chosen book. Still not sure what a theme is? Here’s some more info:

A theme is like a “moral to the story” or a life lesson you get from a story. Stories, especially novels, can have multiple themes. For instance, one theme of *The Talking Earth* has to do with wisdom. What might a reader learn about the source of wisdom by reading *The Talking Earth*? At the beginning of the book, did Billy Wind think she could learn *anything* from her elders? From reading *The Talking Earth*, one could also learn something about the relationship between people and nature, about keeping an open mind, or about listening.

*The Giver* has messages about pain, courage, memory, individuality, and freedom. For instance, why did Jonas want people to have memories? What is the value of memory? Is there anything good about pain?

### Column B

B1. **Illustrated Scene** – Pick an important scene from the book and make an illustration for it. Imagine that you’re competing to get your picture put into the book—make your picture stand out from the thousands of other entries! Think details, color, neatness, and effort!

B2. **Promotional Advertisement** – Publishers need to sell the books they print, so they hire publicists and marketing experts to convince readers to buy, buy, buy the books they make! What if you were involved in an advertising campaign for the summer reading book and were given the job of creating a full-page magazine ad to promote it? What would your ad look like? What kind of slogan might you use? Is there an interesting quotation from the story that would help readers get interested in the book? What about artwork—would you have any? Is there anything about the author you might mention in your ad? Help get your book on the bestseller list by creating an amazing, irresistible magazine ad!

B3. **Wanted Poster** – Choose a character from the story who has done something wrong. Pretend that they are wanted by the authorities. In order to help capture the “criminal,” you’ve been assigned the task of creating a “wanted poster” to publicize not only what the criminal looks like, but also the crime or crimes he or she is being charged with. The crimes can be real criminal acts like murder, or your crimes can be things that are not really punishable by law, like lying.

Your poster must include a large sketch of the suspect’s face, a list of crimes he or she is suspected of committing; a description of where, when and how the crimes were carried out; a description of his or her personality traits; and an account of when and where the suspect was last seen. You should also have a detailed description of the suspect’s physical characteristics and clothing when he or she was last seen.

Your writing voice is important—the writing on this poster needs to sound serious and official! Consider adding cool details like the name of the law enforcement agency involved in the manhunt, the name of the area where this search is taking place, eyewitness accounts of the criminal activity, a hotline number, etc.