



Word Nerd
Collaborative

SEPTEMBER

ELA ENGAGEMENT GAME PLAN

READY, SET, GO!

GREENLIGHTS ALL THE WAY

I love car movies. Fast and the Furious. Gran Turismo. Gone in 60 Seconds. The stakes, the strategy, the style—it's adrenaline meets intention. And whether it's racing on a track or boosting a Mustang out of a parking garage, one thing is always true: where you start isn't where you finish.

The same goes for the school year. August might have felt like a practice lap—shaking off the dust, figuring out who your kids are, what your schedule looks like, and how much coffee it takes to get through a Monday. But September? September is the real starting line.

This is where we settle in.

It's where routines start to stick. Where names come a little faster. Where the new shoes are already scuffed, and the hallway bulletin board is (mostly) finished. And even though the pressure might be building—you haven't taught that unit yet, the benchmark test window is coming, or the curriculum pacing guide is already falling apart—just remember: this is a marathon, not a drag race.

You do not have to do everything in the first month.
You do not have to be perfect to be powerful.
Trust the process. Build your momentum.

And when you need a pit crew, I'll be right here— with tools, resources and strategies ready to roll out.

Let's hit the gas. Together.

— AMANDA

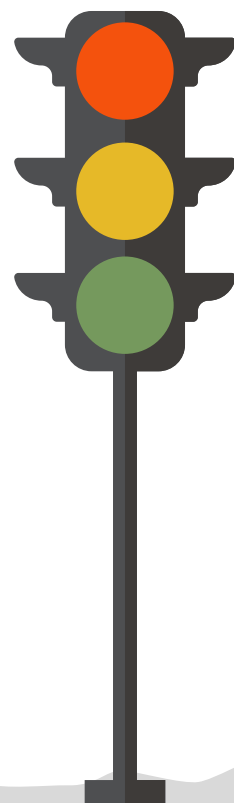
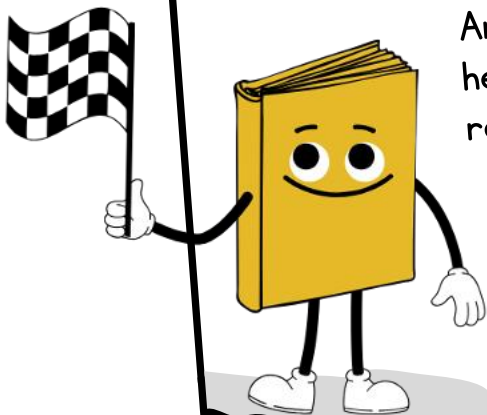


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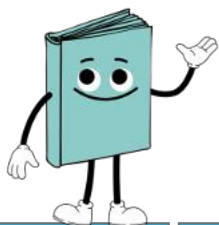
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WATCH A WALK THROUGH
VIDEO OF THIS ELA
ENGAGEMENT PLAN HERE.

COMING SOON!

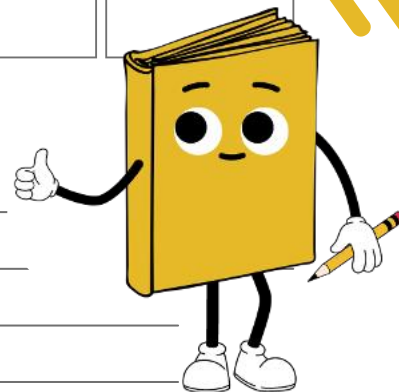




September

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wednes.	Thurs.	Friday	Satur.

Notes:

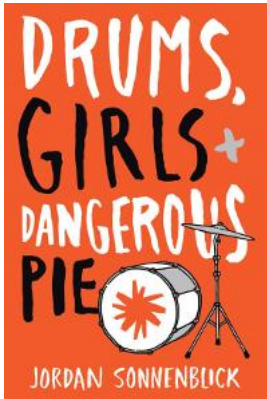




FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAYS

5

Drums, Girls + Dangerous Pie



Drums, Girls +
Dangerous Pie
by Jordan
Sonnenblick

Realistic Fiction/
Prose

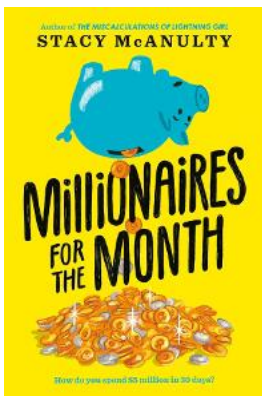
Alone



Alone
by Megan E. Freeman

Survival Story/
Novel in Verse

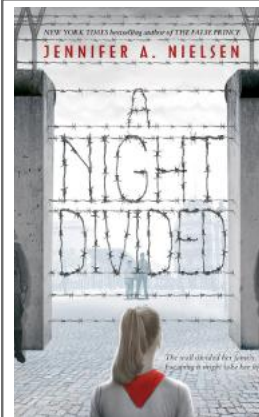
Millionaires for the Month



Millionaires for the
Month
by Stacy McAnulty

Realistic Fiction/Prose

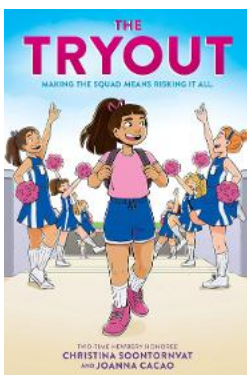
A Night Divided



A Night Divided by
Jennifer A. Nielsen

Historical Fiction/
Suspense/Prose

The Tryout



The Tryout
by Christina
Soontornvat

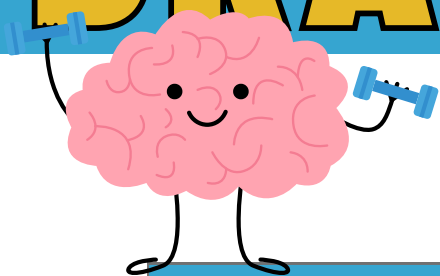
Realistic Fiction/
Graphic Novel

Check out the app for even more reading
recommendations and FCF videos!



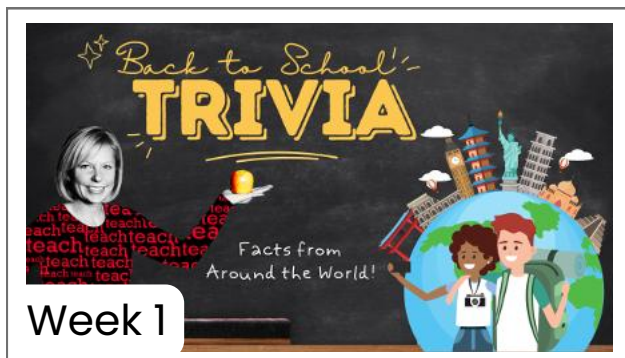
Search: **WORD NERD DAILY** in the app store

BRAIN BREAKS

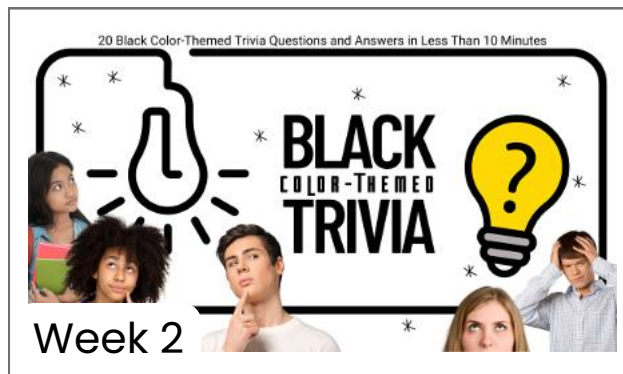


Help your students reset their brains and moods with a little break. Try a fun trivia game! Totally optional, but you can use the LEADERBOARD on page 25 to keep track of student teams and scores throughout the month.

Back to School



Color Trivia: Black



World Series Trivia



Color Trivia: White



Author Trivia



Did you know?

"Brain breaks benefit not only students but teachers, too. They help improve the pacing of your lesson while keeping you and your students refreshed, focused, and engaged."

-- Reading Rockets
Website



Week 1

Monday
Cow - Caption This!

Tuesday
Your Perfect Day

Wednesday
Castle in the Clouds

Thursday
A Tour of Your Town

Friday
Free Write Friday

Week 2

Monday
Famous!

Tuesday
Set the Scene

Wednesday
What Do You Know?

Thursday
Storms

Friday
Free Write Friday

Week 3

Monday
Invisible Bridges

Tuesday
What Would you Do with \$47?

Wednesday
My Favorite Place

Thursday
I'll Never Forget

Friday
Free Write Friday

Week 4

Monday
In a Bad Mood

Tuesday
Trading Places

Wednesday
Sensing the Scene

Thursday
Dog: Caption This!

Friday
Free Write Friday

Week 5

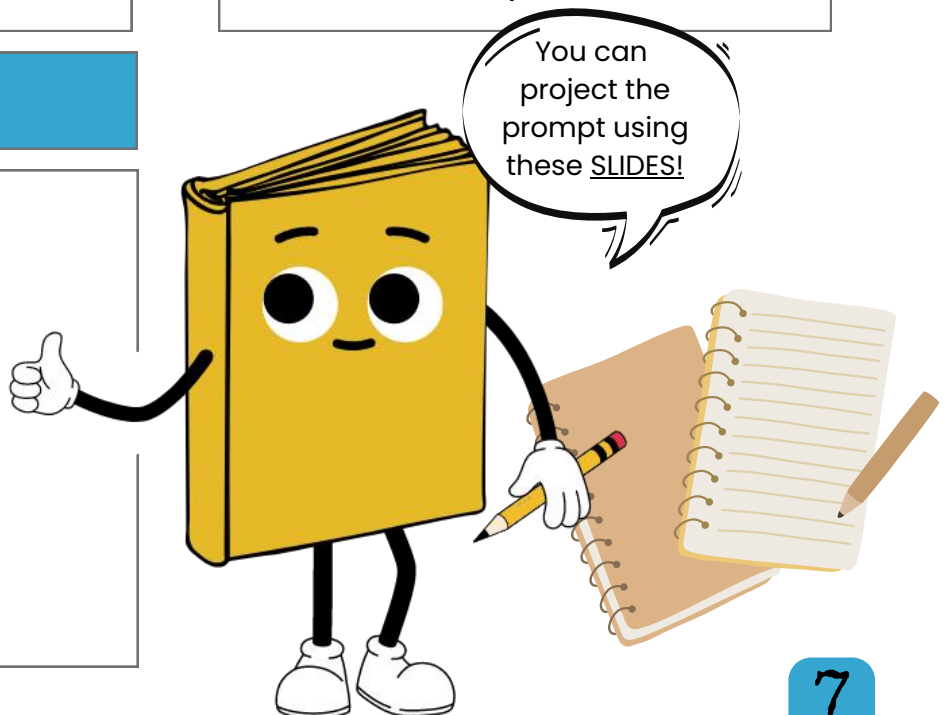
Monday
I'm the BEST!

Tuesday
Art Museum Mishap

Wednesday
I Heard a Rumor

Thursday
Life at Sunset

Friday
Free Write Friday





LESSONS



1

CHATGPT LESSON + VIDEO

In this writing resource you'll find critical thinking and analysis activities that will help you and your students consider the pros and cons and applications of AI and ChatGPT at school. Rather than spend our time creating policies and procedures to prevent its use or penalize those who give it a try, why not teach students the powerfully good ways they can use it? The ways they can learn from it and build off of the foundation it provides? Rather than allowing ChatGPT and AI to do our thinking for us, what if we learned how to work better in collaboration with it?

STANDARDS: CCSS: RL 6.2, RL 6.3, RL 6.5, RL 6.6

2

NOVEL SOUNDTRACK PROJECT

Tired of doing the same ol' thing after your students finish a book? Guess what? They are too! This project is a fun alternative that will hopefully get them thinking critically - without all the moaning and groaning that usually accompanies mental heavy lifting. This project will ask students to create a soundtrack for their book as if it is being turned into a movie!

STANDARDS: CCSS ELA: RL 6.1, RL 6.2, SL 6.2, SL 6.4, SL 6.5

3

WOULD YOU RATHER: BACK TO SCI-FI & FANTASY EDITION

This no-prep resource includes a series of fun, school-friendly Would You Rather questions with paired silent movement responses (like "pose like a ballerina or a weightlifter" or "tap your nose or tap your toes"). After the interactive brain break, students choose a prompt and use the included writing organizer to craft a persuasive or argumentative response

STANDARDS: CCSS: W 6.1



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

September

1 MYSTERY QUOTE RESOURCE

A mystery quote is hidden inside many of my First Chapter Friday videos. A quote from the story appears on the screen, one word at a time. Why? To increase student engagement! In this resource, I'll explain how you can use these quotes to increase student engagement as well as the inspiration behind the idea and ways to level up the activity in your classroom. You might be surprised to learn that HGTV and VH1 helped me come up with this strategy! Great for weekly use, sub days, summer reading programs and more.

2 THEMEATIC READING RECOMMENDATION LISTS

This month I'm highlighting books that feature the topics of: Animal Main Characters, Moving and War. A list with some light-hearted titles and others that deal with HARD THINGS. Moving and War are timely situations and hopefully these books can help your students better navigate the current world as well as help them to know they are not alone. And for most people (though not me, lol) animals are a source of joy and comfort. I hope that these reading recommendations are a hit in your classroom!

3 WOW POW HOW NOW

Ask students to do a little reflection using this guided writing prompt. My favorite thing about WOW, POW, HOW, NOW is that you can apply it to a wide variety of situations. Each person can individualize it to their specific situation or goals. Plus, it's repeatable. Pull it out once a month or once a quarter.

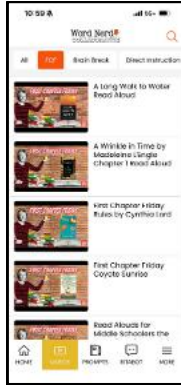
4 WORD NERD DAILY APP PROMPTS

Wish I could plan your lessons with you? With my app, Word Nerd Daily, it can feel like you are... all from your couch with your phone in hand! Use these 8 prompts to help you through tricky teaching situations and plan amazing lessons both you and your students will love!

MUST TRY!

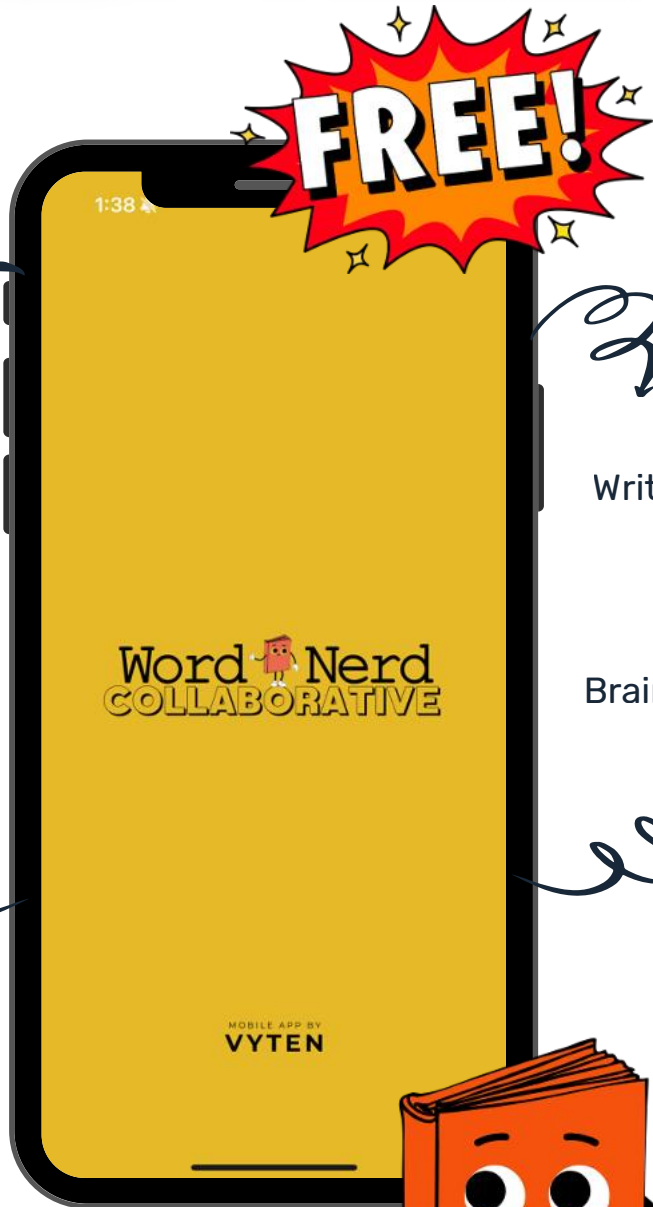
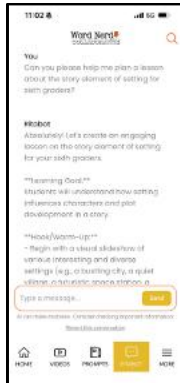
Word Nerd Daily

an app from Amanda Zieba



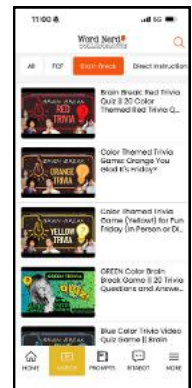
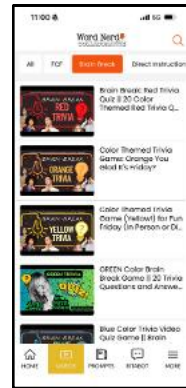
First Chapter
Friday Videos

ChatBot for
Reading Recs and
Lesson Planning

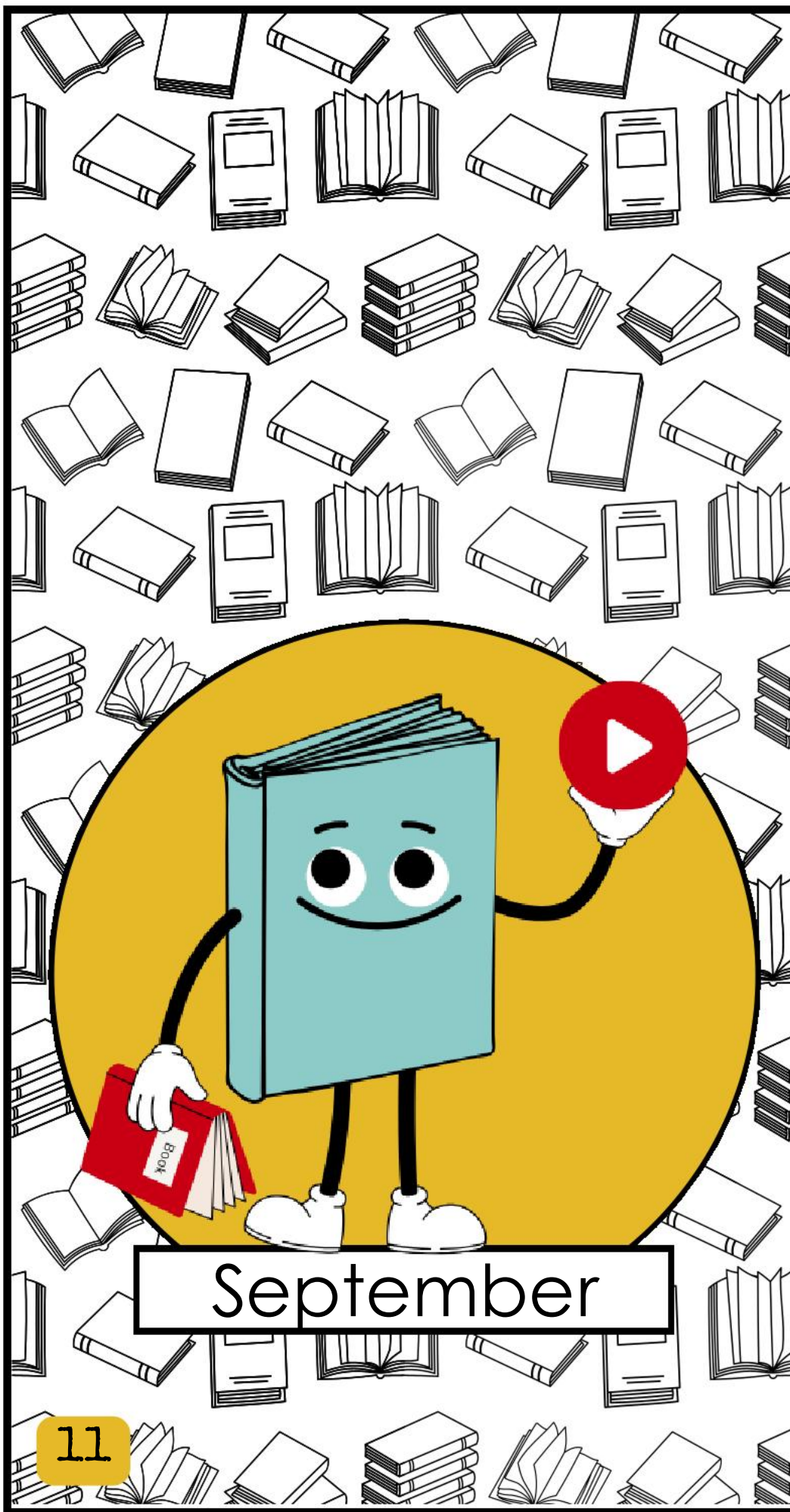


Writing Prompt
Library

Brain Break Videos



AVAILABLE FOR APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES

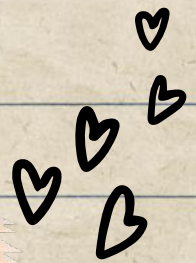


September

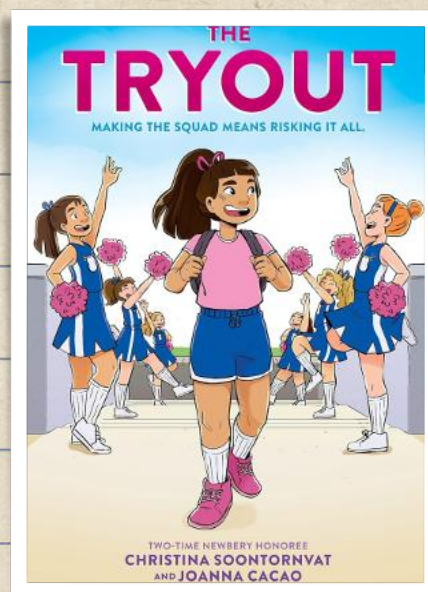
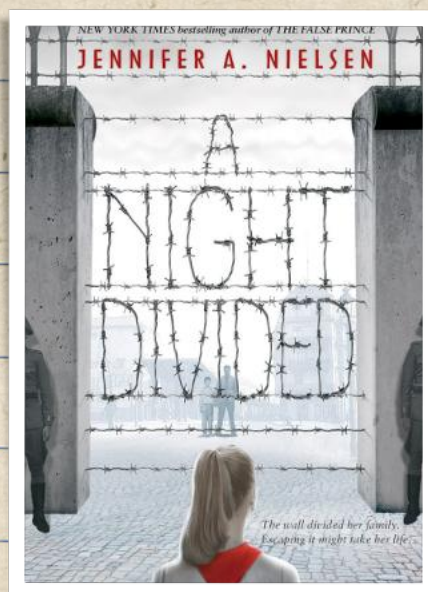
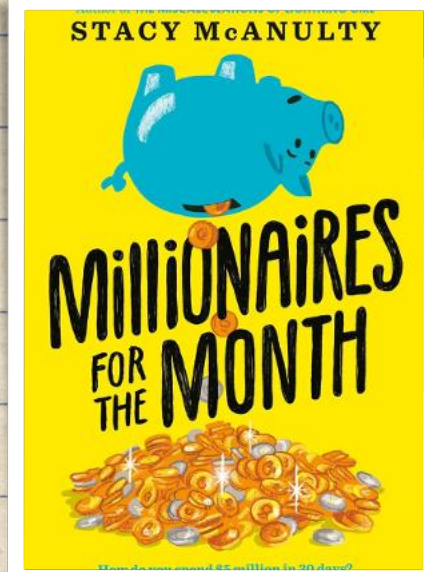
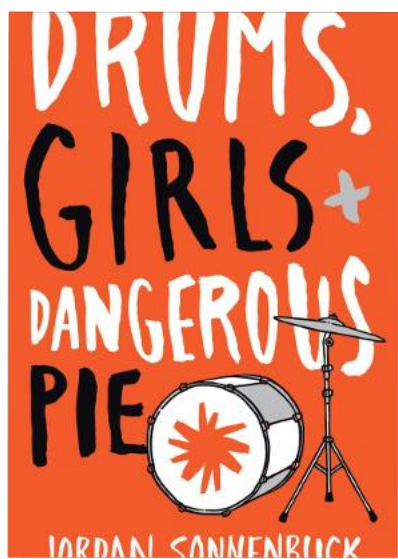
11

FAST
CHAPTER FRIDAY SELECTIONS

SEPTEMBER



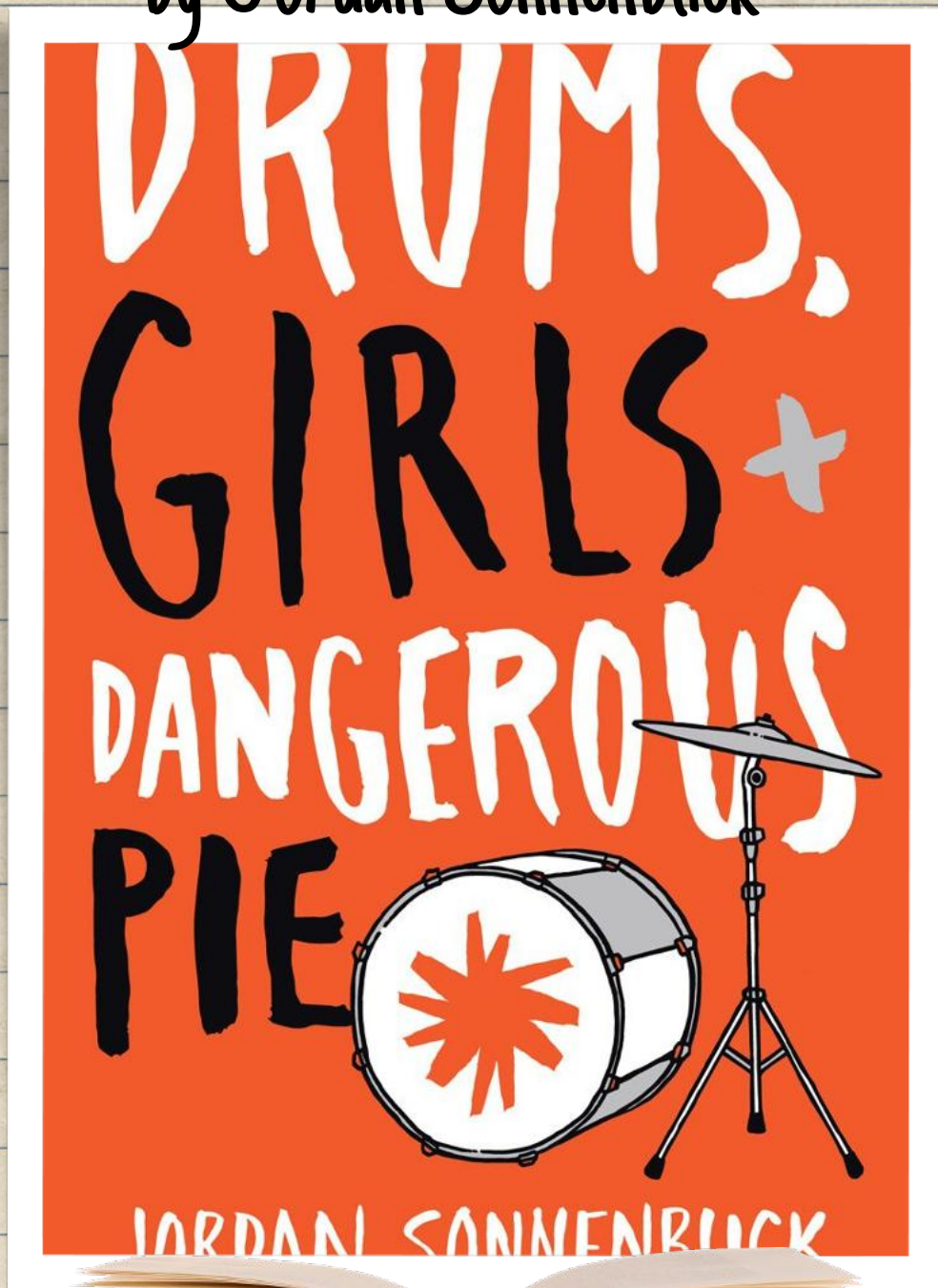
FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAYS



You gotta check them out!

