

Summer Reading

Dear Middle School Families,

As summer approaches, we are excited to share with you our summer reading expectations and reiterate why reading over the summer is such an important part of your child's academic growth.

Research shows that regular reading during the summer months helps students maintain and even improve their literacy skills. It keeps their minds active and engaged, helps prevent the "summer slide," and encourages a lifelong love of reading. Whether your child is curled up with a classic novel or exploring a new interest through nonfiction, reading opens doors to new ideas, experiences, and perspectives. Please see the chart below for each grade's assigned books. Reading widely and often builds vocabulary, strengthens critical thinking, and boosts overall academic confidence.

If you're looking for suggestions, the American Library Association offers an excellent list of age-appropriate books for summer reading at: <https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/2026-04/2026-ALSC-summer-reading-6-8.pdf> . It's a great resource for finding books that your child will enjoy. I would also recommend using the public library to borrow summer reading books, all of these books are available for free though the Kent County Library System.

Please complete one row of the book bingo for your chosen books.

We hope you and your child will make reading a fun and enriching part of your summer. Thank you for supporting literacy and helping your student grow as a reader!

Warm wishes for a relaxing and book-filled summer,

Mary Dulin
Director of Library Services
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5th Grade

This summer, all incoming 5th-grade students are asked to read **three novels**: two are listed below and **one of your choice**. Your choice book should be over 100 pages if mostly text, graphic novels are okay if over 150 pages. These books are meant to help you stay connected to reading over the summer and get ready for the exciting learning ahead in 5th grade humanities.

Books about identity (choose one):

Book	Because of Mr. Terupt	Fish in a Tree
Lexile	Lexile Level: 810L	Lexile Level: 600 L
Description	Because of Mr. Terupt by Rob Buyea is a middle-grade novel about seven diverse fifth-graders who are transformed by their energetic and inspiring teacher, Mr. Terupt, until a tragic snowball fight accident leaves him in a coma, forcing the students to confront their own issues and learn to work together, with the story told from the perspective o	Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt is a middle-grade novel about Ally, a smart, creative, yet dyslexic girl who hides her reading struggles with disruptive behavior until a teacher, Mr. Daniels, helps her see her potential. The story focuses on friendship, overcoming bullying, and realizing that intelligence isn't limited to reading

Required:

Book	Fever 1793 by Laurie Halse Anderson
Lexile	580 L
Description	Fever 1793 is a young adult historical novel by Laurie Halse Anderson about 14-year-old Mattie Cook surviving the 1793 yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia, which she experiences while trying to save her family's coffeehouse and navigate a city gripped by fear and disease. The book is based on the real historical event.

6th Grade

Summer Reading Assignments:

For this summer, all 6th-grade students are recommended to read **three novels**: Choose one of the classic options below, “The Lightning Thief”, one of the students' choice. These assignments are designed to help you stay engaged with reading over the summer and prepare for your upcoming coursework. Your choice book should be over 100 pages if mostly text, graphic novels are okay if over 150 pages. All of the choices explore themes we will discuss during the school year.

Choice books (choose one):

Book	Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson	Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli
Lexile	Lexile Level: 630L	Lexile Level: 590 L
Description	Brown Girl Dreaming is a memoir in verse by Jacqueline Woodson, chronicling her childhood in the 1960s and 1970s as she grew up as an African American girl in South Carolina and New York, exploring themes of identity, family, and the Civil Rights Movement. The book, which won the National Book Award, tells the story of her life through accessible, emotionally charged poems, detailing her experiences with the remnants of Jim Crow laws and her journey to finding her voice as a writer.	Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli about a unique, nonconformist high school student who arrives at Mica High and captures the heart of narrator Leo Borlock, but whose eccentric behavior eventually leads to her being shunned by the student body for being too different, exploring themes of individuality, popularity, and first love.

Required: The lightning thief (Graphic Novel Version also acceptable)

Book	The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan
Lexile	680L
Description	The Lightning Thief is the first book in Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson & the Olympians series, following twelve-year-old Percy Jackson as he discovers he is a demigod (son of Poseidon) and embarks on a quest to find Zeus's stolen master lightning bolt to prevent a war among the gods. Accompanied by his satyr friend Grover and Athena's daughter Annabeth, Percy must travel across the United States, facing mythological monsters and a prophecy of betrayal, all while coming to terms with his absent father. The book blends modern-day life with Greek mythology.

