

June, 2011

Dear Rising 5th Graders and Parents:

We are so looking forward to having you with us in August. There will be lots of changes for you between 4th and 5th grade, some exciting (changing classes), and some not-so-exciting (more homework!). Relax this summer and enjoy the people and things that you really love doing: video games; TV; playing sports; reading; building robots; hanging out with friends; traveling or; whatever you enjoy doing.

In addition to doing all the things you love to do this summer, which may include reading for many of you, you will also be doing some reading in preparation for 5th grade. You have worked hard this year in 4th grade, learning new reading skills, strengthening reading skills you already had. It is important to keep those skills active and strong; the only way you can really do that is to keep on reading.

So this summer, in addition to any other reading you might be doing, you are going to read three books to get ready for 5th grade: you will read two fiction books and one non-fiction book. Next year we will be focusing more on non-fiction text than we have in the past; it will be good for you to sink your teeth into a non-fiction book or two this summer.

After you have read each of your three books, you will write a letter to me about each book. Your letter will have three paragraphs; each paragraph should be a minimum of 5 sentences.

Fiction Book Letter (read two)

For both of your fiction books, follow these directions.

In the first paragraph tell me the title and author of your book. In addition, the first paragraph should include a summary of your book: tell me what your book is about in three or four sentences.

In the second paragraph, pick one character and make the character come alive for me: talk about external characteristics; internal characteristics. What did you particularly like about this character or what did you not like about the character? Were there any connections you made to the character?

Finally, in the last paragraph, reflect on what you have read and write about your reactions to the book.

Here are some prompts that might help you get that third paragraph going:

- When I read the part about
- The picture I had in my head when I read about...
- I was confused when I read about ...
- At the beginning of the book I thought ... but by the end I realized...
- I really liked the way the author ...
- If I were (one of the characters) I would have done ... differently because
- One connection I made was ...
- The author created a lot of suspense by ...
- I didn't like ...

You may have other prompts that make sense. But pick one prompt and then write an entire, five sentence paragraph about that topic. This is something you will be doing every week in your reading journals in 5th grade.

Non-Fiction Books Letter (read one)

For your non-fiction book, follow these directions.

In the first paragraph tell me the title and author of your book. In addition, the first paragraph should include a summary of your book: tell me what your book is about in three or four sentences.

In the second paragraph, tell me three new things you learned from reading the book. Why is this interesting or important to you? What more would you like to know about this idea or topic?

Finally, in the last paragraph, write about your reactions to the book. Here are some prompts that might help you get that third paragraph going:

- When I read the part about
- It really surprised me when I discovered/read/realized...
- I was confused when I read about ...
- Reading this book has really made me want to learn more about ...
- I really liked the way the author ...
- One thing I like/don't like about non-fiction books is...
- One connection I made was ...
- I think people who ... would really like this book because
- I think it is harder/easier to write non-fiction because...

All three books and all three letters must be completed by Wednesday, August 24th; you will bring them to school on that day.

I have included books lists, with instructions. Be sure you pick a book that is just right for you. First, it must interest you. Second, if you open to any page, you should be able to read the page smoothly, without a lot of stopping to figure out words. You can pick a book that has challenging words for you but there should be no more than two or three words on a page that you don't understand.

If you or your parents have questions, please email me at VOtten48@gmail.com. Enjoy your summer and, enjoy your reading. See you in August.

Ms. Otten

PS. If you don't know your reading level you can check with your 4th grade teacher.

FICTION: Choose any two books – make sure they are just right for you! You may also choose other books by these authors or a book by any of the additional authors listed below.