DRUMS, GIRLS + DANGEROUS PIE

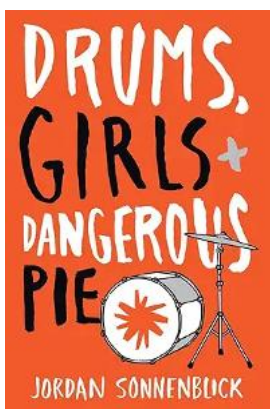
by Jordan Sonnenblick



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name _____

Date _____



Drums, Girls + Dangerous Pie

by Jordan Sonnenblick



Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

Steven has a totally normal life (well, almost). He plays drums in the All-City Jazz Band (whose members call him the Peasant), has a crush on the hottest girl in school (who doesn't even know he's alive), and is constantly annoyed by his younger brother, Jeffrey (who is cuter than cute - which is also pretty annoying). But when Jeffrey gets sick, Steven's world is turned upside down, and he is forced to deal with his brother's illness, his parents' attempts to keep the family in one piece, his homework, the band, girls, and Dangerous Pie (yes, you'll have to read the book to find out what that is!).

This book has over 2,000 five star reviews on Amazon!!

Who Wrote It?

OK, now on to the usual life stuff ... I was born on July 4, 1969 on an Army base in Missouri. My dad got out of the Army when I was a year old and my older sister was five. I spent the rest of my childhood in Staten Island, NY. My favorite school subject was always English, although I was pretty good at everything except sitting still and being quiet. I'm pretty sure my teachers didn't know what to make of me, because I got straight A's, but got in trouble constantly. After high school, I went to the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, where I majored in English, but also took a ton of courses in Russian, history, and anthropology. I joined every activity I could handle, too, playing drums in a theater group, writing and announcing for the marching band, and even dressing up as Santa



Claus to entertain the young cancer patients at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. As a grown up, I taught middle school for along time and now I'm an author. That's the short version! To learn more, visit my website: <https://www.jordansonnenblick.com/bio>

AR Reading Level: N/A

Lexile Level: 940L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

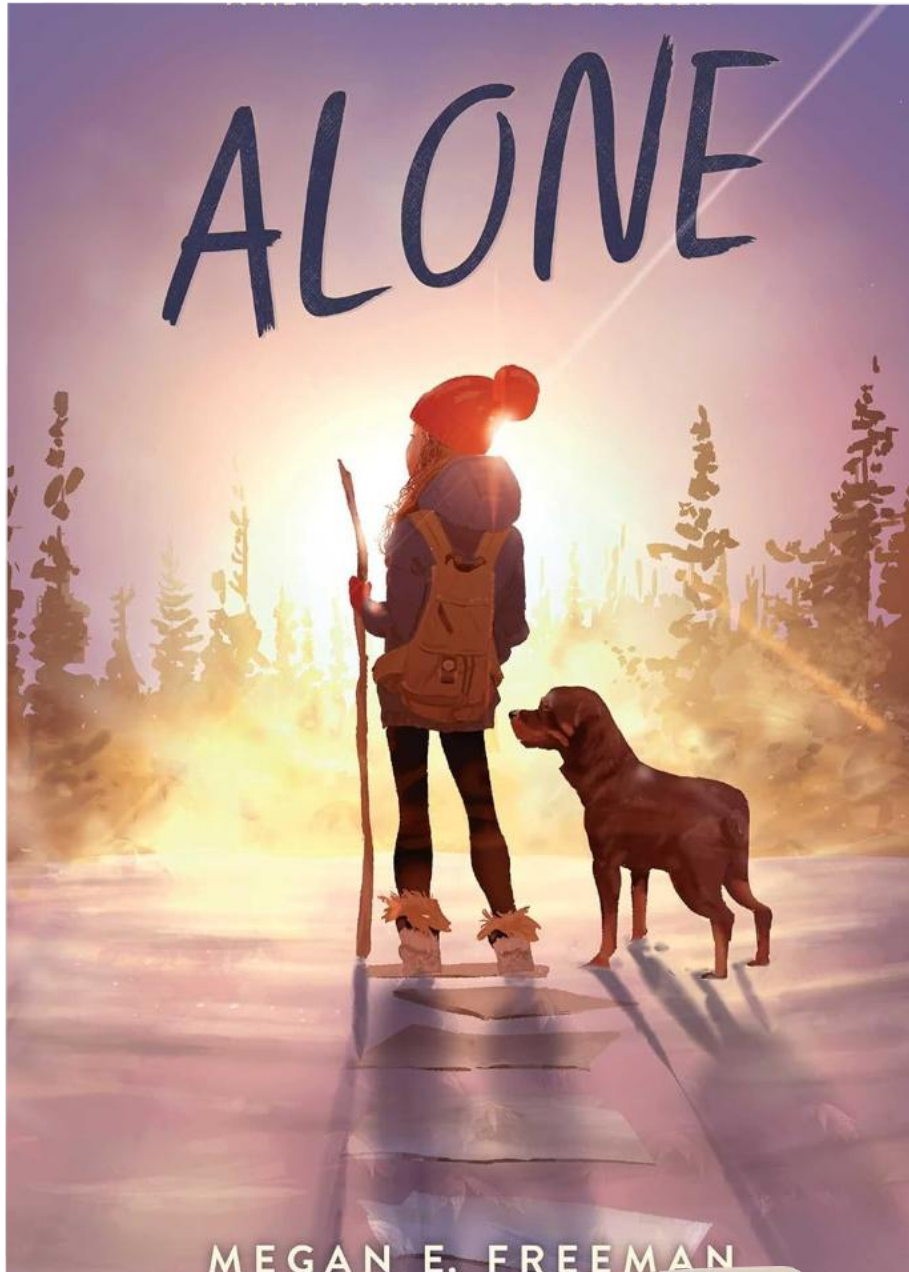
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

ALONE

by Megan E. Freeman



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name _____

Date _____



Alone

by Megan E. Freeman



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

When twelve-year-old Maddie hatches a scheme for a secret sleepover with her two best friends, she ends up waking up to a nightmare. She's alone—left behind in a town that has been mysteriously evacuated and abandoned.

With no one to rely on, no power, and no working phone lines or internet access, Maddie slowly learns to survive on her own. Her only companions are a Rottweiler named George and all the books she can read. After a rough start, Maddie learns to trust her own ingenuity and invents clever ways to survive in a place that has been deserted and forgotten.

As months pass, she escapes natural disasters, looters, and wild animals. But Maddie's most formidable enemy is the crushing loneliness she faces every day. Can Maddie's stubborn will to survive carry her through the most frightening experience of her life?

Who Wrote It?

Megan E. Freeman attended an elementary school where poets visited her classroom every week to teach poetry, and she has been a writer ever since. *Alone* is Megan's first book and it took her 8 years to write! The idea for it came she read *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell in a Mother-Daughter Book Club. She was thinking about *Karana* being left behind on the island, and I wondered what might happen if a modern-day seventh grader was left behind in a Colorado town. Ideas for poems come from things I see or hear or smell or taste, or from thoughts that pass through my mind. I love to travel, and wherever I go, I explore until I find a local bookstore. I always buy at least two books (one book of poetry by a local poet and one other book I'm excited to read). Then I take a picture of the store so I can remember it.



She used to live in northeast Los Angeles, central Ohio, northern Norway, and on Caribbean cruise ships. Now she lives in northern Colorado. You can learn more about Megan on her website: www.meganefreeman.com.

AR Reading Level: 4.7

Lexile Level: 690L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

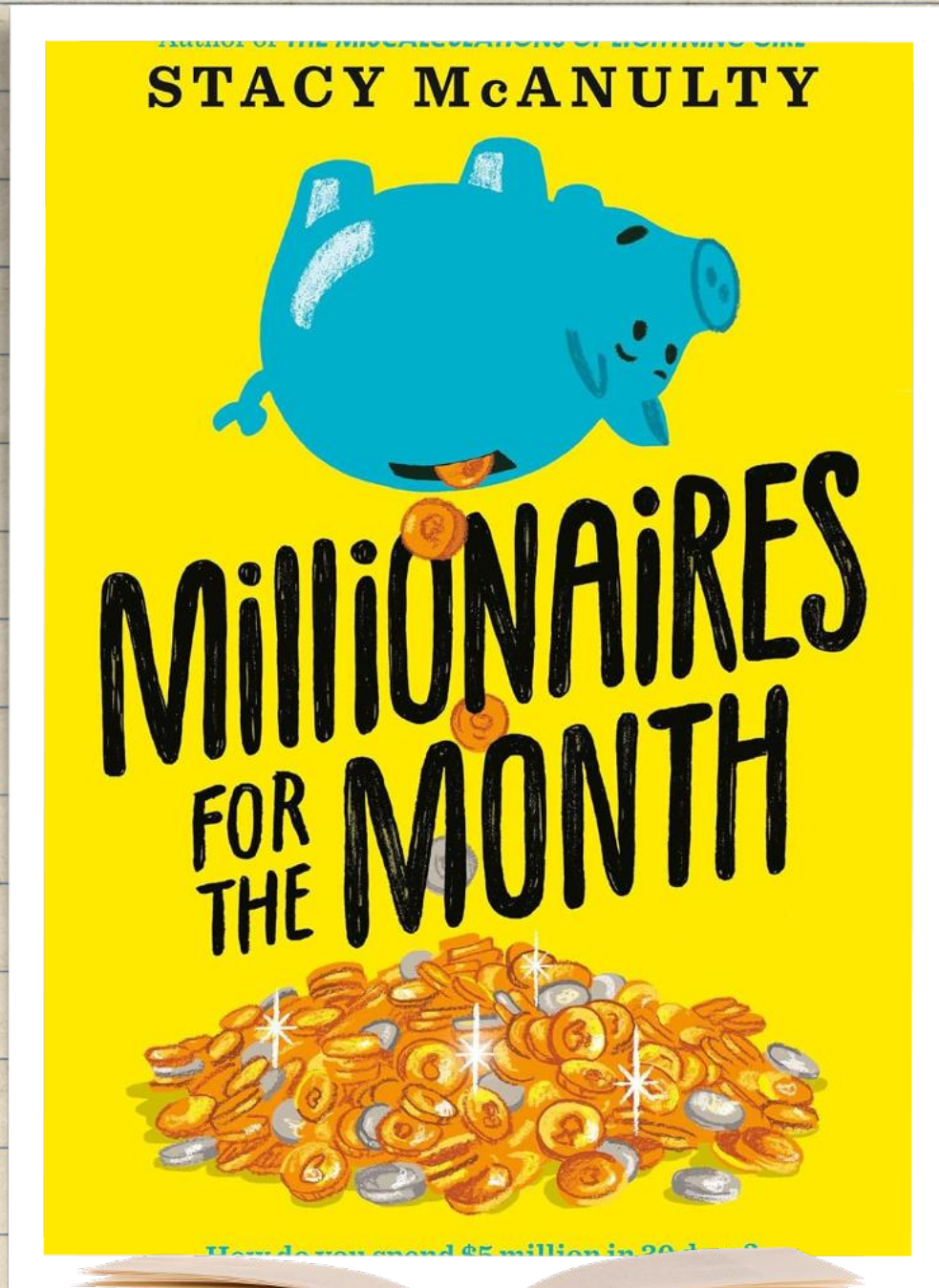
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



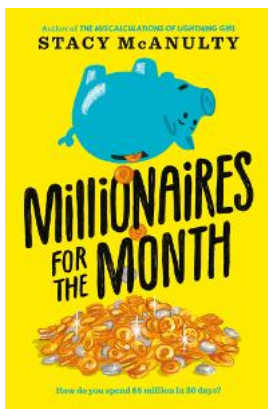
Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

MILLIONAIRES FOR THE MONTH

by Stacy McAnulty



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY



Name _____

Date _____

Millionaires for the Month

by Stacy McAnulty

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

Max soars above the world . . . but in James Patterson's thrilling adventure, fantasy can come crashing down to reveal the nightmares of the Angel Experiment. Maximum Ride and her "flock" -- Fang, Iggy, Nudge, Gasman and Angel -- are just like ordinary kids, only they have wings and can fly. It may seem like a dream come true to some, but their lives can morph into a living nightmare at any time. Angel, the youngest member of the flock, is kidnapped and taken back to the "School" where she and the others were experimented on by a crew of whack jobs. Her friends brave a journey to blazing hot Death Valley, CA, to save Angel, but soon enough, they find themselves in yet another nightmare: fighting off the half-human, half-wolf "Erasers" in New York City. Whether in the treetops of Central Park or in the bowels of the Manhattan subway system, Max and her adopted family take the ride of their lives. Along the way, Max discovers that her purpose is save the world. But can she?

Who Wrote It?

Likes and Dislikes

Things I Love (and I'm keeping family, friends, and food off the list because there wouldn't be room for anything else):

- Dogs
- Photography
- Traveling
- Funny Picture Books
- Sunday Night TV
- Twitter, Facebook, e-mail
- Stars (as in reviews)
- Trying New Recipes
- Dinosaurs
- Fortunes from Fortune Cookies
- Good Manners

Things I Dislike (and I'm keeping cleaning and chores off the list because there wouldn't be room for anything else):

- Bullies
- Running Late
- Being Sick
- Garlic Breath
- Rejection
- Stepping in Gum
- Telemarketing Calls
- Nightmares
- Whining
- People Who Say Reading Is Boring

In no particular order... I'm a wife, mother of 3 kids and 3 dogs, author, daughter, sister and stepsister, aunt, friend, Twitter addict, mechanical engineer (currently inactive), inconsistent blogger, Packers fan, two-finger



typist, concerned citizen, book-buying enthusiast, reluctant volunteer, minivan driver, pancake flipper, snooze-button hitter, and coupon clipper. Learn more about Stacy on her website: www.stacymcanulty.com/

AR Reading Level: 4.1

Lexile Level: 570L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

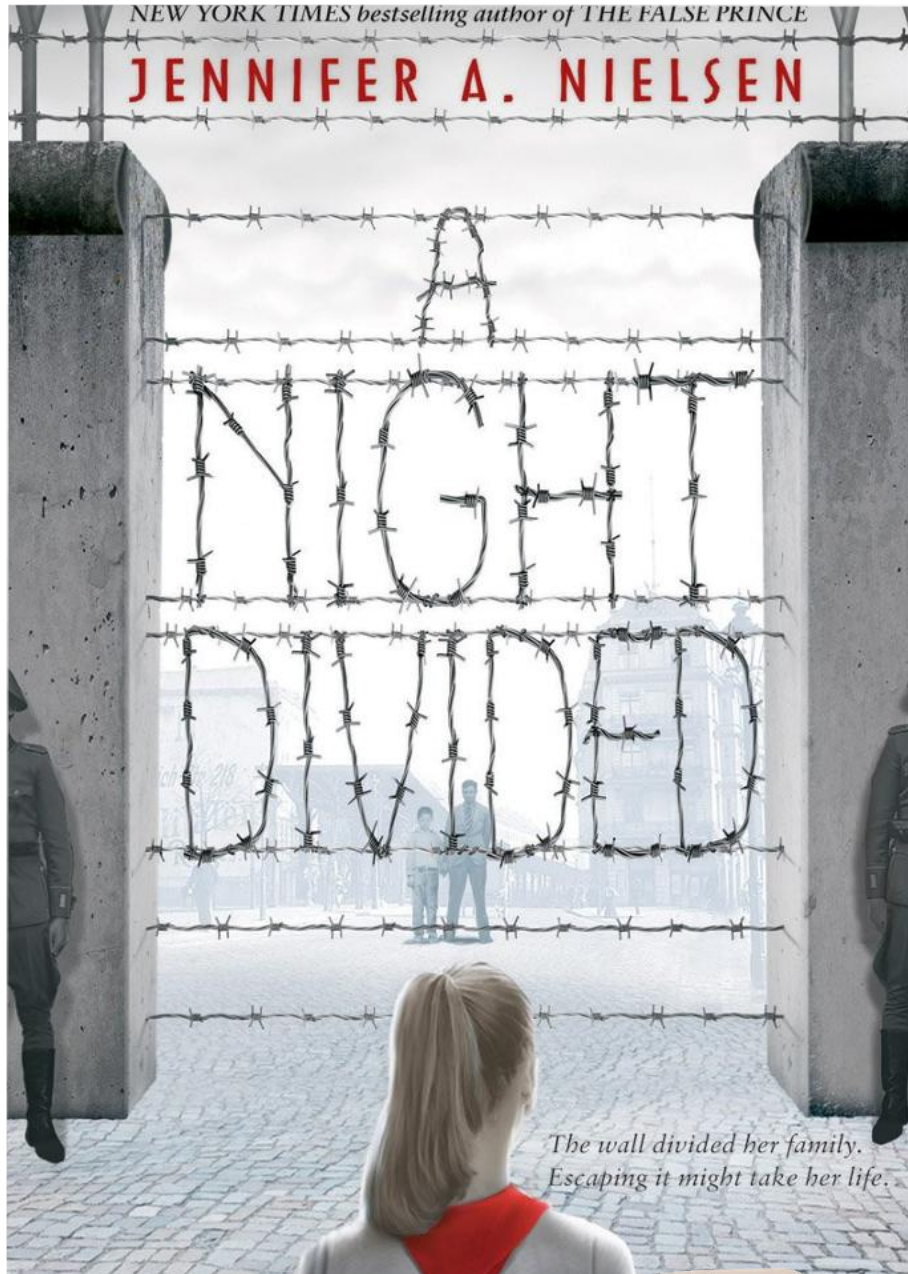
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



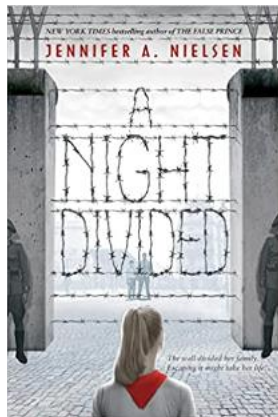
Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

A NIGHT DIVIDED

by Jennifer A. Nielsen



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY



A Night Divided

by Jennifer A. Nielsen

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

A With the rise of the Berlin Wall, 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, yet she can't help herself. She sees the East German soldiers with their guns trained on their own citizens; she, her family, her neighbors and friends are prisoners in their own city. But one day on her way to school, Gerta spots her father on a viewing platform on the western side, pantomiming a peculiar dance. Gerta concludes that her father wants her and Fritz to tunnel beneath the wall, out of East Berlin. However, if they are caught, the consequences will be deadly. No one can be trusted. Will Gerta and her family find their way to freedom?

AR Reading Level: 5.4

Who Wrote It?

For as far back as Jennifer can remember, she has shared her brain with imaginary characters. She figures it's okay if she talks to them as she's working on her stories, as long as they don't start talking back. Jennifer began writing in elementary school, writing in spiral notebooks or plucking out keys on an electric typewriter (yep, she's that old). Jennifer has won multiple awards including the Sydney Taylor Notable Book Award (RESISTANCE, 2019), multiple Whitney Awards, and several state book awards. Jennifer's favorite food is Pho and she loves watching movies. Her favorite is The



**Lord of the
Rings. You can
learn more
about Jennifer
by visiting her
website:
<https://jennielsen.com/> or
watching the
interview at
the end of this
video.**

Lexile Level: 810L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

★ ★ WHAT I THINK ★ ★



THE TRY OUT

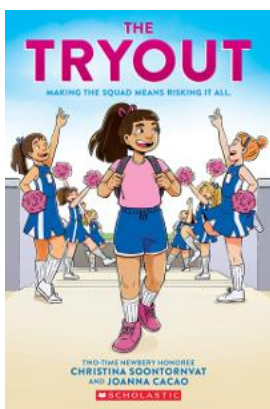
by Christina Soontornvat



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name _____

Date _____



The Tryout

Written by Christina Soontornvat
Illustrated by Joanna Cacao

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

Trying out for middle school cheerleader means: performing in the giant school gym, with the whole school watching, and risking total humiliation. If Christina can make it through this, she can make it through anything.

As one of the only Asian American kids in her small Texas town, Christina just wants to fit in. Luckily, her best friend, Megan, who is Iranian American, can totally relate. The two girls have always been inseparable and relish creating elaborate fantasy worlds together. But middle school is a reality-check, and suddenly popularity is way more important than playing pretend. When cheerleading tryouts are announced, Christina and Megan literally jump at the chance to join the squad. But does fitting in actually equal belonging? Will they survive the terrifying tryouts? And most importantly, will their friendship withstand the pressures of heated competition and rivalry? Hilarious and heartfelt, *The Tryout* is Christina Soontornvat's personal story, sure to make you laugh, cry, and cheer!

Who Wrote It?



Author Christina Soontornvat



AR Reading Level: unavailable

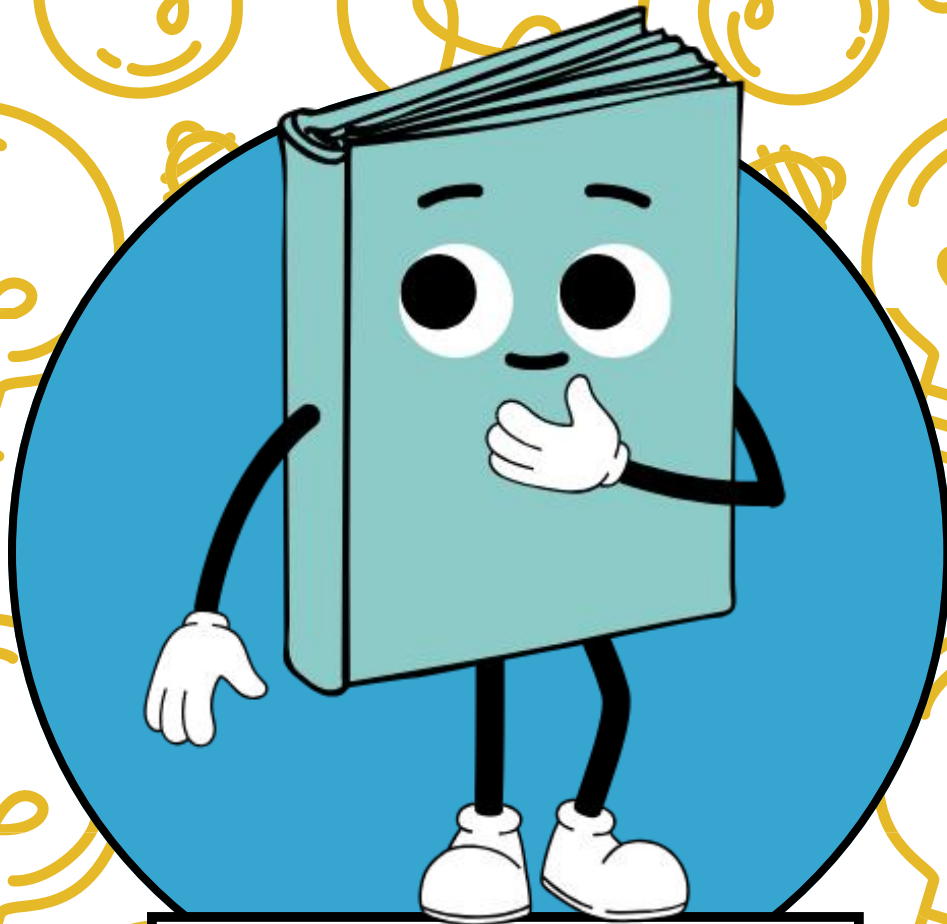
Lexile Level: 380L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



September

23

BRAIN BREAKS

LINKS + ANSWER SHEETS/KEYS

How to do TRIVIA

FOR EACH BRAIN BREAK YOU WILL FIND:

1. Link to the YouTube video version (all around 8-11 minutes)
2. Student answer sheets
3. Modified student answer sheets for students of different ages/abilities
4. Printable question and answer sheets (to use with or without the video)
5. Answer key
6. List of additional considerations, applications and implementation ideas
7. ALL SORTS OF FUN!! :)

DIRECTIONS

1. Play the video showcasing 20-30 themed trivia questions.
2. Using the the provided printable worksheets, or scratch paper, have students record their guesses.
3. During the answer portion of the slideshow/video pause to allow students to share out or discuss their ideas/guesses with the whole class, in small groups or in partnerships.
 - a. This step is optional, but I find that if you want to get your students talking, it works great. If you need a few minutes of silence... you can ban conversation and it works just fine that way too!
4. Reveal final answers.
5. Total up scores
6. Record scores on the leaderboard (page 18)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/IDEAS

1. This activity can be used as a brain break, ice breaker or fun game.
2. In my classes we keep our teams the same for an entire quarter. We have a "leader board" where we keep a running score for all of our brain break games. This is great for team building or creating comradery in a classroom learning environment. :)
3. You can assign this to individuals (ie: in Google Classroom) to do on their own, or complete the challenge as a whole class activity using a screen and projector.
4. This activity can work well in person or via distanced learning.
5. Because the videos are on YouTube, this is an activity that students can easily try/repeat at home with family members. :)
6. Consider letting a classroom helper or leader be the "game show host" and call on classmates to share their ideas and reveal the answers.