7th Grade

Summer Reading Assignments:

For this summer, all 7th-grade students are asked to read **three** novels: one classic, one modern, one of the students' choice. These assignments are designed to help you stay engaged with reading over the summer and prepare for your upcoming coursework. Your choice book should be over 100 pages if mostly text, graphic novels are okay if over 150 pages.

Classic (choose one):

Book	The Call of the Wild	The Giver
Lexile	Lexile Level: 1120L	Lexile Level: 760L
Description	First published in 1903, The Call of the Wild is regarded as Jack London's masterpiece. Based on London's experiences as a gold prospector in the Canadian wilderness and his ideas about nature and the struggle for existence, The Call of the Wild is a tale about unbreakable spirit and the fight for survival in the frozen Alaskan Klondike.	Jonas's world is perfect. Everything is under control. There is no war or fear of pain. There are no choices. Every person is assigned a role in the community. When Jonas turns 12 he is singled out to receive special training from The Giver. The Giver alone holds the memories of the true pain and pleasure of life. Now, it is time for Jonas to receive the truth. There is no turning back.

Book	The Book Thief
Lexile	Lexile Level: 730 L
Description	The Book Thief is a historical fiction novel by Markus Zusak, narrated by Death, about a young girl named Liesel Meminger in Nazi Germany who steals books and shares them, finding solace and power in words amidst the horrors of World War II. Set in 1939, the story follows Liesel as she lives with foster parents, learns to read with her foster father Hans Hubermann, befriends her neighbor Rudy Steiner, and forms a bond with a Jewish man, Max Vandenburg, hidden in their basement. The novel explores themes of the power of words, human resilience, and the impact of World War 2.

8th Grade

Summer Reading Assignments:

For this summer, all 8th-grade students are asked to read **three** novels: one classic, one modern, one of the students' choice. These assignments are designed to help you stay engaged with reading over the summer and prepare for your upcoming coursework. Your choice book should be over 100 pages if mostly text, graphic novels are okay if over 150 pages.

1. Classic Novel:

Book	Walk Two Moons	Ender's Game
Lexile	Lexile Level: 770L	Lexile Level: 870 L
Description	Walk Two Moons is a 1994 Newbery Medal-winning novel by Sharon Creech about 13-year-old Salamanca "Sal" Tree Hiddle, who travels from Ohio to Idaho with her grandparents, telling a story about her friend Phoebe Winterbottom to pass the time as they retrace her own mother's path after her disappearance. The book is a story-within-a-story that explores themes of grief, loss, family, and self-discovery.	Andrew "Ender" Wiggin thinks he is playing computer simulated war games; he is, in fact, engaged in something far more desperate. The result of genetic experimentation, Ender may be the military genius Earth desperately needs in a war against an alien enemy seeking to destroy all human life. The only way to find out is to throw Ender into ever harsher training, to chip away and find the diamond inside, or destroy him utterly.

2. Choose one book from the Cold War Era:

- The students are asked to read a modern novel that explores the Cold War Era. The Cold War novels will give you a better understanding of the political and historical context that will help you connect the themes of *Animal Farm* with real-world events from the 20th century. The class will read *Animal Farm* together in the beginning of 8th grade. These novels will introduce you to significant events and ideologies from the Cold War, such as the tension between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, or the Berlin Wall.

Book	Fallout - Spies, Superbombs and the Ultimate Cold War Showdown. (non-fiction)	A Night Divided by Nielsen (fiction)
Lexile	Lexile Level: 890	Lexile Level: 810 L
Description	<p>Winner of the 2022 Kids' Book Choice Award</p> <p>As World War II comes to a close, the United States and the Soviet Union emerge as the two greatest world powers on extreme opposites of the political spectrum. After the United States showed its hand with the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, the Soviets refused to be left behind. With communism sweeping the globe, the two nations begin a neck-and-neck competition to build even more destructive bombs and conquer the Space Race. In their battle for dominance, spy planes fly above, armed submarines swim deep below, and undercover agents meet in the dead of night.</p>	<p>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.</p>

Directions

Please complete only one row of activities in total for both the summer reading books.

Basically, pick **any 5 activities in a line**, you can complete them for either one of the recommended reading books or you can choose to do two activities for one book and 3 activities for the other. Have fun, these are meant to help you think but not stress you out.