Bud Not Buddy. Christopher Paul Curtis

Chasing Vermeer. Blue Balliet

Frindle. Andrew Clements

Gregor the Overlander. Suzanne Collins

Hatchet. Gary Paulsen

Hoot. Carl Hiaasen

The Kid in the Red Jacket. Barbara Park

Maniac Magee. Jerry Spinelli

The Mysterious Benedict Society. Trenton Lee Stewart

The Princess Academy. Shannon Hale

Sahara Special. Esme Raji Codell

Stormbreaker. Anthony Horowitz

The Time Warp Series. Jon Scieszka

Tuck Everlasting. Natalie Babbitt

Walk Two Moons. Sharon Creech

Other great authors

Avi

Kate DiCamillo

Dan Gutman

Brian Jacques

E.L. Konigsburg

Scott O'Dell

Katherine Paterson

Rick Riordan

Louis Sachar

NON-FICTION: Choose one book

Level "O"

A Picture Book of Jesse Owens. Adler, David
Appalachia: The Voices of Sleeping Birds. Cynthia Rylant
Birds of Prey. M. Woolley and K. Pigdon
Dophins. Kevin Holmes
How Do You Lift a Lion? Robert E. Wells
Jackie Robinson: Baseball's First Black Major Leaguer. Carol Greene
Muscles. Seymour Simon
Owls. Kevin Holmes
Planet Earth/Inside Out. Gail Gibbons
The Story of Ruby Bridges. Robert Coles
What Makes a Bird a Bird? May Garelick
Who Was Ferdinand Magellan? Sydelle Kramer
Who Was Thomas Alva Edison? Margaret Frith

Level "P"

Why I Sneeze, Shiver, Hiccup, and Yawn. Melvin Berger
Against the Odds. Joe Layden
Amazing Rescues. Geore Shea
Bill Pickett: Rodeo-Ridin' Cowboy. Andrea D. Pinkney
Book about the Planet & Stars. Hudson Wade and Wesley
Fire at the Triangle Factory. Holly Littlefield
Fossils. Rona Arato
If a Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks. Faith Ringgold
The International Space Station. Franklyn M. Branley
The Land I Lost: Adventures of a Boy in Vietnam. Quang Nhuong Huynh
The Magic School Bus Series. Joanna Cole
Spacebusters: The Race to the Moon. Philip Wilkinson
The Top of the World: Climbing Mount Everest. Steve Jenkins
The Trail of Tears. Joseph Bruchac
Tut's Mummy: Lost...and Found. Judy Donnelly

Level "Q"

Electrical Circuits
Fossils. Rona Arato
If You Grew Up with Abraham Lincoln. Ann McGovern
If You Lived at the Time of the Civil War Moore. Kay Moore
If You Lived at the Time of the Great San Francisco Earthquake. Levine, Ellen

Level "Q" (continued)

The Kid Who Invented the Trampoline: More Surprising Stories about Inventions: Tom Uhlman
Levi Strauss and Blue Jeans. Nathan Olson
Outside and Inside Kangaroos. Sandra Markle
Outside and Inside Sharks. Sandra Markle
The Snake Scientist. Sy Montgomery
The Story of George Washington Carver. Eva Moore
Thomas Alva Edison: Young Inventor. Louis Sabin

Level "R"

Amelia Earhart: Young Aviator. Beatrice Gormley
The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Kay Melchisedech Olson
The Bat Scientist. Mary Kay Carson
The Battle of Gettysburg. Michael Burgan
Can It Rain Cats and Dogs? Questions and Answers About Weather. Melvin & Gilda Berger
Chocolate by Hershey: A Story about Milton S. Hershey. Betty Burford
Flight: The Journey of Charles Lindbergh. Robert Burleigh
Gentle Annie: The True Story of a Civil War Nurse. Mary Frances Shura
The Great Fire. Jim Murphy
Harry Houdini: Master of Magic. Kraske, Robert
It's Disgusting and We Ate It! True Food Facts from Around the World. James Solheim
Jackie Robinson: Breaking the Color Barrier. Cornerstones of Freedom/Children's Press
Nat Turner's Slave Rebellion. Michael Burgan
Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes. Eleanor Coerr
Weather Words and What They Mean. Gail Gibbons
Abraham Lincoln: The Great Emancipator. Augusta Stevenson

Level "S"

Back to the Day Lincoln was Shot. Beatrice Gormley
Back to the Titanic. Beatrice Gormley
Barefoot: Escape on the Underground Railroad. Pamela Duncan
Bats: The Amazing Upside-Downers. Phyllis Perry
Beautiful Land: A Story of the Oklahoma Land Rush. Nancy Antle
Bright Ideas: The Age of Invention in America 1870-1910. Ann Rossi
Come Back, Salmon. Molly Cone
The Discovery of the Americas. Betsy & Giulio Maestro
Eleanor. Barbara Cooney
Eureka! It's an Airplane. Jeanne Bendick
Guinea Pigs. Elvig Hansen
Leonardo da Vinci. Diane Stanley