Tired of the same old Brain Breaks? I've got you covered.



September Brain Break LEADERBOARD

In each square record either the # of points a team earned, or their place (1st, 2nd, etc.) The method you choose will determine whether the winner will be the team with the highest or lowest score.

TEAM #1

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total

TEAM #2

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total

TEAM #3

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total

TEAM #4

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total

TEAM #5

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total

TEAM #6

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total



Trivia Game Video Link

Use the below links to access the video for this activity.
Click the title, image or link to get to the video!

BACK TO SCHOOL TRIVIA VIDEO



This link will take you to the YouTube Video of Back to School Trivia questions: https://youtu.be/I6jDrw9i59E?sub_confirmation=1





Back to School Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Write your answers on the
lines below.

Trivia Video -->



Name/Team Name: _____

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |

How did you do? Are you a
Back to School Trivia ROCKSTAR?!?!



Back to School Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Circle your answer for
each question below.

Trivia Video -->



Name/Team Name: _____

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. A B C D | 11. A B C D |
| 2. True or False | 12. True or False |
| 3. A B C D | 13. A B C D |
| 4. A B C D | 14. A B C D |
| 5. True or False | 15. A B C D |
| 6. A B C D | 16. A B C D |
| 7. A B C D | 17. A B C D |
| 8. A B C D | 18. A B C D |
| 9. True or False | 19. A B C D |
| 10. A B C D | 20. True or False |

Score: ____ / 20
www.amandazieba.com



Trivia Video



Back to School Trivia

Name: _____

- 1** In which country would you find more than 100 floating schools on boats? (This is so that during flooding season kids can still get an education!)
 - A) Belgium
 - B) Belarus
 - C) Bangladesh
 - D) Burundi
- 2** True or False?
Children in the Netherlands start school on their 4th birthday.
 - A) True
 - B) False
- 3** In a remote area of this country, some kids have to travel to school by zip line!
 - A) Canada
 - B) Columbia
 - C) Cambodia
 - D) Cuba
- 4** About how many words does a pencil write before it's all used up?
 - A) 9,000 words
 - B) 45,000 words
 - C) 600,000 words
 - D) 1,000,000 words
- 5** True or False?
During WWII some students went to school inside the Great Wall of China.
 - A) True
 - B) False
- 6** The U.S. high school with the largest number of students can be found in which American city?
 - A) Brooklyn, NY
 - B) New Orleans, LA
 - C) San Francisco, CA
 - D) Dallas, TX
- 7** The world's largest library is located at what college or university?
 - A) Russian Presidential Academy (Russia)
 - B) Complutense University of Madrid (Spain)
 - C) University of Lyon (France)
 - D) Harvard University (USA)
- 8** Why are school buses painted yellow?
 - A) Safety reasons
 - B) Most visible color
 - C) A study was conducted
 - D) All of the above
- 9** True or False?
In Japan they do not hire custodians or food service workers for their schools. The students do those chores.
 - A) True
 - B) False
- 10** What is the length of the longest school ever built?
 - A) 0.5 miles long
 - B) 0.78 miles long
 - C) 1.1 miles long
 - D) 2.3 miles long





Trivia Video



Back to School Trivia

Name: _____

11 What country started the tradition of giving teachers an apple?

- A) Denmark
- B) Egypt
- C) France
- D) Guatemala

12 True or False?

A child's brain can produce enough energy to power 7 light bulbs.

- A) True
- B) False

13 The oldest public school in the United States is in which city?

- A) Albany, NY
- B) Boston, MA
- C) Charleston, SC
- D) Washington, D. C.

14 What is the most popular school color combination world wide?

- A) Black and Yellow
- B) Blue and Red
- C) Yellow and Green
- D) Blue and White

15 Before pencil erasers were invented, what was a common way to get rid of pencil markings?

- A) a piece of white bread
- B) Q-tips
- C) chewing gum
- D) a tissue

16 How many countries in the world offer FREE COLLEGE to it's residents?

- A) 0
- B) 9
- C) 17
- D) 22

17 Which country's students have the most homework each week?

- A) Czechia
- B) China
- C) Cambodia
- D) Costa Rica

18 If you were to place the crayons that Crayola makes each year, end to end, how many times would they circle planet Earth?

- A) 3 times
- B) 8 times
- C) 6 times
- D) 13 times

19 Due to their distance from school, some students in this country get their lessons by listening to the radio.

- A) Argentina
- B) Albania
- C) Australia
- D) Afghanistan

20 True or False
In Thailand, it is mandatory for all students to get a haircut before attending school.

- A) True
- B) False





Back to School Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:

If you'd like to check student
answers without the video,
here is the answer key.

Trivia Video



ANSWER KEY

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. C) Bangladesh | 11. A) Denmark |
| 2. A) True | 12. B) False |
| 3. B) Columbia | 13. B) Boston, MA |
| 4. B) 45,000 words | 14. D) Blue and White |
| 5. A) True | 15. A) A piece of white bread |
| 6. A) Brooklyn, NY | 16. D) 22 |
| 7. D) Harvard University | 17. B) China |
| 8. D) All of the Above | 18. C) 6 times |
| 9. A) True | 19. C) Australia |
| 10. C) 1.1 Miles Long | 20. A) True |

Thanks for playing!



Trivia Game Video Link

Use the below links to access the video for this activity.
Click the title, image or link to get to the video!

BLACK TRIVIA BRAIN BREAK GAME

20 Black Color-Themed Trivia Questions and Answers in Less Than 10 Minutes



This link will take you to the YouTube Video of Black color themed Trivia questions:

<https://youtu.be/fxF4hkODlrE>





Black Color-Themed Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Write your answers on
the lines below.

Trivia
Video



Name/Team Name: _____

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |

How did you do?
Are you a **BLACK TRIVIA ROCKSTAR?!?!**



Black Color-Themed Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Write your answers on
the lines below.

Trivia
Video



Name/Team Name: _____

1: Dog OR Cat

2: Crow OR Hawk

3: The Black Sails OR The Black Pearl

4: A B C D

5: A B C D

6: Darth Vader OR Masked Intruder

7: The Black Hills OR The Black Bluffs

8: Tomahawks OR Blackhawks

9: A B C D

10: Friday OR Sunday

11: A B C D

12: True OR False

13: A B C D

14: True OR False

15: A B C D

16: True OR False

17: Johnny Black OR Jack Black

18: A B C D

19: A B C D

20: True OR False

How did you do?
Are you a **BLACK TRIVIA EXPERT?!?!**

Score: ____/20



Black Trivia Brain Break Game

Name: _____

Trivia
Video



1 It is often considered bad luck to see what kind of black animal?

- a) Rat
- b) Dog
- c) Cat
- d) Mouse

2 Name a bird that is entirely black.



3 What is the name of Captain Jack Sparrow's ship in the Pirates of the Carribean movie series?

The Black _____

4 In 1928, when the first limousines were made, who were they made to carry?



- a) presidents
- b) famous actors
- c) mobsters
- d) big band musicians

5 What is the top speed of a US Army Black Hawk Helicopter?

- a) 129 mph
- b) 192 mph
- c) 222 mph
- d) 292 mph



6 What is the name of this famously evil father who wears all black?



7 This tourist destination in South Dakota and home of Mount Rushmore, is commonly called:



The Black _____

8 This mascot is the symbol for a Chicago team named the: (hint: 10 letters, 1 word)



9 What name did Marvel creators Stan Lee and Jack Kirby almost give to Black Panther in 1966?

- a) Coal Tiger
- b) Dark Cat
- c) Raven Fighter
- d) Shadow Cat

10 The biggest shopping day of the year, the day after Thanksgiving, is called Black

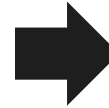




Black Trivia Brain Break Game

Name: _____

Trivia
Video



11 This 4 member pop musical group is called...

(color + veggie = ...)

B _ _ _ _
E _ _ _
P _ _ _



12 True or False: Ancient Egyptians wore kohl (black eyeliner) because they believed it would help them carry the protection of the gods with them throughout their day.

- a) True
- b) False

13 What is the name of this black licorice flavored candy with a pink and white candy coating?

- a) Not So Goods
- b) Whites N' Pinks
- c) Plenty Enough
- d) Good N' Plenty



14 Black holes are only found in science fiction books and the movies. They aren't real!

- a) True
- b) False

15 Which hurricane produced the largest blackout in US history?

- a) Hurricane Maria - 2017
- b) Hurricane Georges - 1998
- c) Hurricane Wilma - 2005
- d) Hurricane Sandy - 2012

16 True or False: Pirate ships made their presence known by their black sails.

- a) True
- b) False

17 This hand in cards and this actor share first and last names, just reversed. What two names make up their full name?





18 What is the fastest recorded speed of a hockey puck hit by a pro?

- a) 80 mph
- b) 88 mph
- c) 108 mph
- d) 118 mph

19 Which country invented black ink?

- a) India
- b) England
- c) China
- d) Peru

20 True or False: The Black Mamba is named not for its body color but for the color of the inside of its mouth.

- a) True
- b) False





Black Color-Themed Answer Key

Directions:
If you'd like to check
student answers
without the video,
here is the answer key.

ANSWER KEY

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Cat | 11. B) Black-Eyed Peas |
| 2. Crow, Raven, | 12. True |
| 3. The Black Pearl | 13. D) Good n' Plenty |
| 4. D) Big Band Musicians | 14. False |
| 5. C) 222 MPH | 15. A) Hurricane Maria (2017) |
| 6. Darth Vader | 16. False |
| 7. The Black Hills | 17. Jack Black/Black Jack |
| 8. Blackhawks | 18. C) 108 MPH |
| 9. A) Coal Tiger | 19. C) China |
| 10. Friday | 20. True |

Thanks for playing!
Check out more Brain Breaks on YouTube!



Trivia Game Video Link

Use the below links to access the video for this activity.
Click the title, image or link to get to the video!

WORLD SERIES TRIVIA VIDEO



This link will take you to the YouTube Video of World Series Trivia questions: https://youtu.be/Szs4_EMzOfY?sub_confirmation=1





World Series Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Write your answers on
the lines below.

Trivia Video



Name/Team Name: _____

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |

How did you do?
Are you a World Series Trivia

MVP?



World Series Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Write your answers on
the lines below.

Trivia Video



Name/Team Name: _____

1. A B C D
2. A B C
3. A B C D
4. True or False
5. A B C D
6. A B C D
7. True or False
8. A B C D
9. A B C D
10. A B C
11. A B C D
12. A B C D
13. A B C D
14. A B C D
15. True or False
16. A B C D
17. A B C D
18. True or False
19. A B C D
20. A B C D

How did you do?
Are you a
World Series Trivia
CHAMPION?!?!?

Score: ____/20
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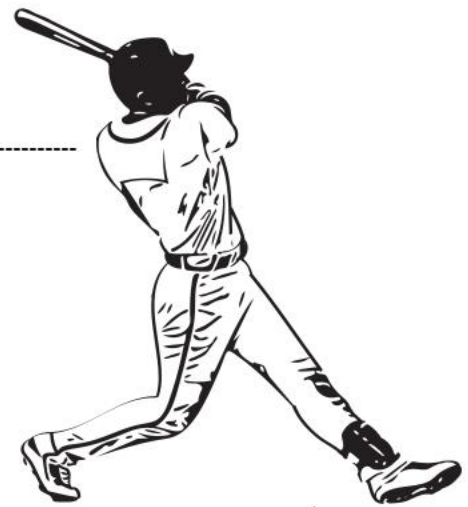


Trivia
Video

World Series Trivia



Are you a World Series Trivia MVP?
Take this Trivia quiz and see!



1 The acronym MLB stands for...

- a) Minor League Ballers b) Moms Love Baseball
c) Most Likeable Ballplayers d) Major League Baseball

2 How many runs were scored in the highest scoring World Series game?

- a) 15 b) 23 c) 29

3 What year was the 1st World Series played?

- a) 1903 b) 1913 c) 1923 d) 1933

4 True or False: Under the leather cover of a baseball, you will find yarn.

- a) True b) False

5 What caused an 11 day delay in the 1989 World Series?

- a) flu outbreak b) hot dog shortage c) player injuries d) earthquake

6 In what year was the first World Series Night game?

- a) 1971 b) 1979 c) 1985 d) 1988

7 As of the 2022 season, the only team to never play in a World Series is the Seattle Mariners.

- a) True b) False

8 What is the length of the shortest World Series Game?

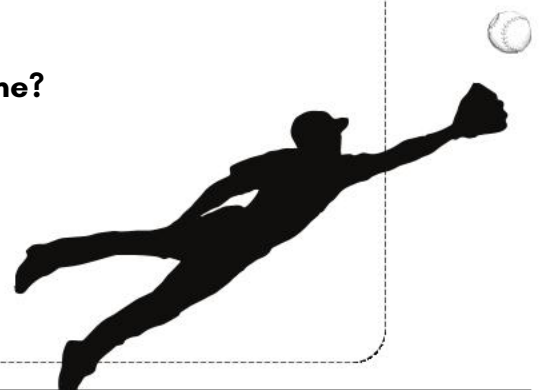
- a) One hour and five minutes (1:05) b) One hour and twenty five minutes (1:25)
c) One hour and fifty three minutes (1:53) d) Two hours and seven minutes (2:07)

9 How many baseballs are used per World Series game?

- a) 12-24 b) 42-56 c) 72-90 d) 96-120

10 In what year did the World Series finish in November (for the first and only time)?

- a) 1980 b) 1992 c) 2001





11 What was the first non-US team to win the World Series?

- a) Montreal Expos b) Chunichi Dragons
- c) Winnipeg Goldeyes d) Toronto Blue Jays

12 What is the name of the trophy presented to the winner of the World Series?

- a) Commissioner's Trophy
- b) Warren G. Giles Trophy
- c) Lombardi Trophy
- d) William Harridge Trophy

13 Which US president threw the first ever presidential first pitch at a World Series game?

- a) John F. Kennedy b) Herbert Hoover
- c) Calvin Coolidge d) Franklin D. Roosevelt

14 What city has hosted the most World Series games?

- a) Miami, FL b) St. Louis, MO c) Los Angeles, CA d) New York, NY

15 The World Series is a best of 7 games contest. Knowing that...

True or False: **1/3 of times, the series requires all 7 games.**

- a) True b) False

16 Why was the 1994 World Series cancelled?

- a) Flood b) Player Strike c) Bird Flue d) The Olympics

17 What is the highest number of pitchers used in a World Series game?

- a) 13 b) 18 c) 24 d) 31

18 True or False: There has NEVER been a GAME 8 in the WORLD SERIES.

- a) True b) False

19 What is the most innings ever played in 1 World Series game?

- a) 15 b) 16 c) 17 d) 18

20 In 1946 the World Series Ring given to the winning team cost \$100 each. How much did each ring cost in 2021?

- a) \$25,000 b) \$20,000 c) \$16,000

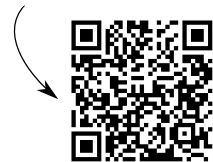




World Series Trivia Answer Key

Directions:
If you'd like to check
student answers without
the video, here is the
answer key.

Trivia Video



ANSWER KEY

1. D) Major League Baseball
2. C) 29
3. B) 1903
4. True
5. D) Earthquake
6. B) 1979
7. True
8. B) 1:25
9. D) 96-120
10. C) 2001
11. D) Toronto Blue Jays
12. A) Commissioner's Trophy
13. C) Calvin Coolidge
14. D) New York, NY
15. True
16. B) Player Strike
17. C) 24
18. False
19. D) 18
20. A) \$25,000 each

Thanks for playing!
Check out more Brain Breaks on YouTube!
www.amandazieba.com



Trivia Game Video Link

Use the below links to access the video for this activity.
Click the title, image or link to get to the video!

WHITE TRIVIA BRAIN BREAK GAME

20 White Color-Themed Trivia Questions and Answers in Less Than 10 Minutes



This link will take you to
the YouTube Video of
White color themed Trivia
questions:

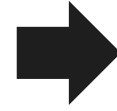
<https://youtu.be/BzCOoy35LFY>





White Color-Themed Trivia Answer Sheet

Trivia
Video



Directions:
Write your answers on the
lines below.

Name/Team Name: _____

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |

How did you do?
Are you a WHITE TRIVIA ROCKSTAR?!?!



White Color-Themed Trivia Answer Sheet

Trivia
Video



Directions:
Write your answers on the
lines below.

Name/Team Name: _____

1: 1 2 3

2: A B C D

3: M _ _ _ _ I N G

4: White _ _ _ _ _

5: A B C D

6: H _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

7: A goose OR a swan

8: True or False

9: A B C D

10: _ _ _ _ _

11: The _ _ _ _ _

12: True or False

13: _ _ _ _ _ and _ _ _ _ _

14: True OR False

15: A B C D

16: True OF False

17: A B C D

18: A B C D

19: A B C D

20: True OR False

How did you do?
Are you a WHITE TRIVIA ROCKSTAR?!?!

Score: ____ / 20





White Trivia Brain Break Game

Name: _____

Trivia
Video



1 How many gallons of whole milk does it take to make 1 gallon of vanilla ice cream?

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3

2 What is the snowiest city in in the US? (Population 50,000 +)

- a) Boulder, CO
- b) Duluth, MN
- c) Syracuse, NY
- d) Cheyenne, WY

3 In Many Asian Countries and cultures, the color white is seen as a symbol of ...

M _ _ _ _ I N G

4 The combination of all sound frequencies at once is called ...

WHITE _ _ _ _ _

5 What year was White Out aka: correction Fluid invented?

- a) 1928
- b) 1973
- c) 1951
- d) 1992



6 The abominable snowman, or Yeti, is rumored to live in what mountain range?

H _ _ _ _ _

Mountain Range



7 The story the Ugly Duckling is actually a story about this white animal. What is it?

S _ _ _

8 True or False: When you see the color white on your TV, it's not actually white.

- a) True
- b) False

9 What item was officially accepted as a sign of surrender at the 1949 Geneva Convention?

- a) White Armor
- b) White Ship Sails
- c) White Flag
- d) White Face Paint

10 Until the 20th century white make up was made of _ _ _ _ until it was discovered to be toxic.

_ _ _ _ _





White Trivia Brain Break Game

Name: _____

Trivia
Video



- 11** What famous White building is located on 1600 Pennsylvania Ave in Washington, DC?

The WHITE _ _ _ _ _



- 12** True or False: Powdered Sugar Donuts are the most popular donut in the United States.

- a) True
- b) False

- 13** Name Two Sports that use a white ball.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

- 14** True or False: Snow White was the first full length animated film by Disney.

- a) True
- b) False

- 15** What kind of whale is naturally white?

- a) Beluga Whale
- b) Humpback Whale
- c) Killer Whale
- d) Finback Whale

- 16** True or False: White water rafts used to be made out of wood.

- a) True
- b) False



- 17** What is white pasta sauce called?

- a) Snow Sauce
- b) Frosty Sauce
- c) Blanco Sauce
- d) Alfredo Sauce

- 18** How many tons of Oreo Creme are manufactured each year?

- a) 28,000 tons
- b) 82,000 tons
- c) 123,000 tons
- d) 200,000 tons



- 14** True or False: Snow White was the first full length animated film by Disney.

- a) True
- b) False

- 15** What kind of whale is naturally white?

- a) Beluga Whale
- b) Humpback Whale
- c) Killer Whale
- d) Finback Whale



- 19** True or False: This white furred animal (Polar Bear) also has white skin.

- a) True
- b) False

- 20** True or False: The earliest cave drawings used white chalk.

- a) True
- b) False





White Color-Themed Answer Key

Directions:
If you'd like to check
student answers
without the video,
here is the answer key.

ANSWER KEY

1. 3
2. C) Syracuse, NY
3. Mourning
4. White Noise
5. C) 1951
6. Himalayan Mountain Range
7. Swan
8. True
9. C) White Flag
10. Lead
11. The White House
12. False
13. Golf, Volleyball, Pool,
Baseball Ping Pong La Crosse
14. True
15. A) Beluga Whale
16. True
17. D) Alfredo Sauce
18. C) 123,000 Tons
19. False
20. True

Thanks for playing!
Check out more Brain Breaks on YouTube!



Trivia Game Video Link

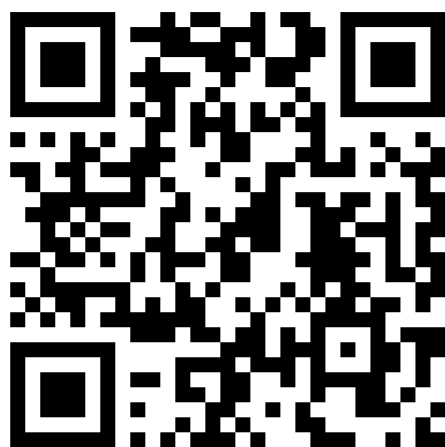
Use the below links to access the video for this activity.

Click the title, image or link to get to the video!

AUTHOR TRIVIA



This link will take you to the YouTube Video of Author Trivia questions: <https://youtu.be/XgHnMQRJLis>



TRIVIA VIDEO





Author Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Write your answers on the
lines below.

Trivia Video -->



Name/Team Name: _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

How did you do?
Are you an Author Trivia ROCKSTAR?!?!



Author Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Circle your answer for
each question below.

Trivia Video -->



Name/Team Name: _____

1. A B C D

6. A B C D

2. A B C D

7. A B C D

3. A B C D

8. A B C D

4. A B C D

9. A B C D

5. A B C D

10. A B C D

How did you do?
Are you an Author Trivia ROCKSTAR?!?!

Score: ____/10



Trivia
Video



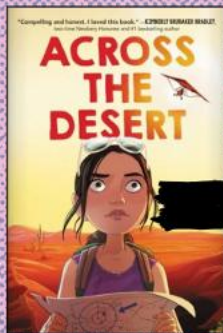
Guess the Author Trivia Quiz

Name: _____

#1

THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK LIVES IN THE STATE WHERE MOST OF HER STORIES TAKE PLACE. SHE WANTS PEOPLE TO FALL IN LOVE WITH HER STORIES AND THE US SOUTHWEST.

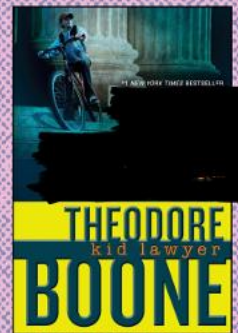
- A) SUZANNE COLLINS
- B) DUSTI BOWLING
- C) KATE MESSNER
- D) MADELINE L'ENGLE



#5

BEFORE BECOMING A FAMOUS WRITER, THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK WAS A LAWYER AND A DEMOCRAT FOR THE MISSISSIPPI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

- A) LYNDA MULLALY HUNT
- B) JAMES PATTERSON
- C) TAE KELLER
- D) JOHN GRISHAM



#2

THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK WAS INSPIRED TO WRITE IT WHEN HER DAUGHTER ASKED, "MOMMY DO YOU THINK THE ROVER IS SCARED?" WHILE WATCHING THE REAL ROVER LAUNCH INTO SPACE ON TV.

- A) JANE YOLEN
- B) JUDY BLUME
- C) JASMINE WARGA
- D) STACY MCANULTY



#6

THIS AUTHOR OF THIS NEWBERY HONOR AWARD WINNING BOOK WAS BORN IN INDIA, GREW UP IN KENTUCKY, AND STILL HAS A FULL TIME JOB AS A DOCTOR.

- A) VEERA HIRINANDANI
- B) R.J. PALACIO
- C) RAJANI LA ROCCA
- D) ERIN ENTRADA KELLY



#3

THIS AUTHOR BEGAN WRITING POETRY WHEN HE WAS NINE YEARS OLD AFTER LISTENING TO THE RHYMES AND RHYTHM OF RAP MUSIC.

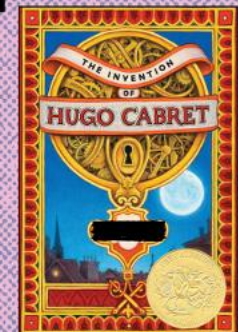
- A) JERRY CRAFT
- B) JASON REYNOLDS
- C) JARRETT LERNER
- D) SID FLEISCHMAN



#7

ONE OF THIS AUTHOR'S JOBS BEFORE WRITING BOOKS WAS TO PAINT BEAUTIFUL DESIGNS ON STORE FRONT WINDOWS.