- 5 activities for the entire summer
- Choose activities to complete a row (across or diagonal).

B	I	N	G	O
Draw the main character and identify 3 traits (examples: Brave, Smart, Kind, etc)	Create a map of the character's journey (drawing or print a map out and write on top it)	Make a comic strip of a favorite scene (included below)	What lesson does the character learn? (1 paragraph)	Create a crossword puzzle (10 clues)
Write a paragraph about your favorite character, including a quote from that character.	Draw the setting and explain how it affects the story (1 paragraph)	Complete a plot mountain worksheet (included below)	Write an acrostic poem using an important theme word. (example below)	Redesign the book cover + back description
Compare one characters to yourself (Venn diagram)	What if the story happened in Chestertown today?	Complete a book review worksheet	Find a song that matches the theme and explain why (1 paragraph)	Create a book trailer (30–90 seconds)
Write a diary entry from a character's point of view	Compare the setting at the beginning vs. end (Venn diagram)	Predict what happens 10 years later	Complete the theme worksheet (included below)	Create a recipe based on the story. Ask yourself "What would the characters eat?"
Write 3 questions you would like to ask the main character	Complete the "Map It Out" worksheet (included below)	Summarize the plot in 5 sentences	Design a bookmark showing the theme (drawing or online)	Create a shoebox diorama of your favorite part of the book

Example acrostic poem:

Ready to explore

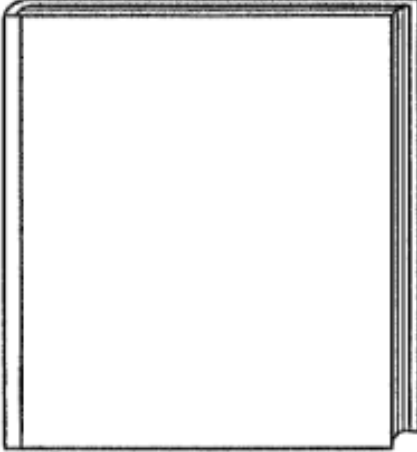
Every page brings a new adventure

Amazing stories spark imagination

Discover something new

Book Review

My book cover



Book Title

Author: _____

Genre (check as many as apply to your book)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> fiction | <input type="radio"/> scary | <input type="radio"/> animal story |
| <input type="radio"/> non-fiction | <input type="radio"/> fairy tale | <input type="radio"/> biography |
| <input type="radio"/> fantasy | <input type="radio"/> adventure | <input type="radio"/> historical |
| <input type="radio"/> humor | <input type="radio"/> sports | <input type="radio"/> mystery |
| <input type="radio"/> other _____ | | |

Plot

Event 1: _____

Event 2: _____

Event 3: _____

Setting



Picture of the setting

Cause and Effect

of one of the events in the book



My Star Rating



Why I rated the book _____ stars.

This book made me feel:

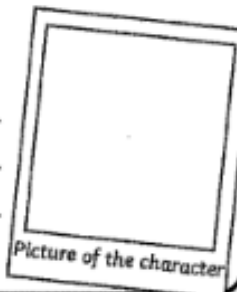


Name: _____

Personality: _____

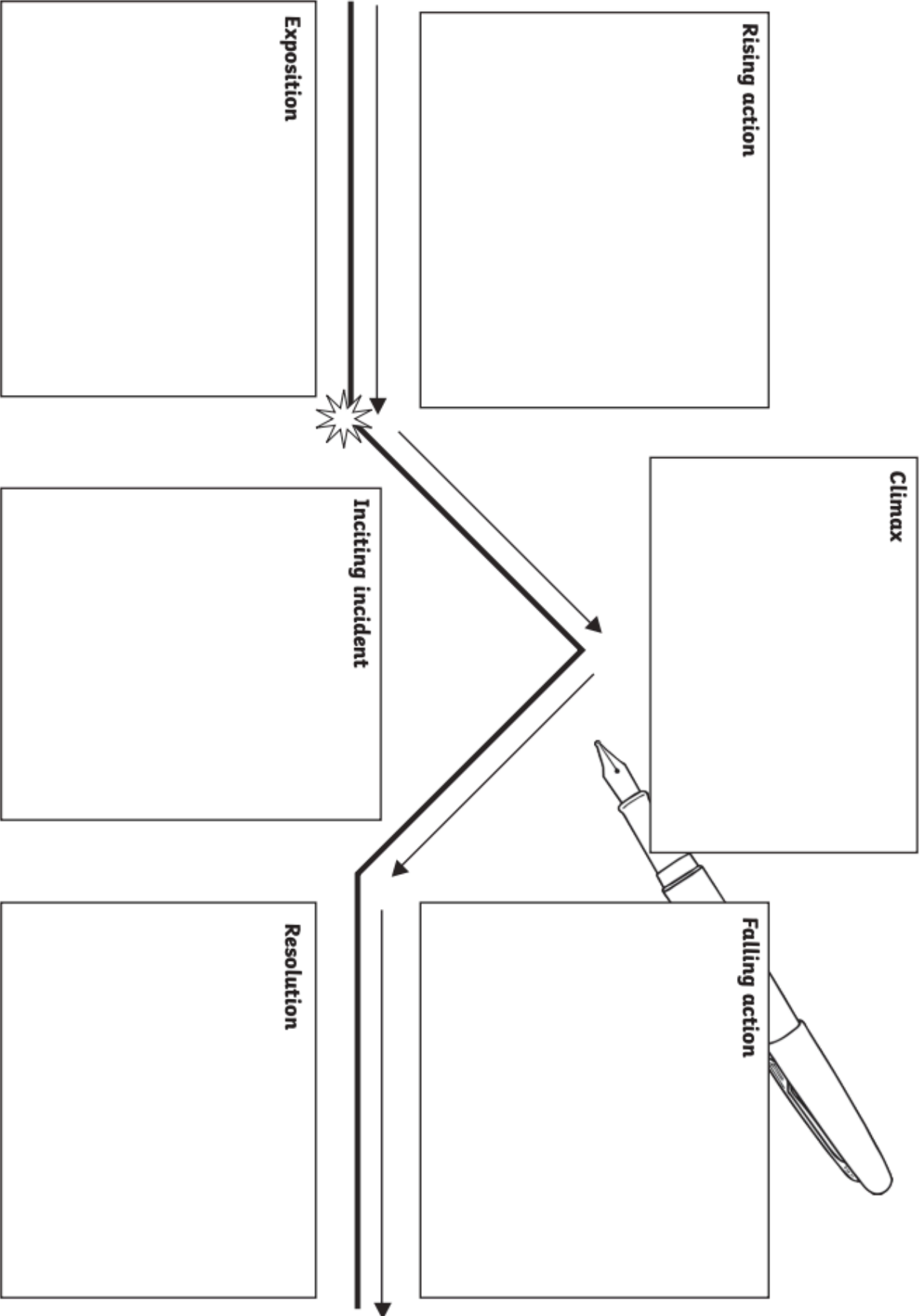
Physical Appearance:

How I feel about this character and why:



Picture of the character

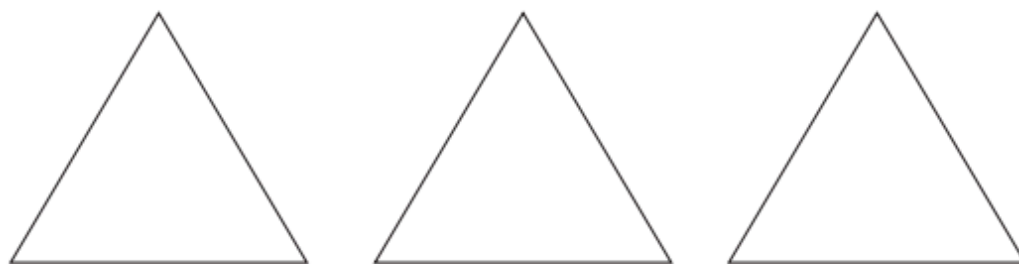
Plot Map



Determining Theme

Brainstorm a list below of all big ideas or topics addressed in the story. These should be expressed in single words: love, honesty, friendship, courage, etc.

Now, decide which three ideas were most important to the plot. Write them in the triangles below.



It's time to write your theme statement! To write it, you are going to use all 3 of the words in a sentence that captures what the story has to say about those three topics. (Hint: You may have to adjust your top three choices once you realize how the ideas do and do not go together, and that's okay! Feel free to switch it up.)

Example: Honesty - Courage - Friendship

True friends are those who have the courage to be honest no matter what.