Level "S" (continued)

On the Field with...Alex Rodriguez. Matt Christopher
The Story of Harriet Tubman: Conductor of the Underground Railroad. Kate McMullan
The Story of Muhammad Ali: Heavyweight Champion. Barry Denenberg
Ultimate Field Trip: Adventures in the Amazon Rain Forest. Susan Goodman

Level "T"

Becoming Joe DiMaggio. Maria Testa
Behind Rebel Lines: The Incredible Story of Emma Edmonds, Civil War. Seymour Reit
The California Gold Rush. May McNeer
Cleopatra. Diane T. Stanley
Discovering Jupiter. Melvin Berger
Eclipses: Nature's Blackouts Billy Aronson
Eleanor. Barbara Cooney
Everglades. Jean Craighead George
Explorers: Women in Profile. Carlotta Hacker
Frederick Douglass: Fights For Freedom. Margaret Davidson
In Their Own Words: Lewis and Clark. George Sullivan
Navajo's Long Walk. Joseph Bruchac
The Story of Sacajawea, Guide to Lewis and Clark. Della Rowland
Susanna of the Alamo: A True Story- John Jakes
Who Was Albert Einstein. Jess M. Brallier
Woodsong. Gary Paulsen

Level "U"

Alexander Graham Bell: An Inventive Life. Elizabeth MacLeon
Birds of Prey: A Look at Daytime Raptors. Sneed B. Collard, III
Classifying Insects. Louise & Richard Spilsbury
City through the Ages. Phillip Steele Crocodilians. Joan Short and Bettina Bird
Knots in My Yo-yo String: The Autobiography of a Kid. Jerry Spinelli
Off the Map: The Journals of Lewis and Clark. Peter and Connie Roop
A Place Called Heartbreak: a Story of Vietnam. Walter Dean Myers
Remember the Ladies: The First Women's Rights Convention. Norma Johnston
Rosa Parks: My Story. Rosa Parks with Jim Haskins
The Silk Route: 7,000 Miles of History. John Major
Undying Glory: The Story of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment. Clinton Cox
Volcano: The Eruption and Healing of Mount St. Helens. Patricia Lauber
When I Was Your Age: Original Stories about Growing Up. Amy Ehrlich, ed.

Level "V"

Avalanches and Landslides. Rob Shone

The Champ: The Story of Muhammad Ali. Tonya Bolden

Corpses and Skeletons: The Science of Forensic Anthropology. Rob Shone

Father Water, Mother Woods. Gary Paulsen

Get on Board: The Story of the Underground Railroad. James Haskins

I Have Lived a Thousand Years: Growing Up in the Holocaust. Livia Bitton-Jackson

Lincoln: A Photobiography. Russell Freedman

The Making of a Writer. Joan Lowery Nixon

My Brother, My Sister, and I. Yoko Kawashima Watkins

Orphan Train Rider: One Boy's True Story. Andrea Warren

Sojourner Truth: Ain't I a Woman? Patricia C. & Frederick L. McKissack

Level "W"

Anne Frank: Life in Hiding. Johanna Hurwitz

Christa McAuliffe: A Teacher in Space. Corinne and Blu Naden

A Day of Pleasure. Isaac Bashevis Singer

Escape from Saigon: How a Vietnam War Orphan Became an American Boy. Andrea Warren

Facing the Lion: Growing Up Maasai on the African Savanna. Joseph Lemasolai Lekuton

A Girl from Yamhill: A Memoir. Beverly Cleary

Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary. Walter Dean Myers

Maya Angelou: Journey of the Heart. Jayne Pettit

My Life with the Chimpanzees. Jane Goodall

The Tarantula Scientist. Sy Montgomery

We Beat the Street: How a Friendship Pact Led to Success. Dr. Sampson Davis, Dr. George Jenkins & Dr. Rameck Hunt with Sharon M. Draper

Winterdance: The Fine Madness of Running the Iditarod. Gary Paulsen