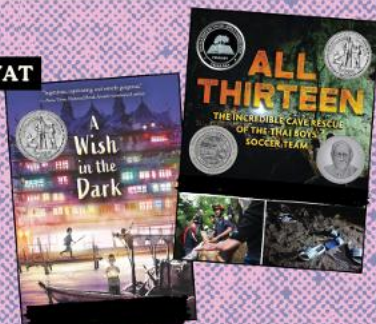
- A) BRIAN SELZNICK
- B) PEDRO MARTIN
- C) KATE DICAMILLO
- D) DAN SANTAT



#4

THIS AUTHOR WON THE NEWBERY HONOR AWARD FOR THESE BOOKS... IN THE SAME YEAR!!

- A) CHRISTINA SOONTORNVAT
- B) LISA FIPPS
- C) CORNELIA FUNKE
- D) REBECCA STEAD



#8

THIS AUTHOR LIVES IN UTAH, WRITES AMAZING HISTORICAL FICTION BOOKS, AND LOVES DIET MOUNTAIN DEW.

- A) LINDA SUE PARK
- B) KATHERINE MARSH
- C) WENDELIN VAN DRAANEN
- D) JENNIFER A. NEILSEN





Trivia
Video



Guess the Author Trivia Quiz

Name: _____

#9

THIS AUTHOR WROTE FOR HIS HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER. WHEN HE WROTE ABOUT HOW BADLY THE LOSING FOOTBALL TEAM LOST, THE TEAM EGGED HIS CAR.

A) NEIL GAIMAN
B) KWAME ALEXANDER
C) RICK RIORDAN
D) GREG LOGSTED

#10

THIS AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK WENT TO COLLEGE AT THE AGE OF 13 AND LAW SCHOOL AT THE AGE OF 17. SHE WAS A LAWYER BEFORE BECOMING AN AUTHOR.

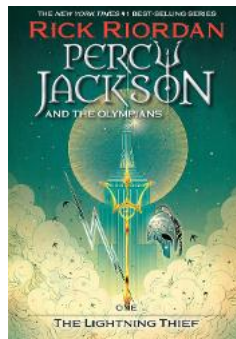
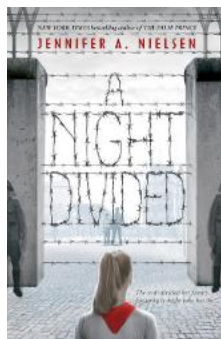
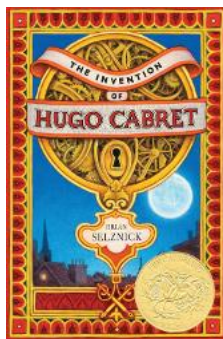
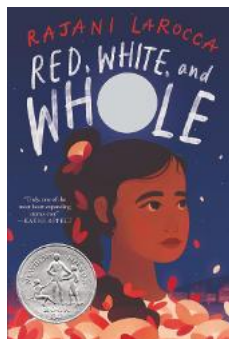
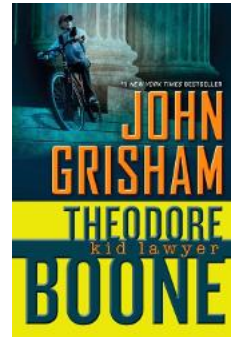
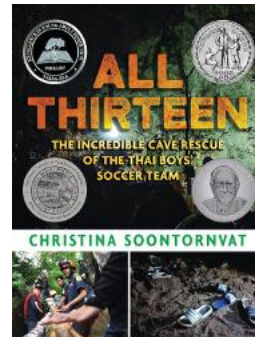
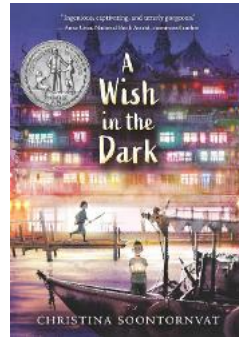
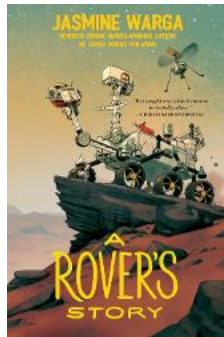
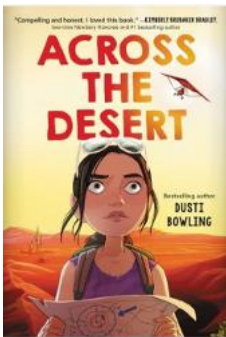
A) MEG MEDINA
B) JANA E MARKS
C) KELLY YANG
D) K. A. HOLT

Record Your Answers Here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Time to Read!

If you want to listen to the first chapter of any book featured in this trivia game, use these QR codes.



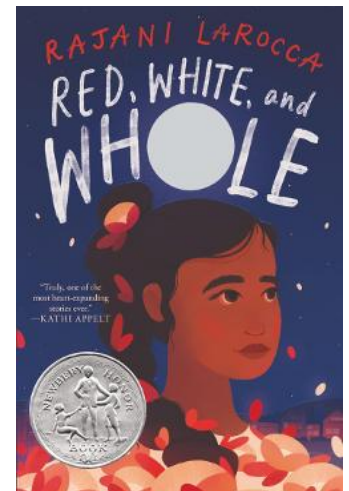
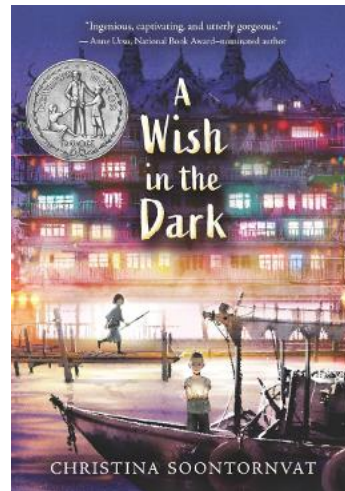
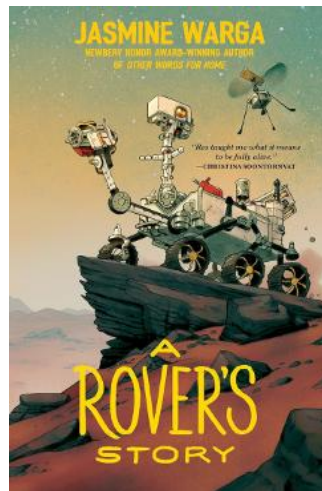
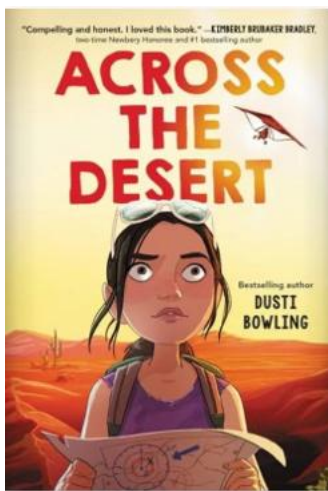
You can find 180+ First Chapter Friday Videos on my channel!

Happy Reading! :)

www.wordnerdcollaborative.com

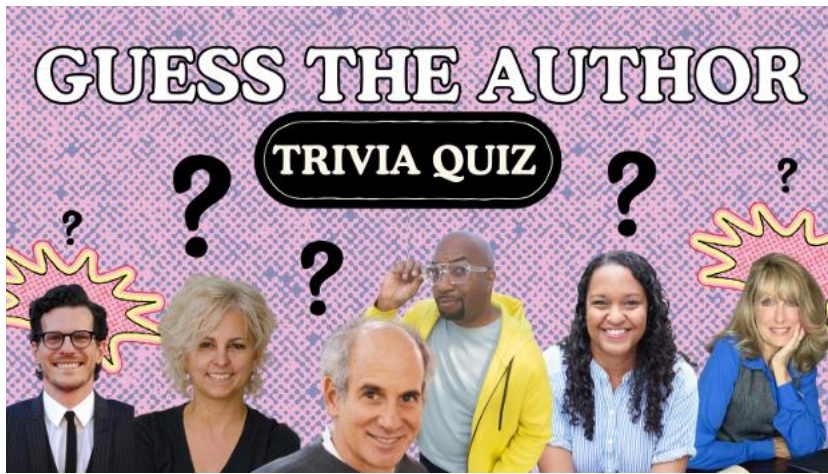
Write On!

These First Chapter Friday videos include interviews with the authors!



You can find 30+ Author Interview Videos on my channel!

Happy Reading! :)



Back to School Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:

If you'd like to check student answers without the video, here is the answer key.

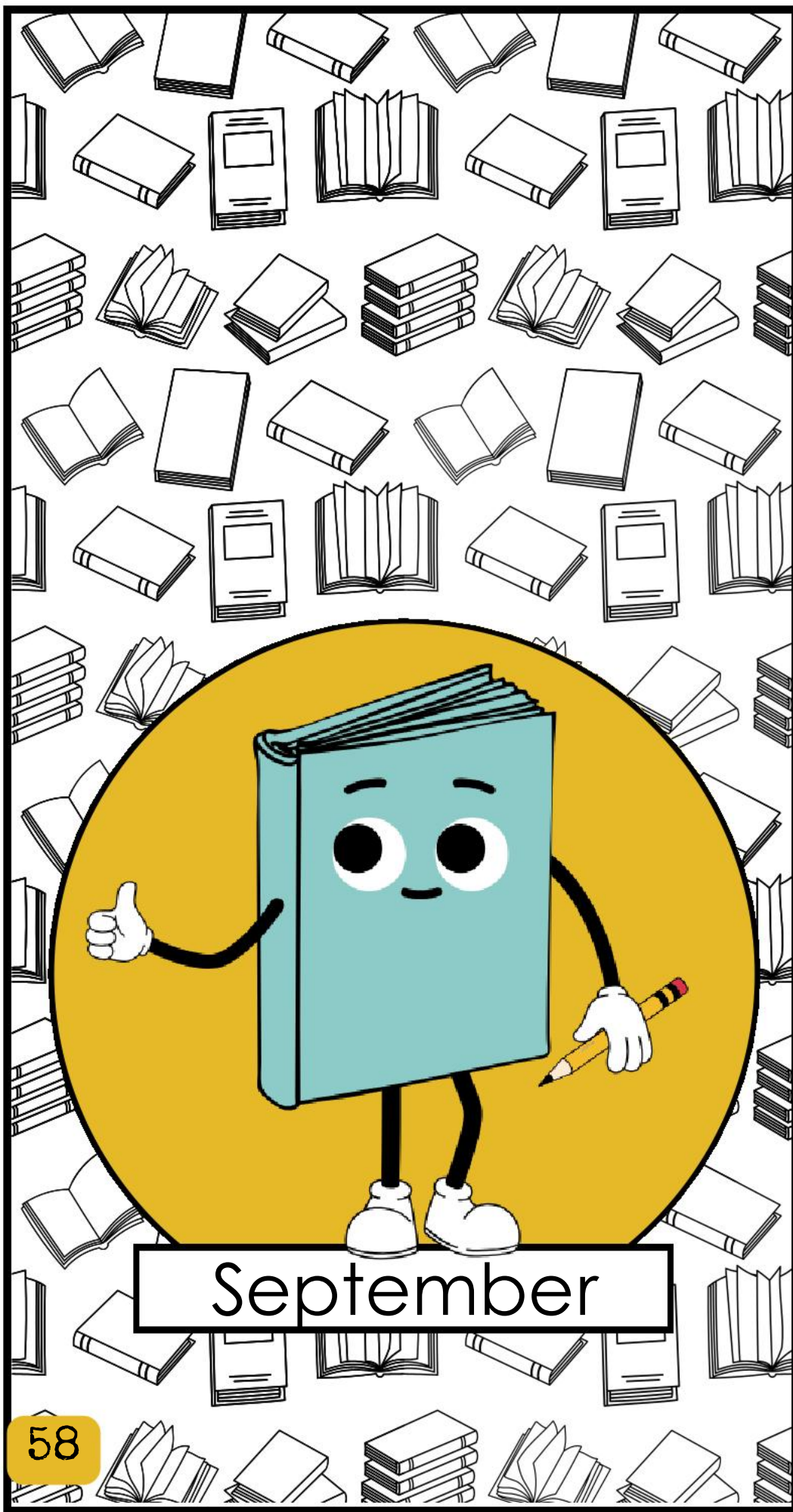
Trivia Video



ANSWER KEY

1. B) Dusti Bowling
2. C) Jasmine Warga
3. B) Jason Reynolds
4. A) Christina Soontornvat
5. D) John Grisham
6. C) Rajani LaRocca
7. A) Brian Selznick
8. D) Jennifer A. Nielsen
9. C) Rick Riordan
10. C) Kelly Yang

Thanks for playing!



September

WRITING PROMPTS



HOW TO USE THE WRITING PROMPTS

How do we get better at any skill? We practice. If you want to be a better free-throw shooter, you get on the line and shoot free throws. If you want to be a faster swimmer, you get in the pool. The same is true for writing. The more we do it, the better we get.

In my classroom, this looks like ten minutes of writing every day. We start at five minutes a day the first week and build up, adding a minute a week, until we reach ten. The prompts in this resource will help you make that practice fun and engaging and also purposeful. The prompts will cover a variety of high interest topics, purposes and forms including fiction, nonfiction, and reflections, with an emphasis on building stamina, idea generation, and enjoyment. When applicable, I call out the genre focus and/or specific skill being practiced. Also, below you can see a list of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that are routinely addressed and covered by doing these daily writing prompts.

- **Writing CCSS: W 6-8.2, W 6-8.3, W 6-8.4, W 6-8.5, W 6-8.9, W 6-8.10**

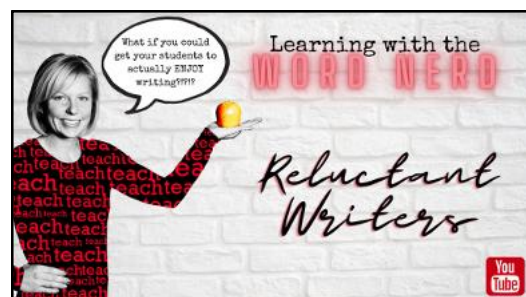
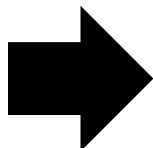
If you want, keep these “curriculum and standard” pieces of information to yourself, go for it! There is no need to let the kids know we have a secret plan to trick them into being better writers and hating it a little bit less each day!

You can either print the following prompt pages for students to directly write on (and then keep in a folder/binder) or project the prompt (via these [SLIDES](#)) onto a whiteboard/screen and have students do their writing in a dedicated notebook. Whatever works best for you... go for it!

My hope is that the daily practice becomes something that students look forward to rather than dread. I hope that as students see the words and ideas pile up, their confidence grows. I hope that by having this resource of high-quality, ready to go prompts, your life will be made just little bit easier!

Happy Writing!

P.S. For more ideas on how to get reluctant writers going, watch [this video](#).



(https://youtu.be/l7UWA-pw04Q?sub_confirmation=1)




MULTI-USE FORMS

The following pages will be used multiple times throughout the resources, but are included just once to save space.

- Free Write Fridays
- Gem and Opportunity Feedback Sheets
- Writing Rubric Sheets

Free Write Friday

Choice A:
Go back and add onto a story you started earlier this week.

Choice B:
Write about a topic of your choice.





GEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES



My name: _____
 Name of classmate I am reviewing: _____
 Date: _____

Title of Piece/Date Written: _____



GEMS

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITERS DOES WELL

-
-
-
-
-

OPPORTUNITIES

LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WRITER TO IMPROVE

-
-
-
-
-

FINAL COMMENTS
 WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ____/10			

WRITING PROMPTS

Write about a topic
of your choice.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Total Points = ____ /10

Rubric



GEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES



My Name:

Name of classmate I am reviewing:

Date:

Title of Piece/Date Written



GEMS

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE
WRITERS DOES WELL

- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *

OPPORTUNITIES



LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE
WRITER TO IMPROVE

- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *

FINAL COMMENTS

WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:



GEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

My Name:

Name of classmate I am reviewing:

Date:



GEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

My Name:

Name of classmate I am reviewing:

Date:

Title of Piece/Date Written



GEMS

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITERS DOES WELL

•

•

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•

OPPORTUNITIES



LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WRITER TO IMPROVE

•

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FINAL COMMENTS

WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:

Title of Piece/Date Written



GEMS

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITERS DOES WELL

•

•

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•

OPPORTUNITIES



LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WRITER TO IMPROVE

•

•

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•

FINAL COMMENTS

WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:



Use this rubric to first communicate your writing expectations to students and then to evaluate the writing products they create. Students and/or peers can also use this rubric to self/peer score/evaluate the pieces of writing.

The rubric can be found at the bottom of each prompt for easy access for both you and your students. There is also a page with 3 rubrics to print and cut for use with this or other writing tasks.

I assign 2 points if the task was completed and done well, 1 if the task was attempted but not mastered, and 0 if the task was not attempted at all.

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ____/10

Again, the Writing CCSS routinely covered and practiced with these prompts include:

W 6-8.2, W 6-8.3, W 6-8.4, W 6-8.5, W 6-8.9, W 6-8.10

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ___/10

Comments:

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ___/10

Comments:

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ___/10

Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS

Week 1

Monday

Cow: Caption This!

Style/Skills:
Caption
Brief Writing
Point of View

Tuesday

Your Perfect Day

Style/Skills:
Personal Reflection

Wednesday

Castle in the Clouds

Style/Skills:
Setting
Description

Thursday

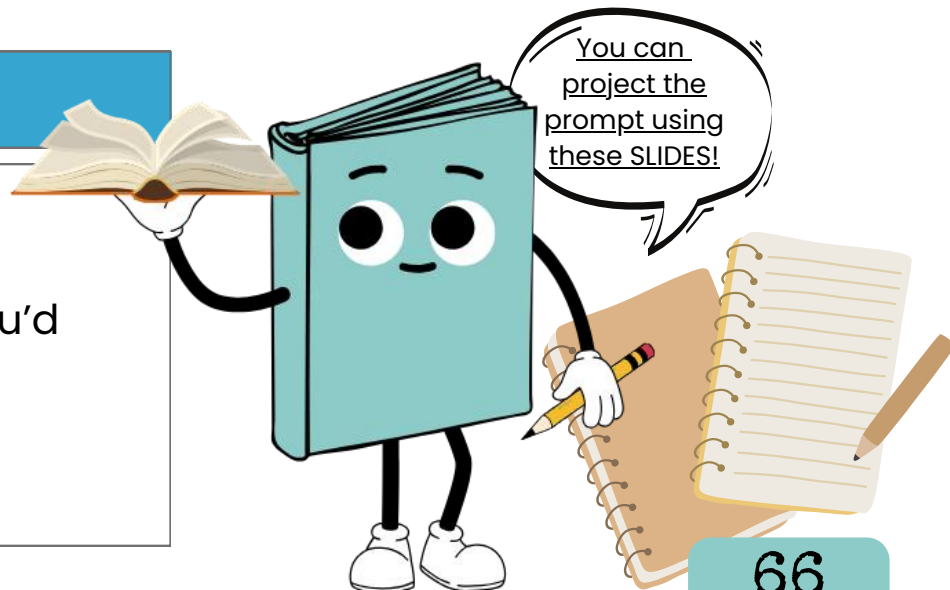
A Tour of Your Town

Style/Skills:
Creative Writing
Personal Reflection
Setting
Science Fiction

Friday

Free Write Friday

Write whatever you'd like... including continuing a past prompt. :)



WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

caption: a title or brief explanation of a visual/picture.

caption: a title or brief explanation of a visual/picture.



- the cow
- the photographer
- a farmer/rancher
- a tourist
- a fly

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ____ /10

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

[illegible]

Teacher Comments:

Created by the Word Nerd

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

- Who lives here?
- What does it smell like?
- Does it feel safe/magical/cold?
- Is that graffiti or art on the walls? Who did it?
- How do the inhabitants breathe so high in the sky?
- How do the inhabitants feel about the moon?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Total Points = ____ /10

Rubric

WRITING PROMPTS

Week 2

Monday

Famous!

Style/Skills:
Personal Reflection

Tuesday

Set the Scene

Style/Skills:
Characterization
Personal Interest Facts

Wednesday

What do you know?

Style/Skills:
Characterization
Personal Interest
Facts

Thursday

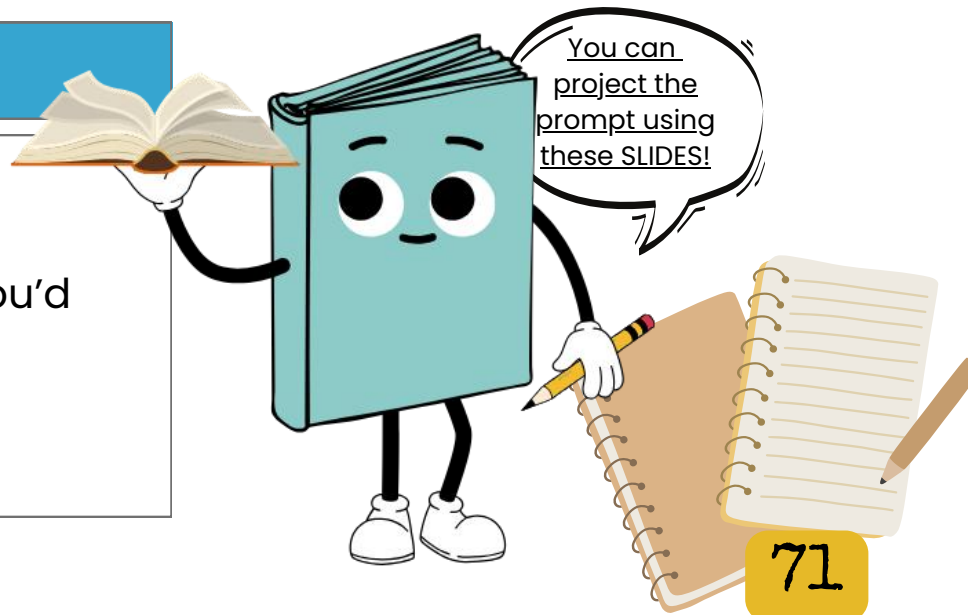
Storms

Style/Skills:
Creative Writing
Prediction
Science Content
Connection - weather

Friday

Free Write Friday

Write whatever you'd like... including continuing a past prompt. :)



WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

- How did you get good at this skill?
- Who helped you along the way?
- How do people know about you and your skill/organization/contribution?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

FROM

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Total Points = ____ /10

Created by the Word Nerd

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

Pick a topic you know
TONS about and then
create a character with this
specific knowledge base.
Where does he/she spend
time and who do they
share this knowledge with?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

What happens next?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper appears to be a standard notebook page or a sheet of stationery.

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS

Week 3

Monday

Invisible Bridges

Style/Skills:
Creative Writing
Contemporary/Realistic Fiction
Personal Reflection

Tuesday

What would you do with \$47?

Style/Skills:
Connection to Literature
Sensory Details

Wednesday

My Favorite Place

Style/Skills:
Personal Reflection
Setting

Thursday

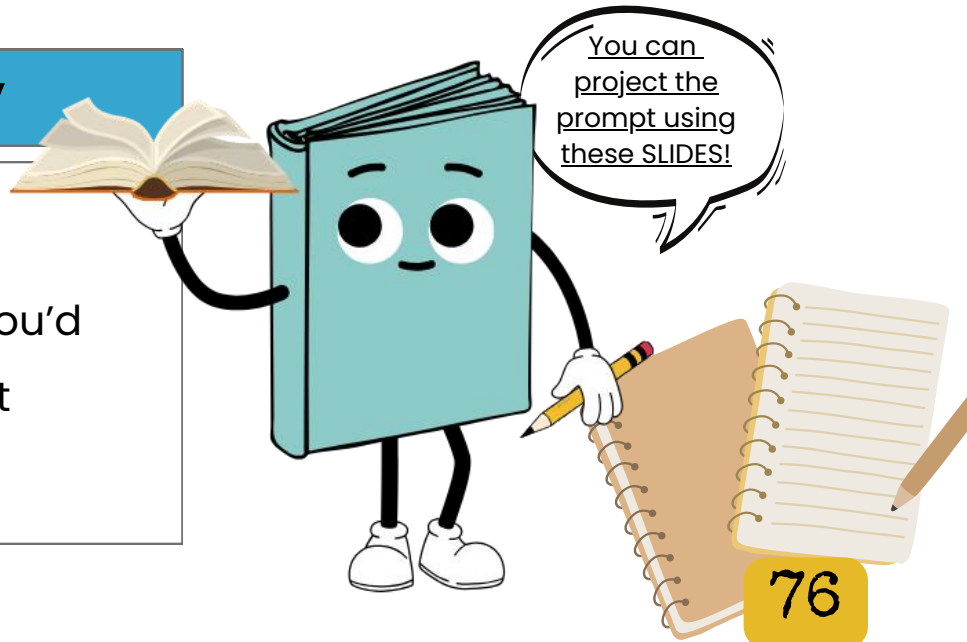
I'll Never Forget

Style/Skills:
Personal Reflection

Friday

Free Write Friday

Write whatever you'd like... including continuing a past prompt. :)



WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Rubric	Task	0	1	2
	Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
	Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
	Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
	Length is appropriate			
	Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
	Total Points = /10			

Created by the Word Nerd

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

He had exactly
forty seven
dollars in his
pocket. Thank
goodness it
wasn't forty six,
or else...

[illegible]

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

A horizontal strip of six images: an airplane on a tarmac, a city skyline at night, a waterfall, a modern building interior, a stone bench in a garden, and a bookshelf.

Make a list of your favorite places on the planet. Then, choose one and write a scene in that location. Do your best to use as many sensory details as possible.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Total Points = ____ /10

Rubric

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

it?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Rubric	Task	0	1	2
	Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
	Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
	Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
	Length is appropriate			
	Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
	Total Points = /10			

Created by the Word Nerd

WRITING PROMPTS

Week 4

Monday

In a Bad Mood

Style/Skills:
Characterization

Tuesday

Trading Places

Style/Skills:
Personal Reflection

Wednesday

Sensing the Scene

Style/Skills:
Sensory Details
Connection to
Literature

Thursday

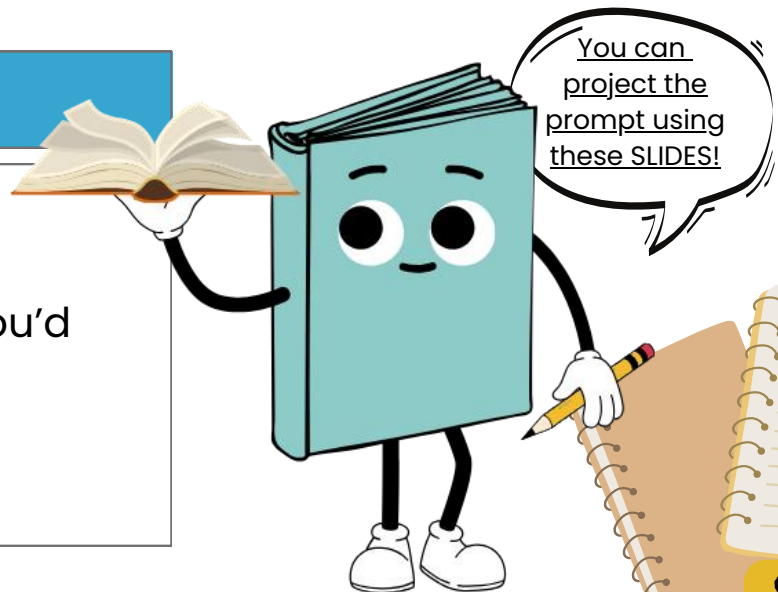
Dog: Caption This!

Style/Skills:
Captions
Point of View

Friday

Free Write Friday

Write whatever you'd like... including continuing a past prompt. :)



NAME: _____

WRITING PROMPTS

FROM THE WORD NERD

"My good mood felt like an endangered species." – Sinner by Maggie Stiefvater

Make a list of things that are rare and then pair it with a situation that does not happen very often for your character.

Try to stay away from cliché phrases like "once in a blue moon", shooting stars, and getting struck by lightning.

Ideas:

Favorite song on the radio
Snow days from school
Hitting a homerun
Seeing a UFO



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ___/10

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

A cartoon illustration of Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse. Mickey is on the left, wearing a red hat, a green scarf, and a blue jacket. Minnie is on the right, wearing a red hat with a blue bow, a red jacket with yellow trim, and a red skirt. They are both smiling and looking towards the viewer. The background is a simple brown wall. There are yellow question marks in the top left and bottom left corners of the image.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Total Points = ____ /10

Rubric

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD



This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Total Points = ____ /10

Rubric

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

Take the POV
(perspective) of...

- the dog
- the dog owner
- the lawn mower
- the newspaper deliver person
- the neighbor's cat

A close-up photograph of a dog, possibly a Chihuahua, with large, upright ears and a joyful expression, showing its teeth. The dog is wearing a red collar and is holding a newspaper open with its mouth. The newspaper is a parody of the 'Daily News' and contains various headlines and articles, including 'PLACES TO BE', 'HOW TO GET FAMOUS', 'NICE PLACES IN NEW YORK', and 'THE SKITTE'. The background is a soft-focus green field. In the top left corner, there is a green speech bubble containing the text 's!!'. The overall image is a humorous take on a dog reading the news.

[illegible]

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS

Week 5

Monday

I'm the BEST!

Style/Skills:
Argumentative
Writing

Tuesday

A Soggy Field Trip

Style/Skills:
Creative Writing

Wednesday

I Heard a Rumor

Style/Skills:
Genre: Science Fiction

Timeline/Plotting
events

Thursday

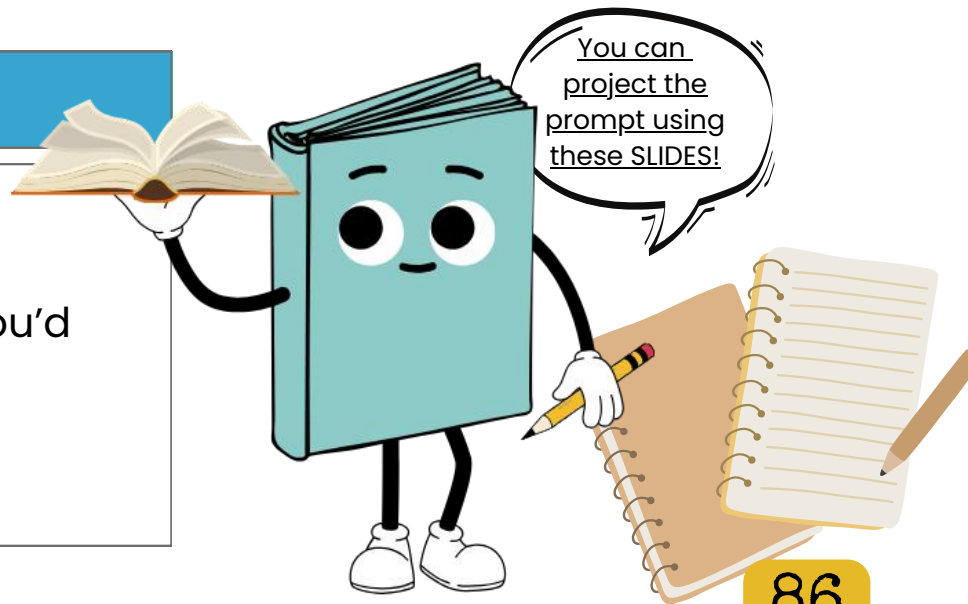
Life at Sunset

Style/Skills:
Descriptive Writing
Figurative Language

Friday

Free Write Friday

Write whatever you'd
like... including
continuing a past
prompt. :)



WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

Why is your favorite team or celebrity the **BEST** at what they do?

[illegible]

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS FROM THE WORD NERD

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

▼ Rubric	Task	0	1	2
	Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
	Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
	Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
	Length is appropriate			
	Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
	Total Points = /10			

Created by the Word Nerd

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

It was a crazy thing, but craziest because if you looked closely at the librarian, Mr. Melvin, it wasn't that hard to believe he really was an alien. Now, all someone had to do, was prove it.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

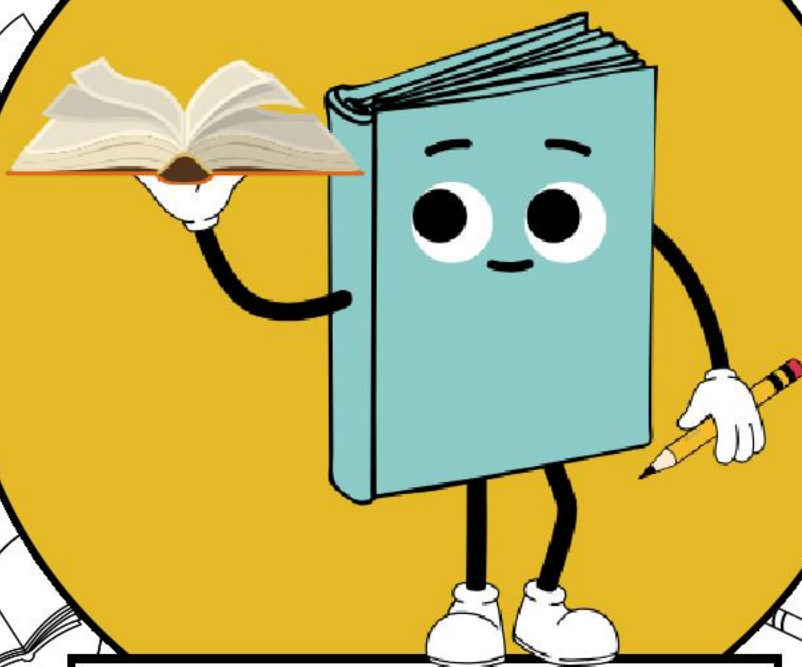
So he picked up his pencil and notebook and tried to describe the sunset in a way that would please Mrs. Marconi.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Teacher Comments:

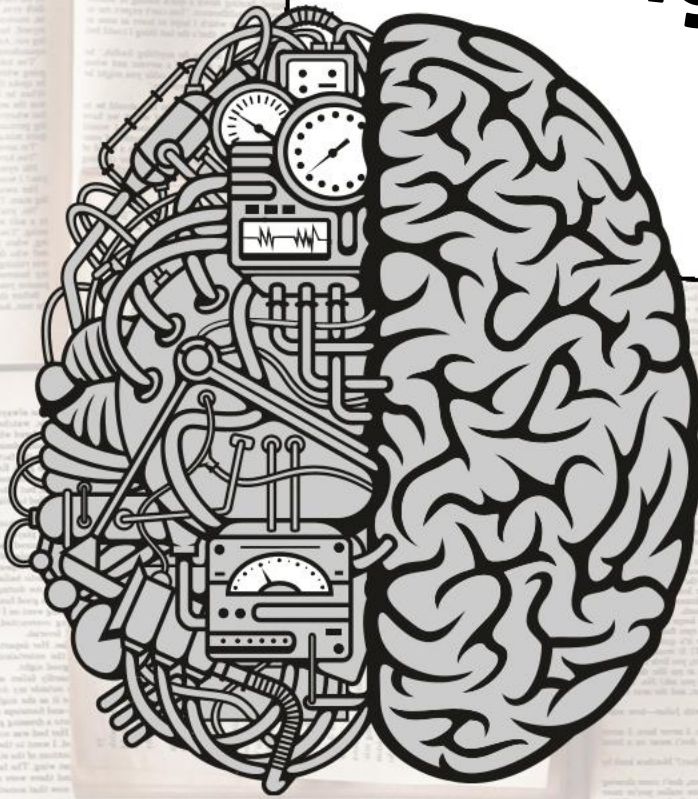
Created by the Word Nerd

SCHOOL SCHEDULE



September

Humans vs. AI Writing Assignments



Created by The Word Nerd



HELLO TEACHER FRIEND!

When it comes to AI and ChatGPT, teachers, well, humans in general, find themselves on one side of the fence or the other. It's either the most amazing thing humans have ever created or it's going to be the innovation that kills us all.

I want to invite you to set aside your previously conceived notions on the topic and take a few minutes to watch [this video](#) I created that was inspired by an entrepreneurial podcast as it covered the topic of AI. Hopefully it will help you embrace the best parts of this new technology and share it with your students.

In this resource you'll find activities that will help you and your students consider the pros and cons and applications of AI and ChatGPT at school. We would be foolish to think our students are going to ignore this new technology. Rather than spend our time creating policies and procedures to prevent its use or penalize those who give it a try, why not teach students the powerfully good ways they can use it? The ways they can learn from it and build off of the foundation it provides? Rather than allowing ChatGPT and AI to do our thinking for us, what if we learned how to work better in collaboration with it?

People used to think calculators and GPS would be the end of us all. Our teachers assured us there was no way we'd carry a calculator around with us everywhere, so why learn to rely on it. (Ope!) Rather than rant and rage, let's lean in.

Many of the tasks and texts associated with this resource focus on the theme that humans are smarter than robots... that we bring life experiences, emotions, and our own special sauce to life that auto-generated content can't possibly replicate. At the end of this resource you'll find a posters you can hang in your classroom to remind you and your students of this sentiment.

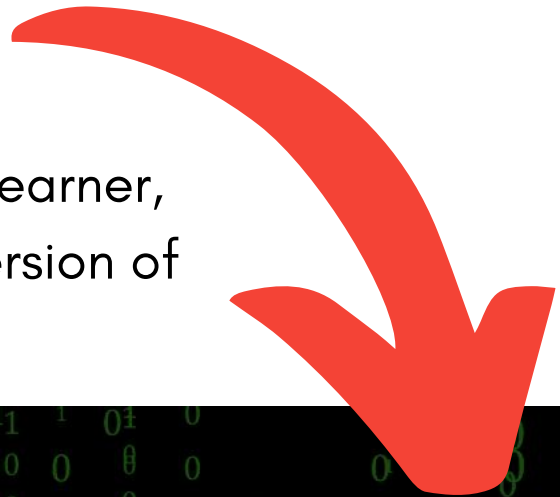
Hopefully, the combination of these resources and voices will create a solid learning experience for your students. It's a great reminder that polarization of any topic is harmful and an open mind is a wonderful thing.

Thanks for reading all of this and for all of the things you do. I appreciate you and even if your students don't wax poetically or sing your praises on a daily basis, I know they appreciate you too.

~ Amanda Zieba
(aka: The Word Nerd)

P.S. I am just dipping my toe into the Chat GPT/AI waters. If I learn more and subsequently created more, I'll add it to this resource. The good news is, now that you've bought it, you'll get all the goodness that follows. Just click re-download anytime you get a notification that I've upgraded the resource. :)

If you are more of an auditory learner,
click here to watch the video version of
this information.

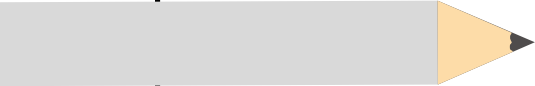


I want to invite you to set aside your previously conceived notions on the topic and take a few minutes to listen to the podcast excerpt included in this video. (You can take an hour and listen to the whole thing if you want, but most of it is about how AI and ChatGPT apply entrepreneurship.) This part I've pulled for you however, is great no matter who you are. In the video you can hear the quote directly from Jasmine and Jenna. To hear the conviction in their voices will drive home their point and also help you auditory learners! In the video I also share a few of my own thoughts on the topic.

Perhaps, this video would be a great thing for your students to listen to and discuss as well.

Original Podcast - <https://jennakutcherblog.com/jasminestar/> (8:43-12:16)

My video featuring the excerpt, plus my additional thoughts - https://youtu.be/uKBZBoD_So0



THIS RESOURCE INCLUDES

- 1** A link to my video about AI use for teachers and classrooms.
- 2** What is ChatGPT and how can we use it in the classroom
- 3** An activity that focuses on ways in which humans are smarter than computers including nonfiction text and 2 reflective response worksheets (3 pages)
- 4** An activity that analyzes a sample ChatGPT set of written directions and also includes a writing sample, analysis worksheets, student writing direction writing activity (a brainstorming sheet, writing sheet and rubric)(3 pages)
- 5** An activity that will help you and your students create an AI Use Code of Conduct
- 6** A list of Teacher Tips for AI Use
- 7** 2 “Humans are smarter than computers” posters, one in color and one students can color. :)



WHAT IS CHATGPT ?

ChatGPT is a piece of artificial intelligence that generates written and visual content. Visit <https://chat.openai.com/> and type in a request.

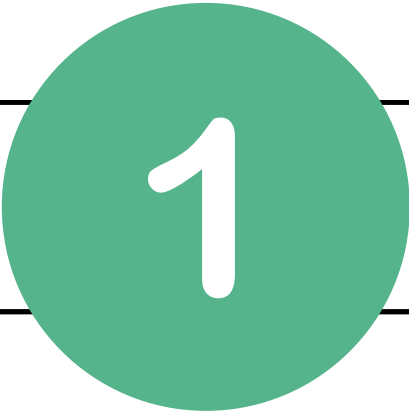
For example, in this resource I asked it to write a paragraph on why humans are smarter than computers and also write a list of 5 steps explaining how to make homemade Mac n' Cheese. Once a text has been written you can ask ChatGPT to make revisions, for example: make it shorter, increase the sentence complexity, make it humorous, etc.

Many educators are worried students will just ask ChatGPT do their homework, and while this is a real concern, we can also learn to use and embrace the tool.

We are always using exemplar texts in class. Why not use ChatGPT to generate exactly the text we want our students to study? Why not let students analyze different versions of writing, pull out the good parts, and then ask them to replicate the task in their own way... good techniques on hand?

This resource is my first attempt at teaching students how to ethically and responsibly use AI. I plan to add to it. This is all very new. Let's experiment together.

All my best,
Amanda

**1****ACTIVITY**
N U M B E R 1**HUMANS ARE SMARTER
THAN COMPUTERS**

Read the “newspaper articles” about instances when computers and technology failed humans.

Answer the reflection questions on the next page.

Look at sample ChatGPT text about why humans are smarter than computers and analyze it by pulling out the well written and poorly written aspects.

Students can then take what they’ve learned to write their own response to the question: Do you think humans are smarter than computers?

(Rubric included)

THE THOUGHTFUL TIMES

HUMANS ARE SMARTER THAN COMPUTERS

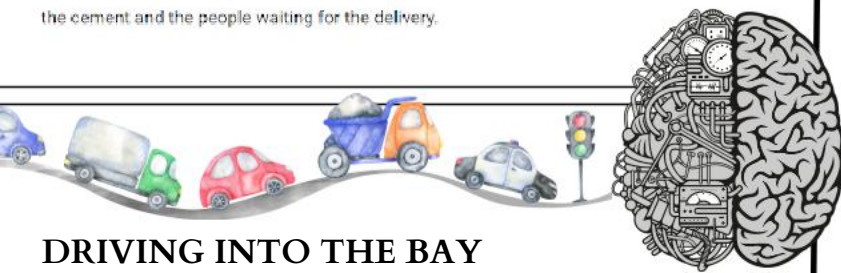
It has been said that computers are taking over the world, and soon, there will be no need for us and our simple brains. The stories in today's issue prove otherwise.

Delivery vehicle mishaps



@42hrc

Unmanned and autonomous vehicles of one kind or another may well be the future, but at the moment there are all sorts of mishaps being caused by them. Here an unmanned deliver vehicle has found its way into wet cement. No doubt much to the upset of the people that laid the cement and the people waiting for the delivery.



DRIVING INTO THE BAY

Three Japanese tourists in Australia used their GPS to plan a drive to North Stradbroke Island, just off the coast of the eastern city of Brisbane. But what the machine didn't account for was the *nine miles* of water dividing the island from the mainland. The road turned to gravel, then to thick mud, then to gentle laps of water against the tires. The three were forced to abandon the vehicle and return on foot. Passengers aboard a passing ferry — the *recommended* way to get to the island — reportedly watched the whole embarrassing event unfold. A tow truck gave the poor tourists a ride back, and the car, not being worth the repair, was sent to the dump.

10 Mars Climate Orbiter



Photo credit: NASA/JPL/Corby Waste

The *Mars Climate Orbiter* was a small space probe launched on December 11, 1998, by NASA to enter Martian orbit and both study the atmosphere of the Red Planet and provide valuable insight into its climate and any surface changes that might occur. The launch went as planned, and the probe traveled toward Mars with seemingly no issues, but unknown to the mission control team on Earth, the spacecraft was being put on a trajectory that would lead to the failure of the mission.

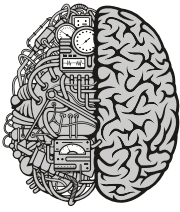
The orbiter was being navigated by various teams of people—some who used metric units, and others who used imperial units. Due to this simple conversion error—and the misconfiguration of the computer systems on the part of Lockheed—a course correction sent the *Mars Climate Orbiter* far too close to the planet, and it was likely violently burned up and destroyed in the atmosphere.^[1]

ARTICLE SOURCES

[HTTPS://WWW.POCKET-LINT.COM/GADGETS/NEWS/137638-TECH-FAILS-THAT-RUINED-PEOPLE-S-LIVES/](https://www.pocket-lint.com/gadgets/news/137638-tech-fails-that-ruined-people-s-lives/)

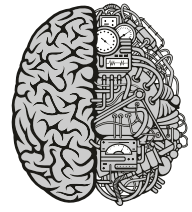
[HTTPS://LISTVERSE.COM/2019/07/30/TOP-10-MOST-CATASTROPHIC-COMPUTER-FAILURES-IN-HISTORY/](https://listverse.com/2019/07/30/top-10-most-catastrophic-computer-failures-in-history/)

[HTTPS://THEWEEK.COM/ARTICLES/464674/8-DRIVERS-WHO-BLINDLY-FOLLOWED-GPS-INTO-DISASTER](https://theweek.com/articles/464674/8-drivers-who-blindly-followed-gps-into-disaster)



What do you think?

Are humans smarter than computers?



Answer the following questions to explore your thoughts and feelings on this topic.

- 1** What is one task you think a computer can do, but YOU cannot?

- 2** What is one task you think YOU can do better than a computer, or that a computer cannot?

- 3** What is one job you hope a computer will take over for humans?

- 4** What is one job you hope a computer never takes over for a human?

- 5** After reading the articles and reflecting, do you think humans are smarter than computers? Why or why not?

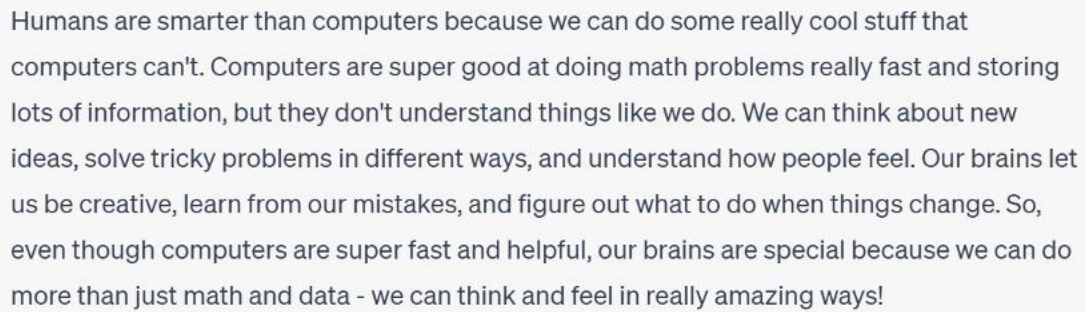
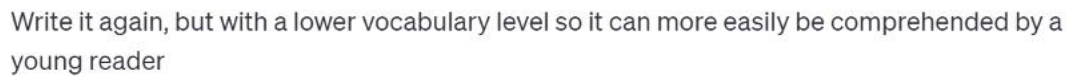
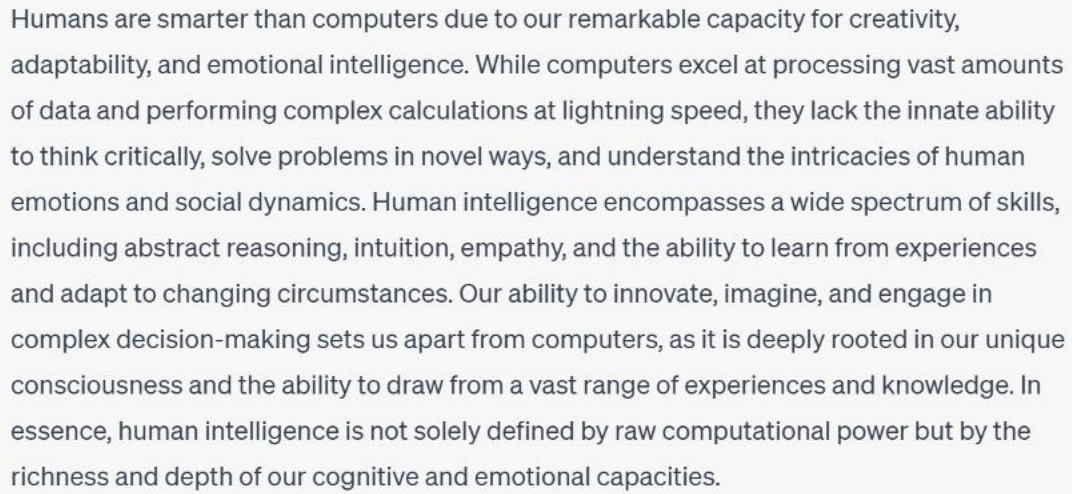
- 6** What additional thoughts do you have that you'd like to share about humans and computers?

Date:

Name:



I asked ChatGPT to write a paragraph about why humans are smarter than computers. Here is it's response.

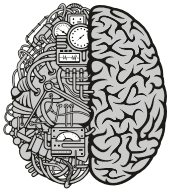


WELL DONE

POORLY DONE

Also think about: What did ChatGPT forget to think about or include?

[illegible]



Name:

Humans vs. AI

Now, using what you have learned, write your own response. Do you believe humans are smarter than computers, why or why not?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



2

ACTIVITY

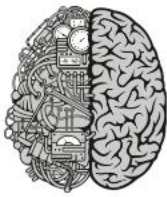
N U M B E R 2

HOW TO MAKE MAC N' CHEESE WRITTEN DIRECTIONS

Read the sample ChatGPT directions on how to make Mac n' Cheese and analyze it by pulling out the well written and poorly written aspects.

Students will brainstorm about a task/skill they know how to complete including ideas, emotions, sensory experiences and vocabulary.

Students will write their own list of instructions using what they learned from the ChatGPT sample and their own human experiences.



Name: _____

Humans vs. AI

I asked ChatGPT to write a list of 5 steps explaining how to make homemade Mac n' Cheese. Here is it's response.



Write a list of five steps explaining how to make homemade mac n cheese



Certainly! Here are five steps to make homemade macaroni and cheese:

Ingredients:

- 2 cups elbow macaroni
- 4 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 cups milk
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika (optional)
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs (optional, for topping)

Instructions:

1. Cook the Macaroni:

- Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
- Add the elbow macaroni and cook according to the package instructions until al dente.
- Drain the cooked macaroni and set it aside.

2. Make the Cheese Sauce:

- In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat.
- Add the flour and whisk continuously for about 2 minutes to create a roux (a thick paste).
- Gradually pour in the milk while whisking to create a smooth mixture.
- Continue to cook and whisk until the sauce thickens, usually for about 5-7 minutes.
- Reduce the heat to low, then stir in the shredded cheddar cheese until it's completely melted and the sauce is smooth.
- Season the cheese sauce with salt, black pepper, and paprika (if using).

3. Combine Macaroni and Cheese Sauce:

- Pour the cooked and drained macaroni into the cheese sauce.
- Stir well to ensure all the macaroni is coated with the creamy cheese sauce.

4. Bake (Optional):

- Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C).
- If you want to bake your mac and cheese for a crispy topping, transfer the mixture to a greased baking dish.
- Sprinkle breadcrumbs evenly over the top for added crunch.
- Bake in the preheated oven for about 20-25 minutes, or until the top is golden brown and the cheese is bubbling.

5. Serve and Enjoy:

- Remove the macaroni and cheese from the oven, if you baked it.
- Let it cool slightly before serving to avoid burning your mouth.
- Serve your homemade mac and cheese as a delicious and comforting dish for any occasion!

Feel free to customize your mac and cheese by adding ingredients like cooked bacon, diced tomatoes, or sautéed vegetables for extra flavor and texture.

Directions

Highlight the aspects of the ChatGPT response that are effective (well done) in one color and the parts that are poorly written in another color. Then list additional positive and negative characteristics below.

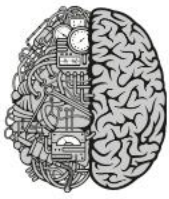
Things to consider:

- Format/Organization
- Keywords
- Clarity of directions
- Word Choice

WELL DONE

POORLY DONE

What have you learned from reading and analyzing this ChatGPT sample of writing?



Name: _____

Humans vs. AI

Using what you've learned about the skill of writing directions from ChatGPT, write your own set of instructions for a task that you know how to complete.

Brainstorm

First, brainstorm skills or experiences on which you have a unique perspective and practiced skill completing. Is there something you can do better than the average human? What do you know that others do not?

When have you completed this task or had an experience with this task? What emotions did you feel? What memories do you have related to it? List as many sensory details as possible.

Vocabulary

What topic-specific vocabulary words will you include? To get your brain whirring, think about the recipe and food and kitchen words, tools, etc that ChatGPT used in the Mac n' Cheese example.

Use these ideas to write your own set of directions.



Name: _____

How To

Ingredients/Supplies

Instructions

One of our gifts as humans is to think creatively. If there is another, better way, you'd like to present your task and directions, feel free to do so! Just run your plan by your teacher first!



Use this rubric to first communicate your writing expectations to students and then to evaluate the writing products they create. Students and/or peers can also use this rubric to self/peer score/evaluate the pieces of writing.

I assign 2 points if the task was completed and well done, 1 if the task was attempted but not mastered, and 0 if the task was not attempted at all.

On the next page you'll find a page of 3 rubrics for easy printing and use.

Name: _____

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ____/10

Name: _____

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ____/10

Name: _____

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ____/10

Name: _____

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ____/10

3

ACTIVITY NUMBER 3

AI IN OUR CLASSROOM: CODE OF CONDUCT

AI is a learning partner, not a shortcut. Humans bring experience, empathy, and originality, the combination of which is a secret sauce no machine can replace.

Creating an AI code of conduct helps us decide—ahead of time—when and how to use AI responsibly, so that in the rush of a deadline we don't make choices our brain or our integrity would later regret.

The activities in this section will help you think through the different uses of AI and select the ones you feel comfortable and ethical about using.

Personally, I believe that AI will not overtake the role of humans, but that humans who use AI will surpass those who do not in efficiency and success. It is our JOB as educators to expose students to the world of AI and help them navigate it's uses with guidance. To ignore it is to neglect an important part of our students' 21 century education.

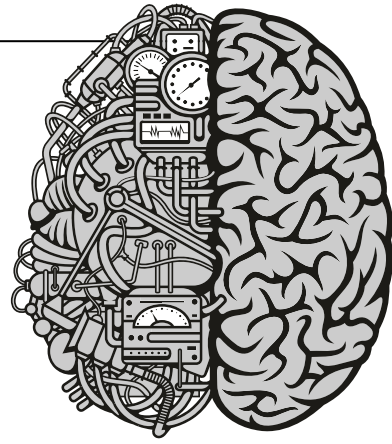
But I know we are all different and work in different educational settings. To make revisions to this Canva document to better align it with your beliefs and school situation, [click here](#) or use the QR code to the right, click FILE MAKE A COPY and edit as you wish.



AI Code of Conduct

Name: _____

Let's start by looking at some foundational ideas and boundaries of AI usage so we can all start on the same page. Read and reflect, discuss as a group – what feels true and fair to you? Highlight, make notes. Take time to think carefully.



Shared Principles

- Humans first. AI can suggest, but you decide.
- Be transparent. Always disclose when AI helped.
- Protect privacy. Never share personal or confidential information with AI.
- Check for accuracy & bias. Verify facts and look for missing perspectives.
- Create, don't copy. Use AI to brainstorm and revise—not to submit work it wrote for you (unless the task explicitly allows it).
- Grow your skills. AI should make you a better thinker, reader, and writer over time.

Green Light AI Activities

These are AI activities that are generally seen as acceptable and allowed. Feel free to add others that are allowed in your school.

- Brainstorm ideas, outlines, titles, and questions
- Clarify directions or vocabulary you don't understand
- Get examples, sentence starters, or mentor-text patterns
- Generate checklists or study guides you then use and adapt
- Request feedback on structure, clarity, tone, or grammar—then revise in your own words
-

Yellow Light AI Activities

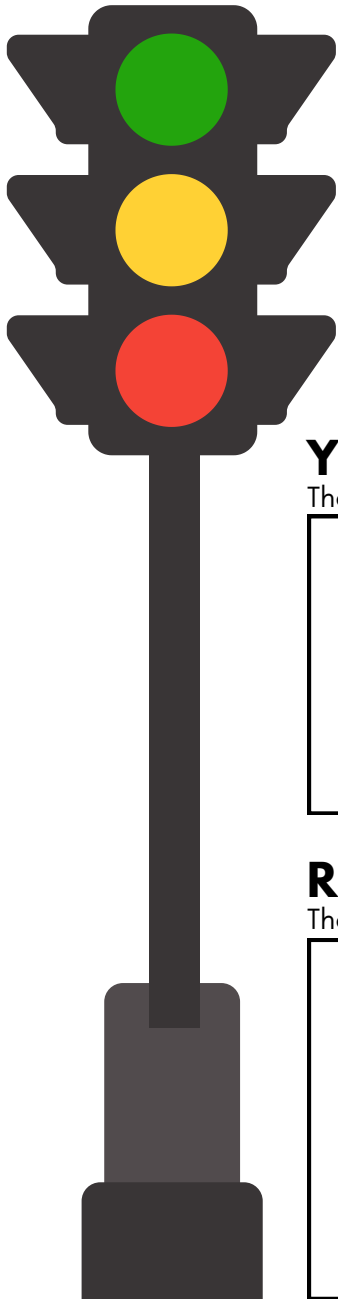
These are AI that often require permission from a teacher and citation of AI usage.

- Paraphrase a draft you wrote
- Suggest evidence or sources to explore (then you read and decide)
- Produce short text you will heavily edit (e.g., a hook, a transition)
- Translate your own writing for language support
-

Red Light AI Activities

These are AI activities that are typically not allowed.

- Submitting AI-generated writing as your own
- Using AI to find answers on graded assessments or quizzes
- Asking AI to write entire essays, lab reports, or creative works unless the assignment says so
- Entering anyone's personal, health, or contact information
- Generating harmful, harassing, or discriminatory content
-



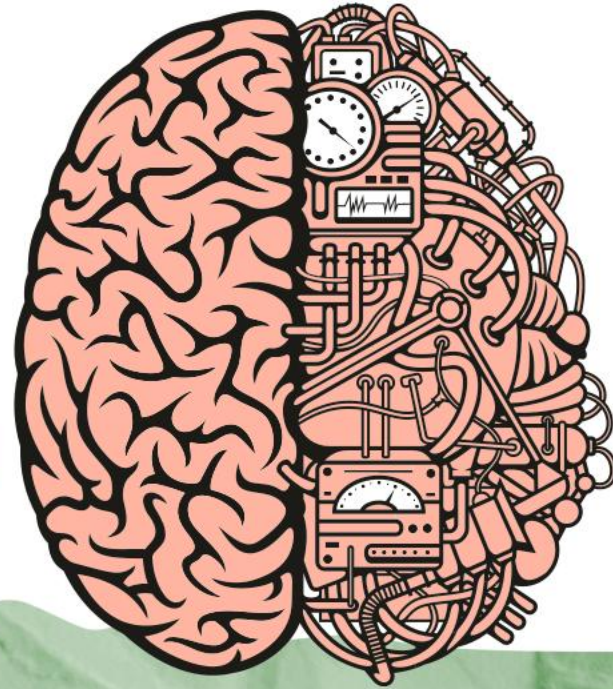
Name:

Date:

Student AI Use Pledge

I will use AI as a learning partner, be transparent, protect privacy, verify accuracy, and submit work that reflects my own thinking and voice.

I will leave a clear human fingerprint on my work—showing where my ideas, choices, knowledge, perspective, voice, and style shine through.



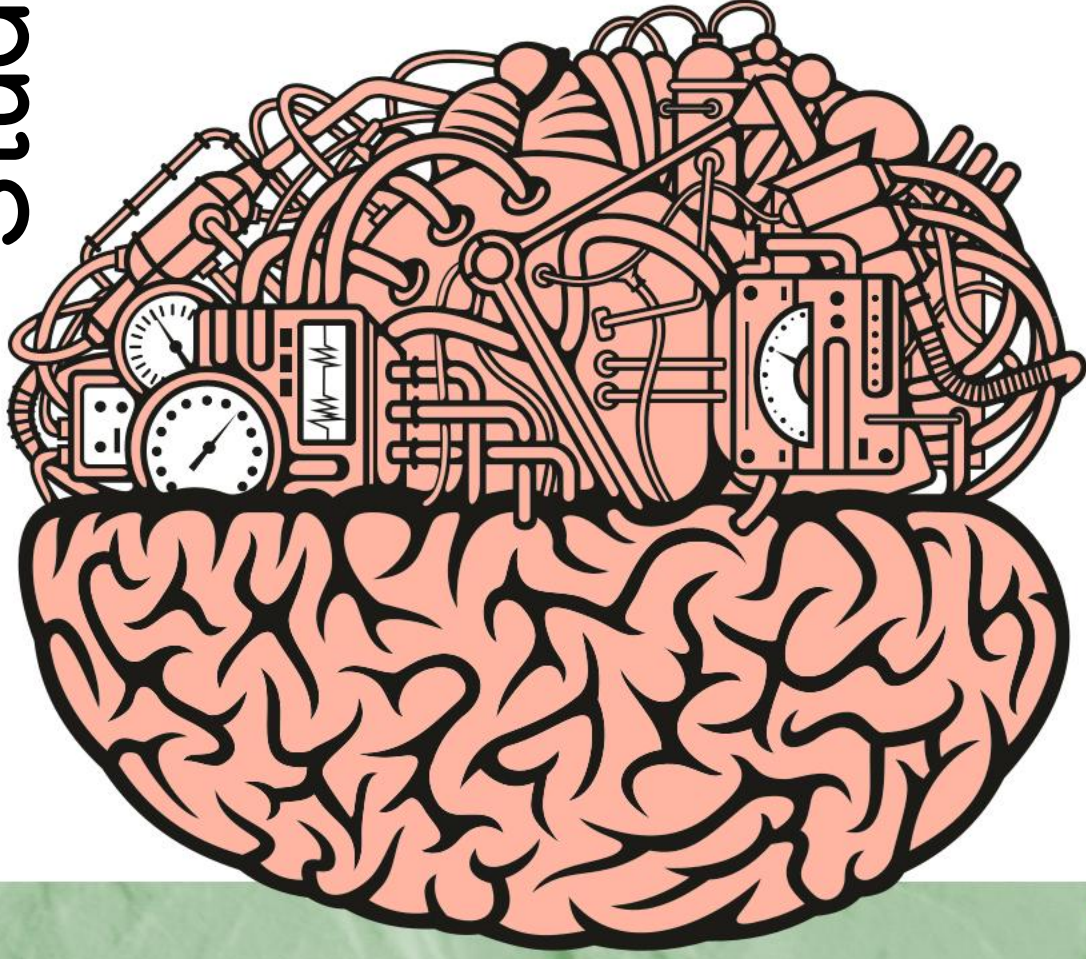
I will use AI to:

I will NOT use AI to:

Student AI Use Pledge

I will use AI as a learning partner, be transparent, protect privacy, verify accuracy, and submit work that reflects my own thinking and voice.

I will leave a clear human fingerprint on my work—showing where my ideas, choices, knowledge, perspective, voice, and style shine through.



NAME: _____

USE THIS LOG TO TRACK YOUR AI USAGE

AI USAGE LOG

ASSIGNMENT: _____

TOOL: _____ DATE: _____

MY USEAGE OF THE OUTPUT: _____

ASSIGNMENT: _____

TOOL: _____ DATE: _____

MY USEAGE OF THE OUTPUT: _____

ASSIGNMENT: _____

TOOL: _____ DATE: _____

MY USEAGE OF THE OUTPUT: _____

ASSIGNMENT: _____

TOOL: _____ DATE: _____

MY USEAGE OF THE OUTPUT: _____

ASSIGNMENT: _____

TOOL: _____ DATE: _____

MY USEAGE OF THE OUTPUT: _____

4

TEACHER TIPS

Helpful uses for Teachers

- Drafting reading questions, exemplars responses, or checklists you then refine
- Differentiated supports (sentence frames, vocabulary banks, leveled summaries)
- Generating multiple mentor-text versions for analysis (tone, structure, complexity)

Guardrails

- Never paste student or confidential data
- Review and adapt outputs for your curriculum and learners
- Model transparency: add a brief note on slides/handouts when AI assisted

Consequences & Make-It-Right

- If lines are crossed: Students may need to redo the work without AI, complete a reflection on ethical use, and/or lose credit on the “Ethical AI Use” rubric category.
- Restorative step: Conference + plan for future transparent, appropriate use.

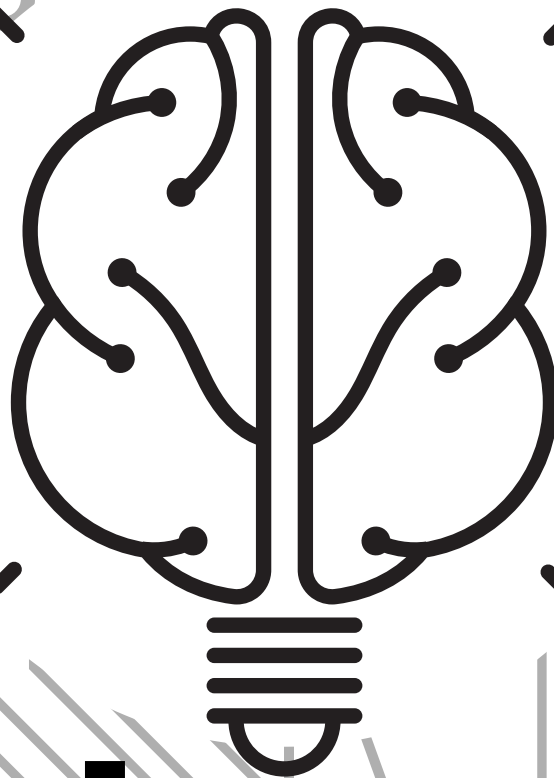
Assessment Add-On

Ethical & Effective AI Use (0–2 points)

- 2: Disclosed AI use; kept a clear log; verified facts; shows clear human voice and original thinking
- 1: Disclosed AI use but limited verification or minor overreliance on AI phrasing
- 0: Did not disclose AI use or submitted AI-written work as own; privacy or academic integrity violated

Teachers: You can add this section into existing rubrics for seamless integration with your current grading system. Feel free to weight is in a way that is appropriate for your classroom/students/district guidelines.

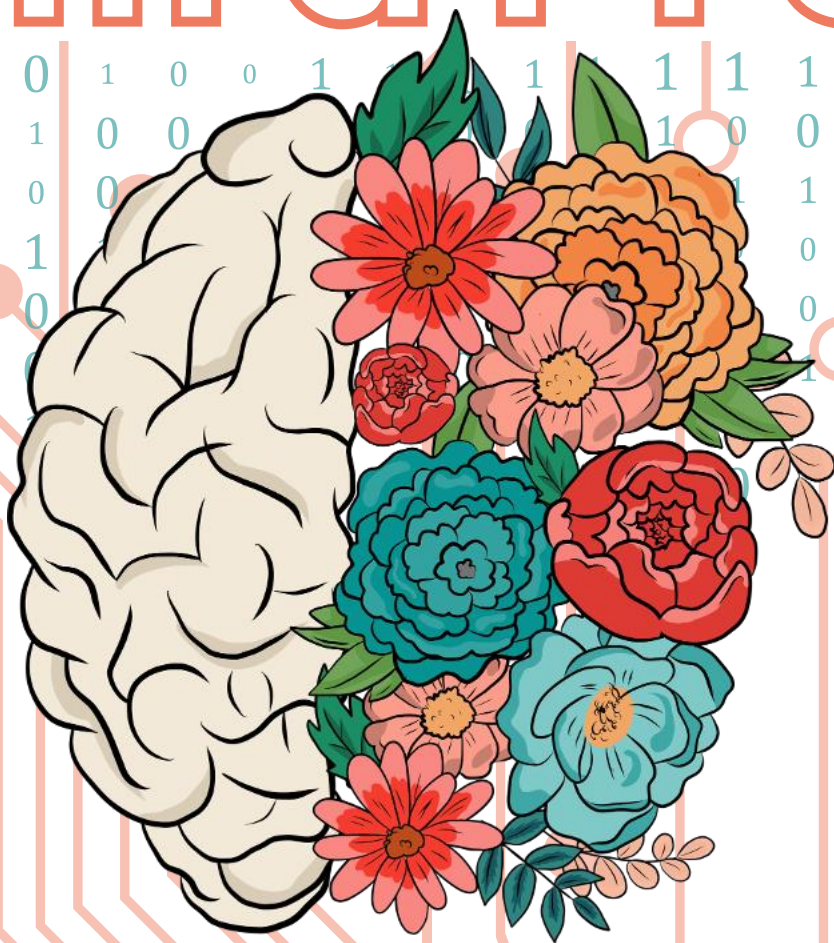
Humans
are
smarter



than
computers

Humans
are

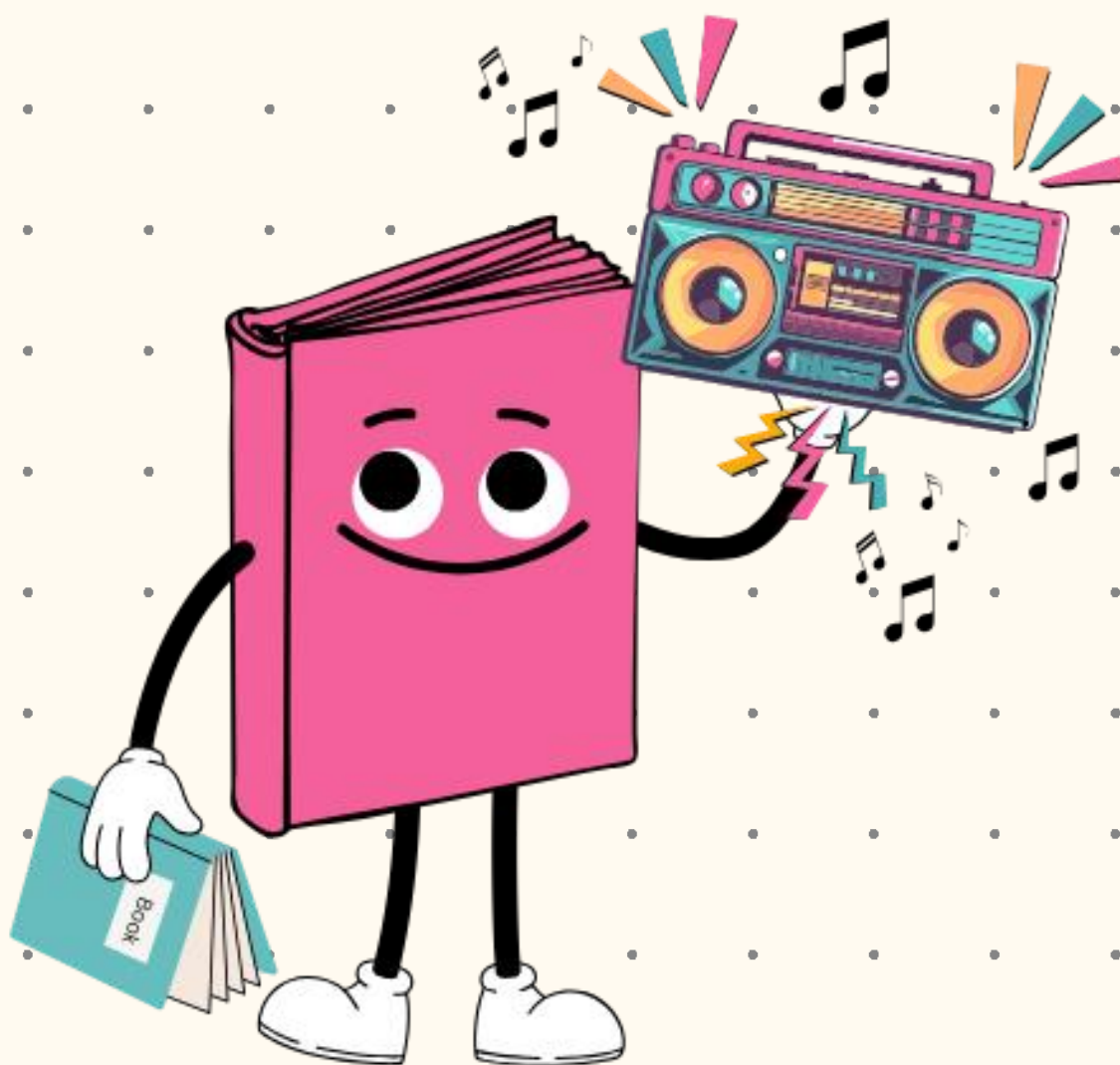
smarter



than

computers

NOVEL SOUNDTRACK PROJECT



from the Word Nerd Collaborative

NOVEL SOUNDTRACK PROJECT

A CREATIVE POST-READING ASSESSMENT

Tired of doing the same ol' thing after your students finish a book? Guess what? They are too! This project is a fun alternative that will hopefully get them thinking critically - without all the moaning and groaning that usually accompanies mental heavy lifting. This project will ask students to create a soundtrack for their book as if it is being turned into a movie!

STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.5

Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

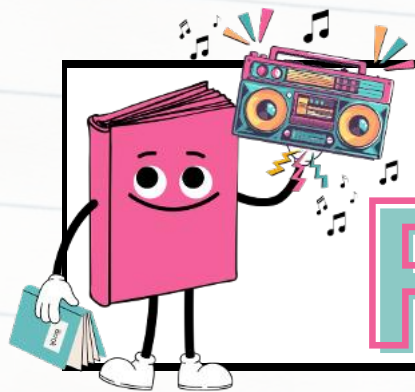
A FEW TIPS



- You can have the students present the material a variety of ways, one of which is actually creating the soundtrack cd and playing it for the class and then sharing their explanation. Other options could be creating a power point such as this, or a hand-written/drawn final product.
- I gave extra credit for students who included more than 4 songs.
- Another option could be to have students work in partners or groups.
- If you have any questions while using this resource, feel free to reach out! wordnerd@amandazieba.com



HAPPY TEACHING, LISTENING, AND
CREATING!! - AMANDA



NOVEL SOUNDTRACK PROJECT

A Creative
Post-Reading
Assessment

Your Job: Pretend the book you have just read is being turned into a movie. Your job is to create a soundtrack that would play in that movie.

The Music

- Chose 4 songs
- Include the titles for each song
- Include the artist/group for each song
- Include some of the lyrics for each song
- Write responses for the when/why questions
- Correct capitalization throughout

The Album Cover

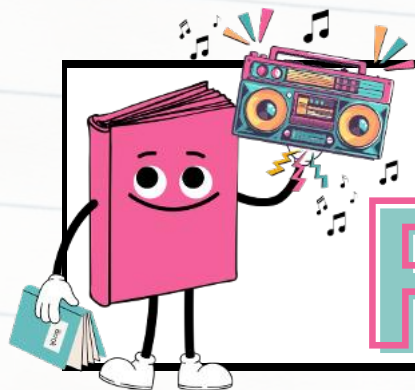
For the album cover you must create a visual design. The design must include:

- Soundtrack title
- Thoughtful design that incorporates several aspects/elements from the book. For example: images/scenes/characters/quotes/etc.

Ideas to Get You Started:

1. Think of emotional scenes in the story. Often times, songs are written about big feelings and emotions.
2. Think of songs that make you feel a particular emotion. Is that emotion found in the book anywhere?
3. Think of songs you enjoy that have a distinct message. Does that message match a lesson in the book?

Use this space to brainstorm some initial ideas.



NOVEL SOUNDTRACK PROJECT

A Creative
Post-Reading
Assessment

Sample

Song Title: Over My Head

Artist/Group: The Fray

Lyrics

And suddenly I become a part of your past
I'm becoming the part that don't last
I'm losing you and it's effortless
Without a sound we lose sight of the ground
In the throw around
Never thought that you wanted to bring it down
I won't let it go down till we torch it ourselves

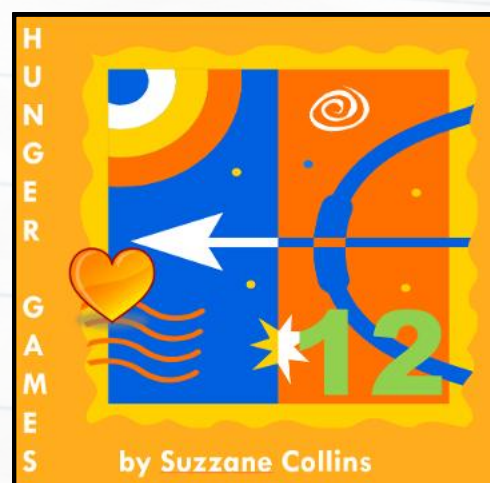
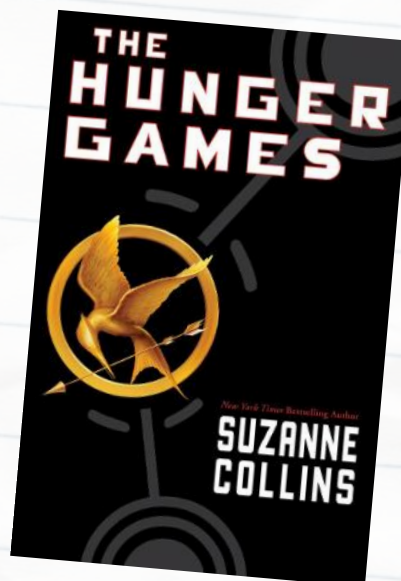
And everyone knows I'm in
Over my head
Over my head

When would I play this song in the book? (Please tell about the scene and include a page #)

I would play this song when Katniss discovers that she must go into the arena to fight in the Hunger Games. (page 23)

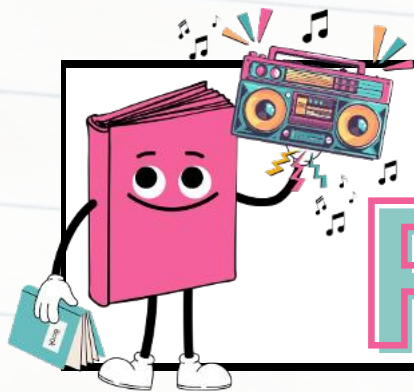
Why does this song fit in with the book/scene?

I chose this song because I think that Katniss must have been overwhelmed by all of her thoughts and feelings. Also this song talks about leaving people behind like Katniss has to do.



Book Aspects/Elements included:

- Title
- Author
- Bow and Arrow
 - *Katniss' weapon of choice
- Heart
 - *For Katniss and Peeta's relationship
- District 12
 - *Katniss' and Peeta's home



NOVEL SOUNDTRACK PROJECT

Song: _____

Artist/Group: _____

Lyrics

When in the book would this song play?

This song fits with the scene/book because

Song: _____

Artist/Group: _____

Lyrics

When in the book would this song play?

This song fits with the scene/book because

Song: _____

Artist/Group: _____

Lyrics

When in the book would this song play?

This song fits with the scene/book because

Song: _____

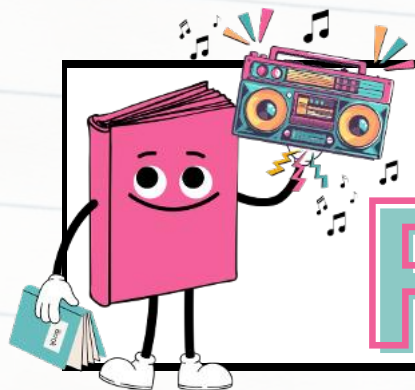
Artist/Group: _____

Lyrics

When in the book would this song play?

This song fits with the scene/book because

Lyrics Sheet



NOVEL SOUNDTRACK PROJECT

A Creative
Post-Reading
Assessment

Album Cover Ideas

Book Aspects/Elements included:

Title: _____

Author: _____

Setting: _____

Symbols: _____

Colors: _____

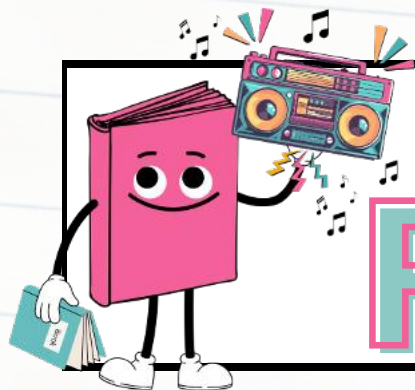
More Ideas:

A large empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing or writing more ideas for the album cover.

Rough Draft Sketch:

A large empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing a rough draft sketch of the album cover.

Album Covers I
like to use as a model:
(List or glue pictures)



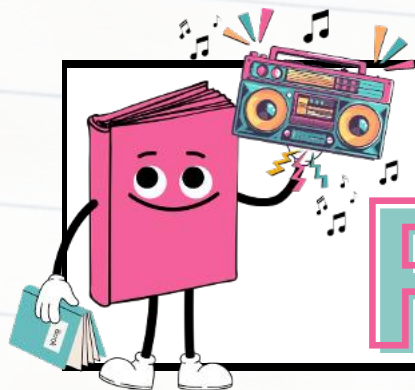
NOVEL SOUNDTRACK PROJECT

A Creative
Post-Reading
Assessment

Final Album Cover



Use this space to explain the elements and details of your album cover:



NOVEL SOUNDTRACK PROJECT

A Creative
Post-Reading
Assessment

Rubric

Task/Points	1	2	3	Comments
Cover Design Includes 3 aspects from the book				
Cover Design was created with critical thought and genuine effort				
Song #1 matches the emotion and plot of the book				
Song #2 matches the emotion and plot of the book				
Song #3 matches the emotion and plot of the book				
Song #4 matches the emotion and plot of the book				
Lyrics are included (and school appropriate)				
Correct capitalization and complete sentences are used where necessary				
Student presentation of the soundtrack is clearly communicated				
Total: ____/27 points				

Comments

Would You Rather...

PERSUASIVE WRITING WORKSHEETS



SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY EDITION

CREATED BY THE WORD NERD

TAKEAWAYS

Even silly prompts (“Would you rather have pizza every day or ice cream every day?”) still help students practice the serious structure of argumentative writing—without the intimidation of “real” essay topics. This lowers the stakes while reinforcing core skills.

WE WANT STUDENTS TO BE ABLE TO:

- Choose a side → Make a clear claim.
- Back it up → Give 2-3 strong reasons with evidence or examples.
- Use transitions → Show relationships between ideas.
- Acknowledge the other side → Strengthen their argument.
- Conclude clearly → Wrap up their reasoning in a persuasive way.



**SPARK STUDENT
ENGAGEMENT -
START WITH THE VIDEO!**



Video Link



STANDARDS IN ACTION

W.6.1 – Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- Students should learn to:
 - Make a claim → choose one option in their “Would You Rather?”
 - Give reasons → explain why they chose it.
 - Use evidence/examples → support their reasoning with logic, facts, or even life experience.
 - Acknowledge the other side → briefly explain why someone might choose differently, and why their choice is stronger.

W.6.1a – Introduce claims clearly, organize reasons and evidence.

- Skill Focus: Write an introductory sentence that states their choice.
- Ex: “I would rather be a ballerina than a weightlifter because it fits my personality and challenges me in new ways.”

W.6.1b – Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- Skill Focus: Develop 2–3 strong reasons with examples or explanations.
- Ex: “Dancing allows me to express myself creatively, and it’s also excellent exercise.”

W.6.1c – Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify relationships among claims, reasons, and evidence.

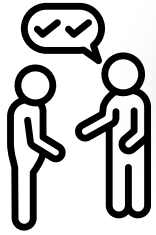
- Skill Focus: Use transition words like for example, in addition, because, however, and therefore to guide readers.

W.6.1d – Establish and maintain a formal style.

- Skill Focus: Write in a clear, academic voice (not “texting language”), even if the topic is silly.
- Ex: “I’d choose...” instead of “Because it’s cool.”

W.6.1e – Provide a concluding statement or section.

- Skill Focus: Wrap up by restating the claim and leaving a final thought.
- Ex: “For these reasons, being a ballerina would be a better fit for me than being a weightlifter.”



BUILD YOUR CASE

You've made your choice... now it's time to convince someone else to agree with you! Use this organizer to help plan and write your persuasive paragraph. Strong persuasive writers make a claim, give clear reasons, support their ideas, and wrap it all up like a pro!

FOLLOW THESE STEPS!

✓ **Step 1: Make Your Claim**

Write a strong opening sentence that clearly states your answer to the Would You Rather question.

Example: I would rather live in a treehouse than on a boat because I love nature and dislike water.

✓ **Step 2: Give Your Reasons**

List 2–3 strong reasons why you chose your answer. Add examples or explanations for each one.

✓ **Step 3: Use Transitions**

Use words like because, for example, in addition, also, however, even though to connect your ideas and make your writing flow.

✓ **Step 4: Think About the Other Side**

Can you think of why someone might choose the other option? Briefly explain why your choice is still the better one.

Example: Some people might say... But I think...

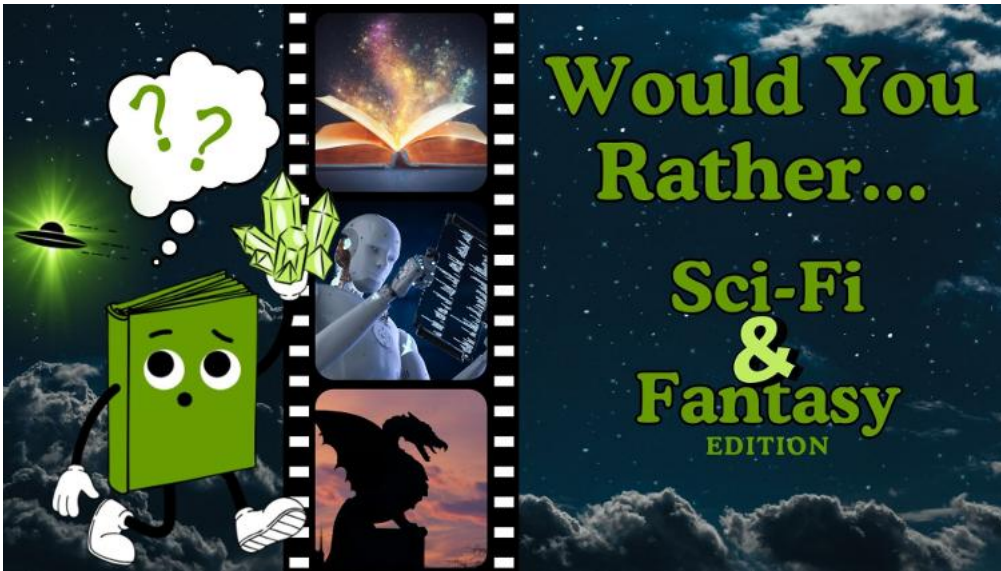
✓ **Step 5: Wrap It Up**

Write a conclusion sentence that restates your choice and leaves the reader convinced.

Example: That's why I would definitely rather live in a treehouse!

WOULD YOU RATHER?

Name: _____



VIDEO



Video Link

Directions: As you watch the video, circle your preferred choice and then follow the physical cue on screen!

1. Would you rather be in a Marvel movie, Harry Potter movie or Star Wars movie?
2. Would you rather travel 10 minutes or 150 years into the future?
3. Would you rather face a zombie apocalypse or a robot apocalypse?
4. Would you rather be able to read minds or move objects with your mind?
5. Would you rather have a pet Pegasus or pet dragon?
6. Would you rather be able to breath underwater or in outer space?
7. Would you rather have a pause button or rewind button for life?
8. Would you rather be the ruler of a hidden underground city or the guardian of a floating city in the clouds?
9. Would you rather be a spaceship engineer or a dragon tamer?
10. Would you rather have a magical backpack that gives you exactly what you need or a futuristic gadget that fixes anything instantly?

Respond: Which would you rather match up do you have the strongest feelings about? Why?

Date: _____

Would You Rather...

or

??



Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.

[illegible]

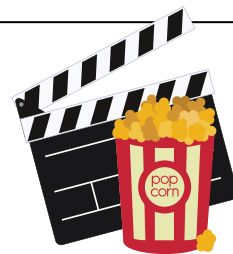
Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition



Would You Rather...

be in a Marvel movie, Harry Potter movie or Star Wars movie?

Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition

Would You Rather...

travel 10 minutes or 150 years into the future?



Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition

Would You Rather...

zombie apocalypse or a robot apocalypse?



Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

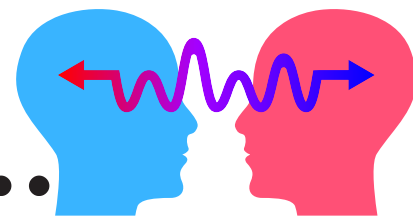
Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition

Would You Rather...



be able to read minds or move objects with your mind?

Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

Name: _____

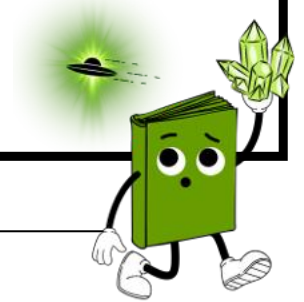
Date: _____

Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition

Would You Rather...

have a pet Pegasus or pet dragon?

Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

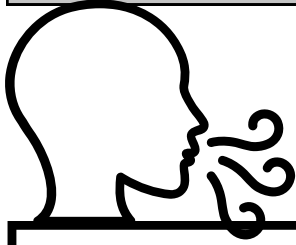
Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

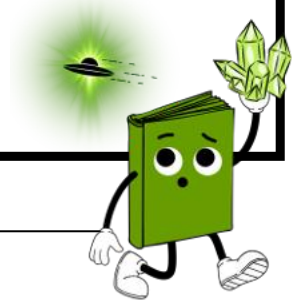
Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition



Would You Rather...

be able to breath underwater or in outer space?

Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition

PAUSE



Would You Rather...

have a pause button or rewind button for life?

REWIND

Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition

Would You Rather...

be the ruler of a hidden underground city or
the guardian of a floating city in the clouds?



Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

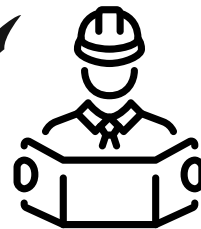
Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition



Would You Rather...

be a spaceship engineer or a dragon tamer?

Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sci Fi & Fantasy Edition

Would You Rather...

have a magical backpack that gives you exactly what you need or a futuristic gadget that fixes anything instantly?



Use this space to brain-dump ideas, list reasons, or otherwise plan your response.



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

MORE WYR!

Check back to my store, channel or the membership each month for more Would You Rather Brain Breaks!

TOPIC LINE UP:

- August: Back to School
- September: Sci-Fi and Fantasy
- October: Scary Edition
- November: Sports Edition
- December: Winter Edition
- January: Gross Stuff!
- February: Fun Stuff!
- March: Body Adaptations
- April: Around the World
- May: 100 of ...
- June: Summer Edition



**EACH WOULD YOU RATHER SET
WOULD INCLUDES AN INTERACTIVE
VIDEO AND PRINTABLE WRITING
WORKSHEETS**



September

141

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
BECAUSE YOU DESERVE THEM!

First Chapter Friday

Mystery Quote



First Chapter Friday

Mystery Quote

Included in this Resource:

- What is a Mystery Quote and How Do I Use It? ([video link](#))
- 2 sided student engagement worksheet to use during The Word Nerd's First Chapter Friday Videos
- Printable Mystery Quote "answer sheets" for students to record the mystery quote while listening to the video. Students can turn in their answers for a drawing. Suggested prizes may be: choice seating, first dibs on the book that was read aloud, candy, "School Bucks", etc.
 - I would do one of these two (either 2 sided sheet or prize sheet... otherwise it might be too much and become tedious for the students which would detract from the goal of engaging them.
 - I would also choose to do either this mystery quote activity or one of the other student engagement worksheets I've created... again, we don't want to just give busy work. I think it would be a great idea to continually mix it up to keep things fresh. For example: Do a mystery quote sheet one week, a mindfulness coloring sheet (in the 2023 pack) the next, an original FCF worksheet (novel specific or generic) the week after that, or an author interview worksheet ([from this pack](#)) the next. This way things won't get stale and stagnant and you can reach a variety of types of learners in your classroom.



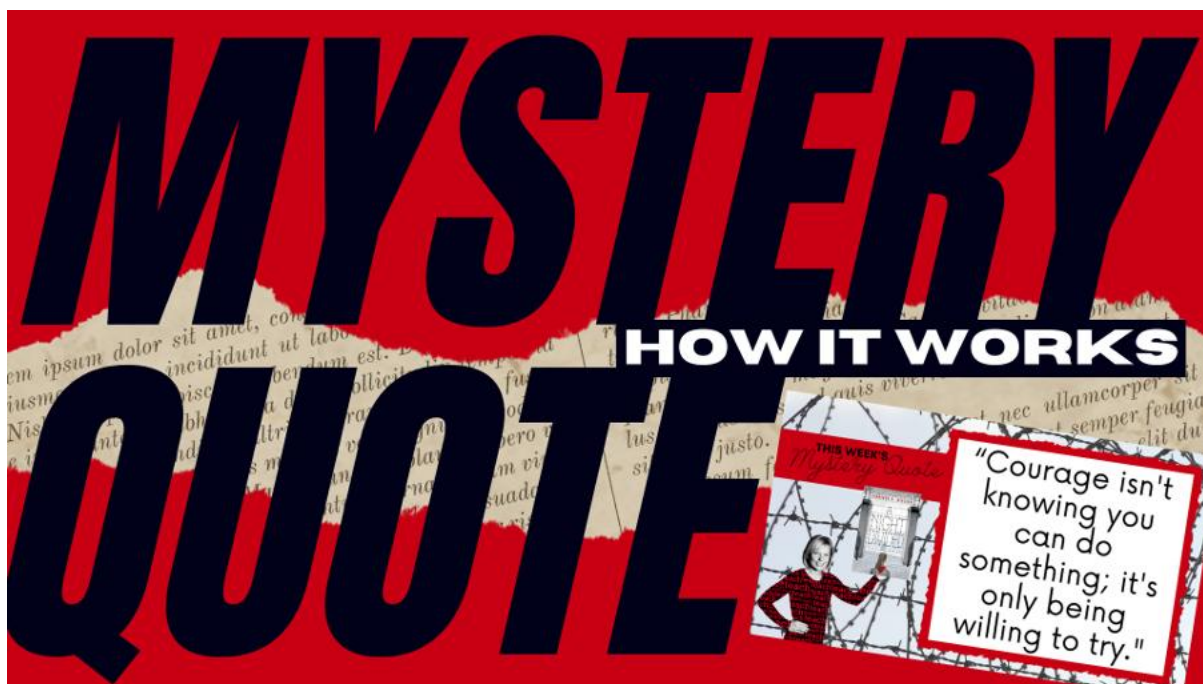
- Leaderboard Printable
- Links to the First Chapter Friday Playlist

First Chapter Friday

Mystery Quote



Watch this [quick video](#) to learn all about the Mystery Quote hidden in my First Chapter Friday videos and how to use it in your classroom.



I have over 120 First Chapter Friday Read Aloud Videos on my channel. MOST have Mystery Quotes hidden inside. If a mystery quote is included, it will be noted on the video thumbnail image, in the video description box and also within the first 30 seconds of the video.



Videos that do not have mystery quotes were likely made in the first half of 2021 (before I began adding them) or in a graphic novel read aloud when there is already a lot going on, on screen. I hope your students enjoy this added layer to my videos and that it further engages them in the wonderful ritual that is First Chapter Fridays.

Name _____

First Chapter Friday

Mystery Quote

As you listen to the read aloud, watch the screen to learn the mystery quote, one word at a time. Write it here:



Book Title:

I think this quote relates to:
(check as many as apply)

- ☐ The book's theme
- ☐ A lesson the character learns
- ☐ My life: _____
- ☐ Our curriculum (ELA/Reading lesson)
- ☐ Another book I have read: _____
- ☐ Other: _____



I want to continue
reading this book.



I do not want
to continue
reading this
book.

Name _____

First Chapter Friday

Mystery Quote

My rating of this book's
beginning:



○ ○ ○ ○ ○

I rate this book's beginning ____ stars
because

Emotions I felt as I
listened to this chapter:

Happy Intrigued Hopeful Disgust Nervous Joyful
Focused Sad Frustrated Confident Jealous Bored
Excited Fear Angry Entertained other: _____

The elements of this book's beginnings that drew
me in or pushed me away were... because...

Name _____

First Chapter Friday

Mystery Quote

As you listen to the read aloud, watch the screen to learn the mystery quote, one word at a time. Write it here:

Book Title: _____

Quote: _____

Then turn this paper into your teacher for a chance to win a prize!

Name _____

First Chapter Friday

Mystery Quote

As you listen to the read aloud, watch the screen to learn the mystery quote, one word at a time. Write it here:

Book Title: _____

Quote: _____

Then turn this paper into your teacher for a chance to win a prize!

First Chapter FridayMystery Quote LEADERBOARD

Color in a square for each quote correctly written. The 1st team to fill their boxes wins!

TEAM #1

TEAM #2

TEAM #3

TEAM #4

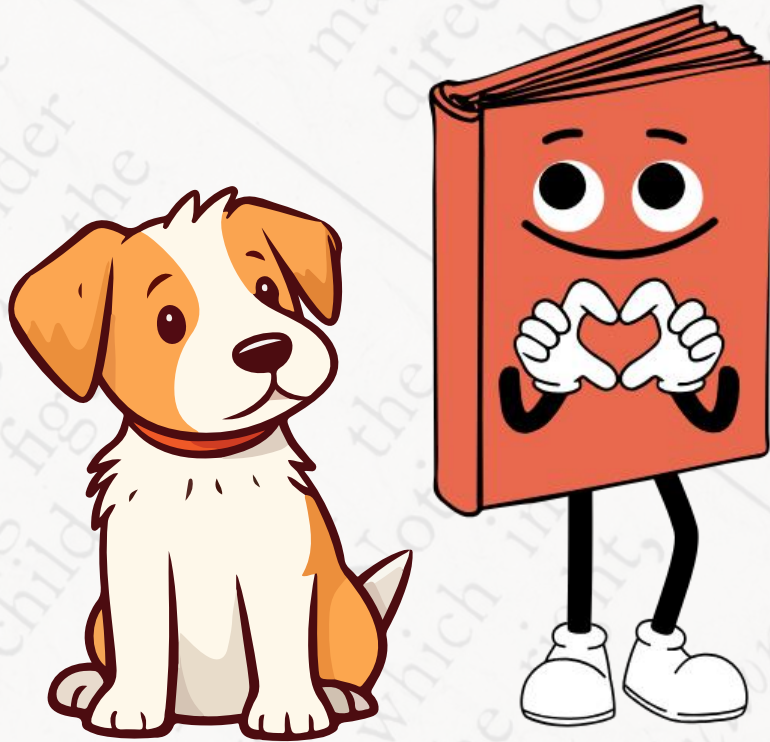
TEAM #5

WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

ANIMAL

MAIN CHARACTER



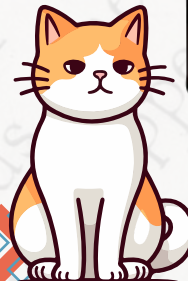
ANIMAL MAIN CHARACTER



The books on this list feature an animal as the/one of the main characters.

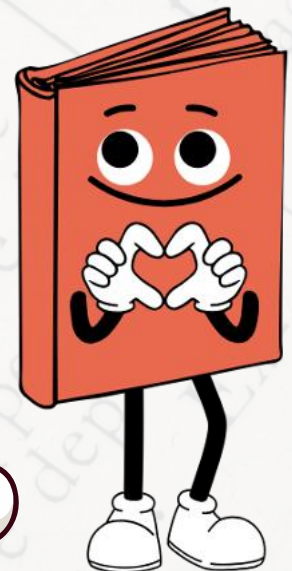
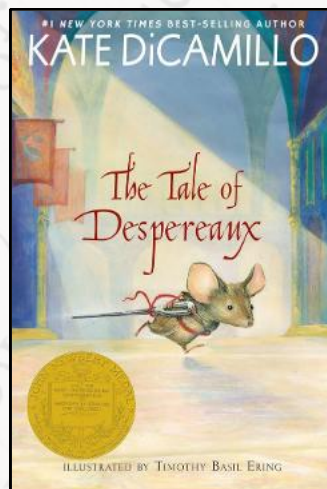
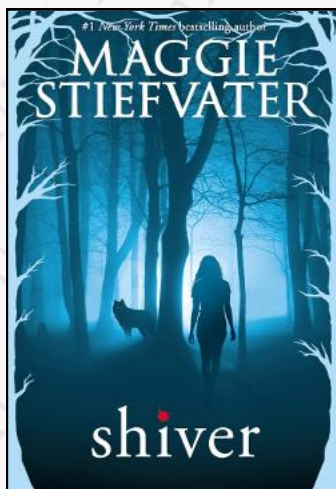
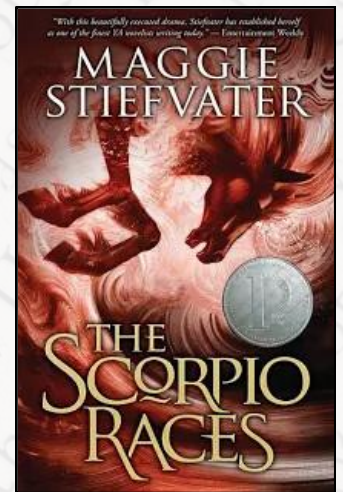
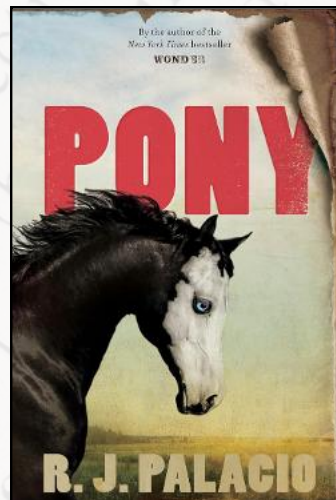
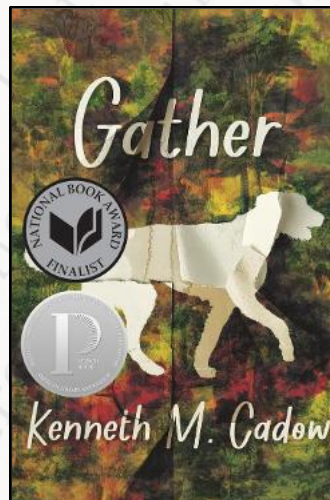
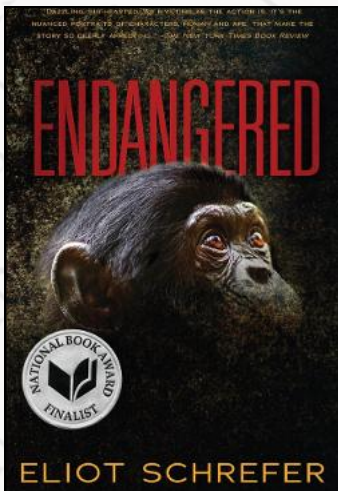
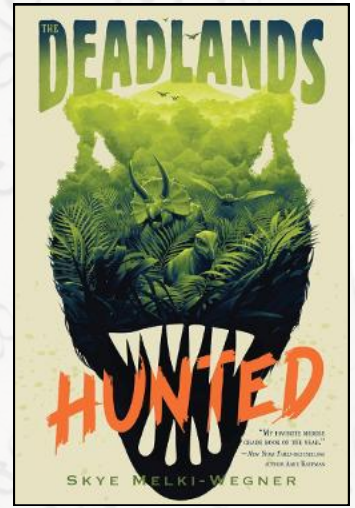
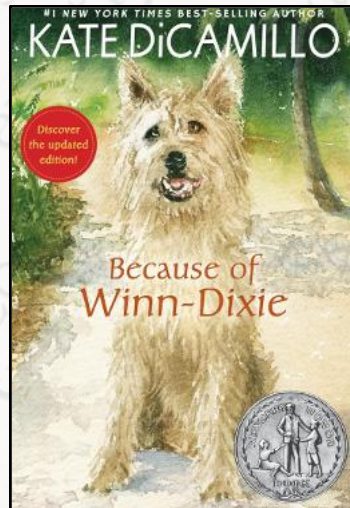


- **Alone (dog)**
by Megan E. Freeman
- **Because of Winn Dixie (dog)**
by Kate DiCamillo
- **Concrete Cowboy (horses)**
by G. Neri
- **Deadlands (dinosaurs)**
by Skye Wegner Melki
- **Endangered (bonobo - chimp)**
by Eliot Schrefer
- **Gather (dog)**
by Kenneth M. Cadow
- **Pony (horse)**
by RJ Palacio
- **The Scorpio Races (horse)**
by Maggie Stiefvater
- **Shiver (wolves)**
by Maggie Stiefvater
- **The Tale of Despereaux (mouse)**
by Kate DiCamillo



WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

ANIMAL MAIN CHARACTER



WNC BOOK LISTS *
TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

MOVING



MOVING

to a new school/town/country



Absolutely Truly

by Heather Vogel Frederick

Amari and the Night Brothers

by B.B. Alston

Free Throws, Friendship and Other Things We Fouled Up

by Jenn Bishop

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

by J.K. Rowling

New Kid

by Jerry Craft

The Night Diary

by Veera Hirinandani

Nowhere Boy

by Katherine Marsh

Parachute Kids

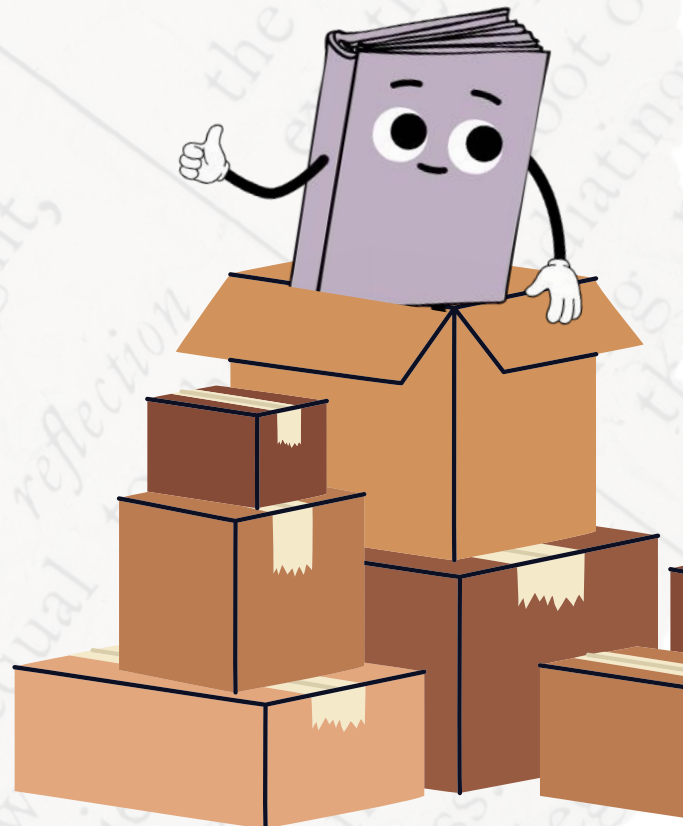
by Betty C. Tang

The War That Saved My Life

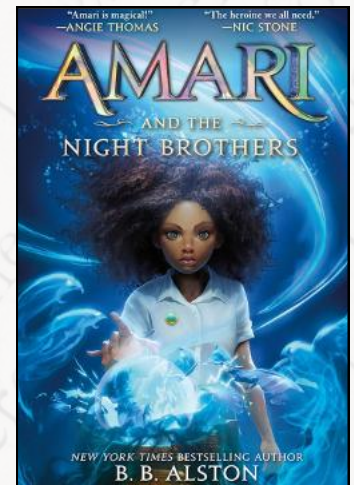
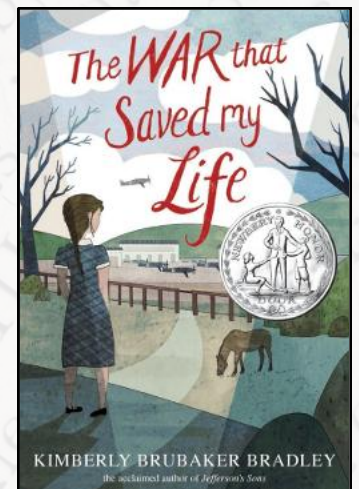
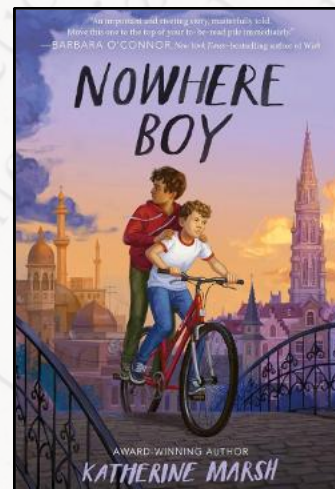
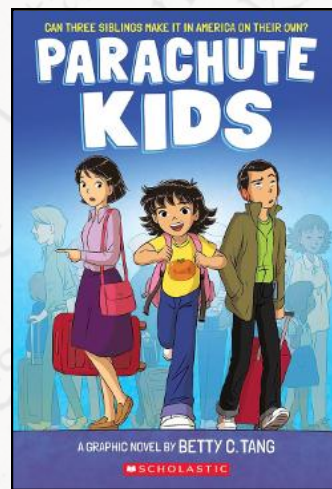
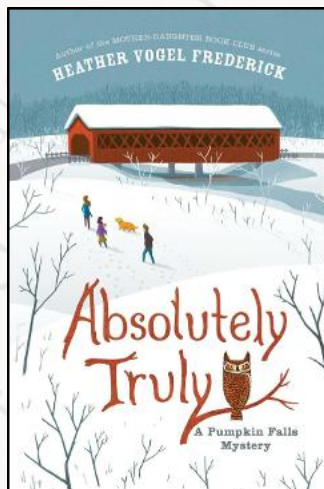
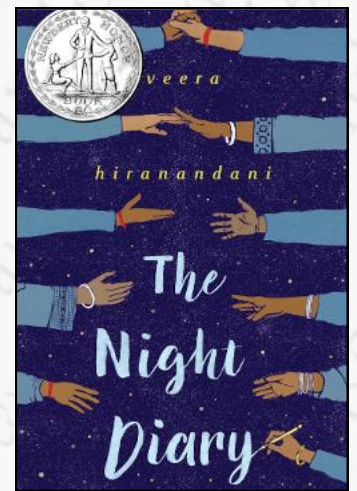
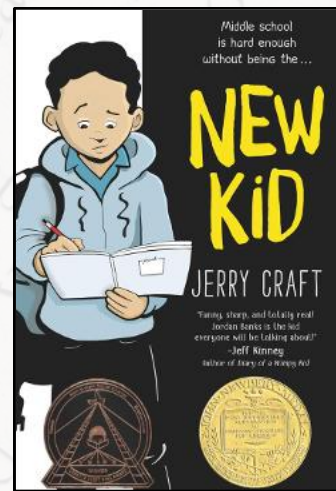
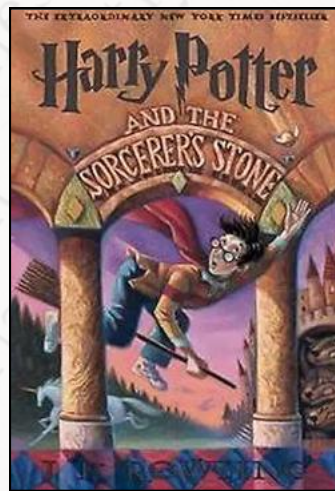
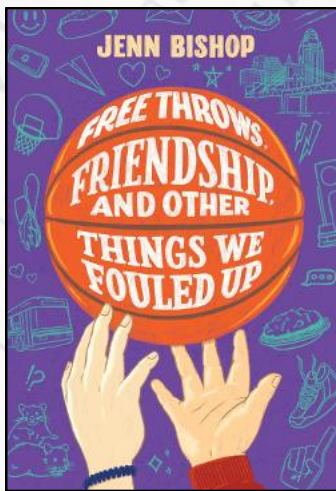
by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

The Wrong Way Home

by Kate O'Shaughnessy



BOOKS ABOUT: MOVING



WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS



WAR

WAR

These books deal with military conflicts and the way they affect the world, specifically focusing on the impacts of child-aged characters.



A Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park

A Place to Hang the Moon by Kate Albus

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

Bomb by Steve Sheinkin

Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card

Inside Out and Back Again by Thanhha Lai

Letters From Rifka by Karen Hesse

Lifeboat 12 by Susan Hood

Other Words for Home by Jasmine Warga

Shadow on the Mountain by Margi Preus

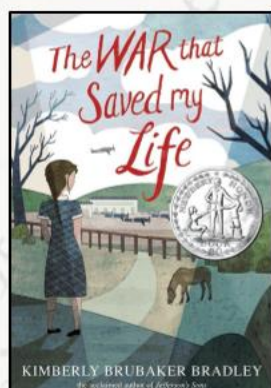
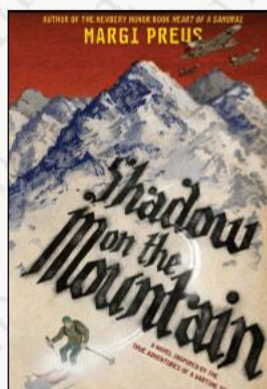
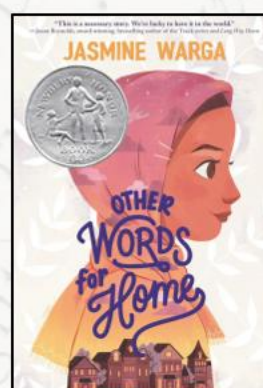
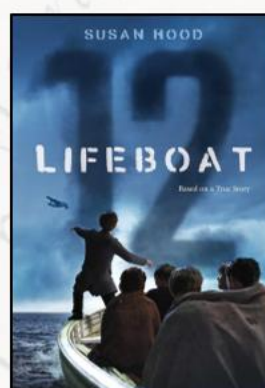
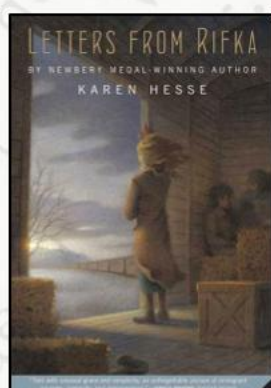
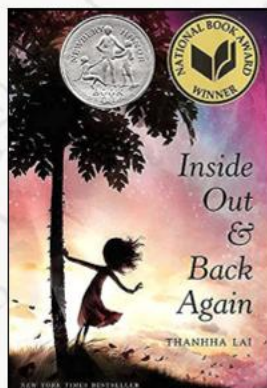
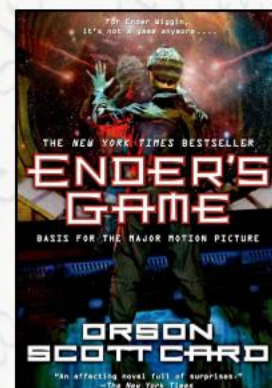
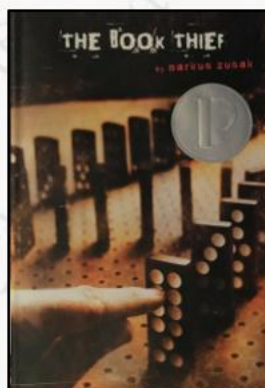
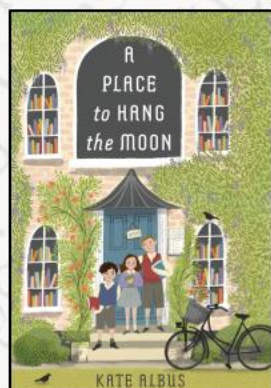
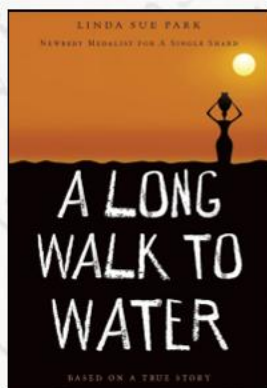
Stealing Home by J. Torres

Refugee by Alan Gratz

The War That Saved My Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

BOOKS ABOUT: WAR



WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

Name: _____



Think about your day and then answer these questions.



What is one really great thing that happened?



What is one not-so-great thing that happened?



How are you going to maximize your WOW or fix your POW?



What is the next best step you can take?



MUST TRY!

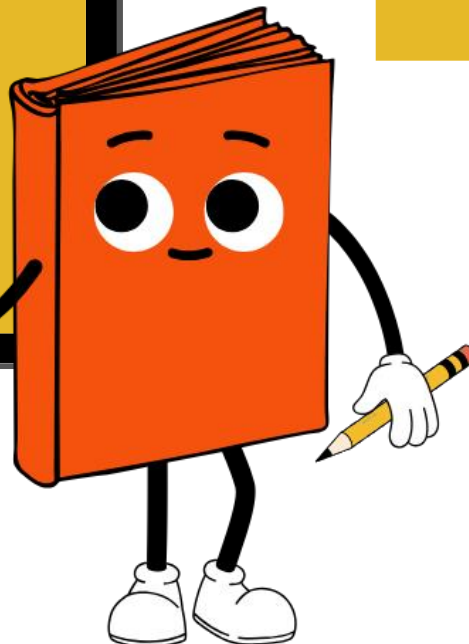
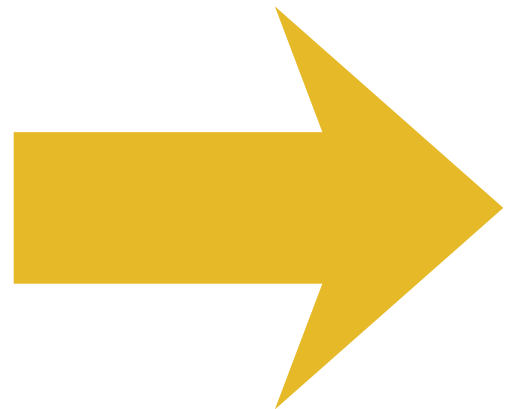
Word Nerd Daily

an app from Amanda Zieba

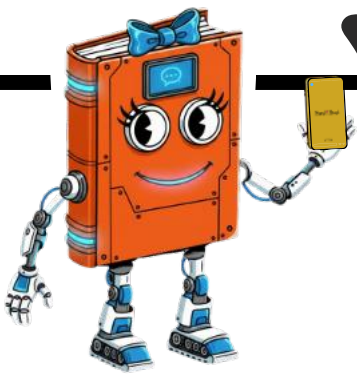


FREE!

**DOWNLOAD THE
WORD NERD DAILY
APP AND THEN TRY
THESE PROMPTS!**



AVIALBE FOR APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES



RITABOT RESCUE PROMPTS

FOR DAYS WHEN TEACHING FEELS HARD OR YOU WANT
TO SHAKE THINGS UP!

TO COPY AND PASTE THE PROMPTS, HEAD TO THIS [GOOGLE DOC](#).



PROMPT 1

SITUATION: FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY BOOSTER

Help me create an engaging First Chapter Friday experience for middle school students.

Book title or genre: [INSERT HERE]
Grade level: [6th / 7th / 8th]

Please include:

- A quick hook before reading
- 3 prediction/discussion questions
- One interactive listening activity
- One follow-up writing or creative response
- One way to increase participation for reluctant readers

Keep everything low-prep, engaging, and realistic for a busy classroom.

PROMPT 2

SITUATION: HIGH-INTEREST WRITING PROMPT CREATOR

Create a highly engaging middle school writing prompt.

Topic/theme: [INSERT HERE]
Grade level: [6th / 7th / 8th]

Please:

- Connect the prompt to a real-world situation, curiosity, mystery, or emotional dilemma
- Give students a role or scenario to step into
- Include a strong hook sentence
- Add 3 optional "thinking boost" questions for students who get stuck
- Suggest one book, article, or video connection to extend the activity

Make the prompt creative, age-appropriate, and exciting enough that students WANT to respond.

RITABOT RESCUE PROMPTS

FOR DAYS WHEN TEACHING FEELS HARD OR YOU WANT
TO SHAKE THINGS UP!



PROMPT 3

SITUATION: EVERYONE IS BORED 🙄

My middle school students are bored and disengaged. Help me redesign today's lesson to increase participation and energy.

Current topic/lesson: [INSERT HERE]
Grade level: [6th / 7th / 8th]

Please include:

- A more engaging opening activity
- One movement or collaboration component
- One element of challenge, competition, or choice
- A way to make the topic feel more relevant to students
- A strong closing activity that keeps students thinking

Keep everything classroom realistic and easy to implement immediately.

PROMPT 4

SITUATION: STUCK IN A RUT ↺

I feel stuck in a teaching rut. Help me refresh a lesson or activity I've used too many times.

Current lesson/activity: [INSERT HERE]
Grade level: [6th / 7th / 8th]

Please suggest:

- 5 creative ways to teach the same concept differently
 - One gamified version
 - One discussion-based version
 - One tech-friendly version
 - One low-prep/high-engagement version
 - One unexpected or "outside the box" idea students would remember

Keep the ideas practical, engaging, and middle-school friendly.

RITABOT RESCUE PROMPTS

FOR DAYS WHEN TEACHING FEELS HARD OR YOU WANT
TO SHAKE THINGS UP!

PROMPT 5

SITUATION: THEY ARE NOT GETTING IT

My students are struggling to understand this concept. Help me reteach it in a more engaging and accessible way.

Concept/skill: [INSERT HERE]
Grade level: [6th / 7th / 8th]

Please include:

- A simple explanation using student-friendly language
- An analogy or real-life comparison
- A hands-on, visual, or interactive teaching idea
- Common misconceptions students may have
- A quick formative assessment/check for understanding
- One fun or memorable way to practice the skill

Make this realistic for a middle school classroom with mixed ability levels.

PROMPT 6

SITUATION: MY STUDENTS HAVE CHAOTIC ENERGY

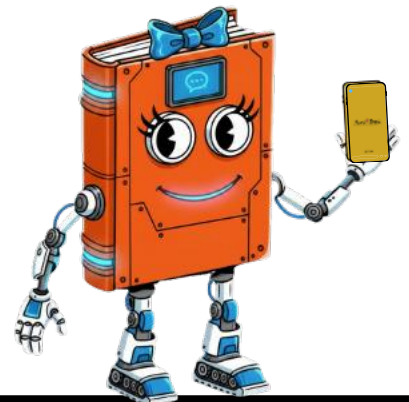
My middle school students are extremely energetic and unfocused today. Help me channel their energy into productive learning.

Topic/subject: [INSERT HERE]
Grade level: [6th / 7th / 8th]

Please include:

- A movement-based learning activity
- A structured partner or group task
- A competitive or timed element
- Clear routines or boundaries to prevent chaos
- A calming/reset transition before the lesson ends

The goal is high engagement WITHOUT letting the classroom go off the rails.





RITABOT RESCUE PROMPTS

FOR DAYS WHEN TEACHING FEELS HARD OR YOU WANT TO SHAKE THINGS UP!

TO COPY AND PASTE THE PROMPTS, HEAD TO THIS [GOOGLE DOC](#).



PROMPT 7

SITUATION: ADMIN IS COMING 🙄

I am being observed/evaluated by administration and want to create a highly engaging middle school lesson that feels rigorous, student-centered, and well-managed.

Topic/standard: [INSERT HERE]
Grade level: [6th / 7th / 8th]

Please include:

- A strong, engaging lesson hook
- Clear learning targets
- Student discussion/collaboration opportunities
- Differentiation ideas for mixed ability learners
- Visible engagement strategies
- A meaningful student task or product
- Classroom management structures that keep students focused
- A strong closing or assessment piece

Make this lesson realistic, organized, and impressive without requiring hours of prep.

PROMPT 8

SITUATION: THE “NOTHING IS WORKING” RESET BUTTON

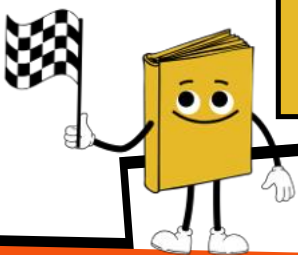
I feel overwhelmed and need a simple, engaging reset lesson for my middle school classroom.

Topic/subject: [INSERT HERE]
Grade level: [6th / 7th / 8th]

Please create:

- A low-prep lesson with high student engagement
- A simple hook or discussion starter
- One collaborative activity
- One creative or reflective component
- A manageable pacing structure
- Minimal materials and easy directions

The goal is to help both me AND my students feel successful again.



LOOK AT YOU GO!

You did it, teacher friend. You made it through September—engine still running, maybe a little dusty, maybe a little dented, but definitely moving forward.

This time of year, it's easy to focus on how far there is to go.

The units you haven't gotten to yet.
The papers you haven't graded.
The routines that still need tweaking.

But I want to pause for a second and remind you: you're making progress. You've built relationships. You've introduced books. You've established expectations. You've navigated construction zones and surprise detours. And along the way, I hope you've had a few moments (small but meaningful!) where you caught a glimpse of something beautiful. A student who finally picked up a book. A class that actually followed directions the first time. A lesson that just worked.

Because this school year isn't just a race to winter break, testing season, or summer. It's a road trip. A journey. And even when the destination feels far away, the view from here is worth noticing.

Next month, we'll be continuing our momentum with new lessons, brain breaks, and a special First Chapter Friday pick that's close to my heart: my YA novel, [Life in the Passenger Seat](#)—a story about grit, growth, and (of course) cars. If you haven't gotten a copy yet, here's your nudge to read it, write a review on Amazon (pretty please!) and get ready to share this story with your students. 😊

Until then, take a deep breath. Give yourself credit. You're doing more than you think—and you're not doing it alone.

See you at the next mile marker.

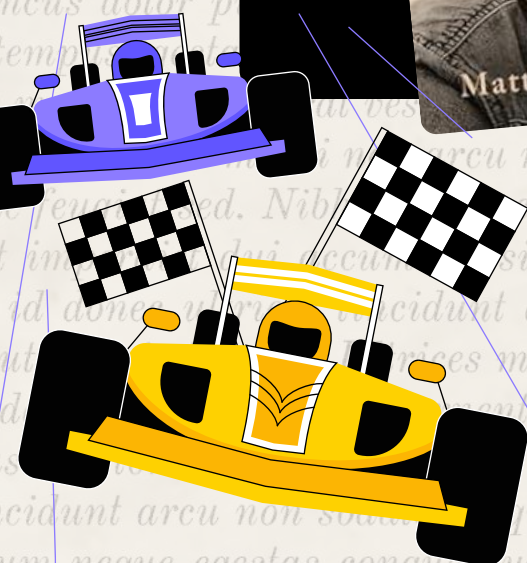
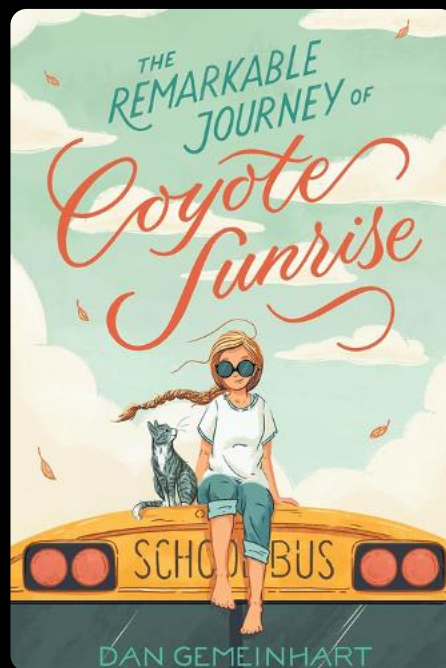
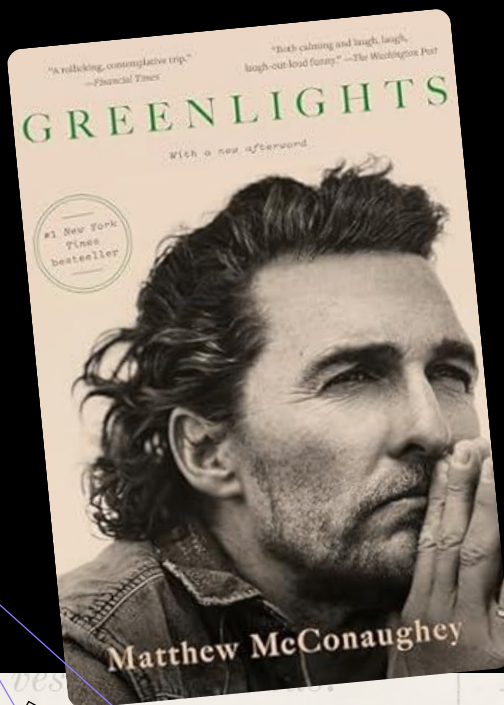
— AMANDA

READING RECS

FROM THE WORD NERD



CAR-INSPIRED READS



In addition to the movies I listed and *Life in the Passenger Seat*, here are two other amazing stories with vehicles (or driving metaphors) that I love, love, loved. *Greenlights*, in particular, is **AMAZING** in audio, since the author reads the book. If you need a way to kick back and relax this month, I highly recommend these two books!