



Little Red School House & Elisabeth Irwin High School

June 2007

Dear Soon-To-Be Fifth Grade Families (!),

Welcome to the middle school. We hope that you are as excited about being in the fifth grade as we are about your joining the middle school community. Middle school is a wonderful time. It is a time for students to have new experiences, to become increasingly independent, to grow, and, most of all, it is a time to learn. We would like to start the new school year by getting to know you better. In order to do that, we are asking you to do the following assignment over the summer.

Sometimes we read a book and feel that the main characters are very much like we are. They act the same way, they do the same things, and they have the same feelings. If the reader admires the characters, the reader may want to act like the character or may imagine living his/her life the way the character has. Sometimes we feel as if the main characters are very different from us. If this is the case, we may feel that the main characters are acting in a way that we could never act, and we may even disapprove of their choices.

Your task is to use the main characters in a book you read this summer to introduce yourself to us. You will do this by comparing yourself to the characters in the book. The questions on the attached sheets will help you to do this.

You may choose any book when completing this assignment. Book suggestions can be found:

- on the attached lists
- on the Supplemental Summer Reading List which is on our web site.
- at the other web sites listed on the Supplemental Reading List.
- from a teacher or friend.
- at the public library.

After you have completed your book complete the attached assignment. Answer all questions on the attached sheet in complete sentences.

Choose your book carefully. You might want to complete this assignment at a point in the summer when you will be able to get help. You may want to read the book you choose along with a parent or family member. You do not need to bring this work in on the first day. You will be told on the first day when it is due. (Probably late in the first week.) You should do your best work on this assignment. Please proofread, write neatly or type and remember that this is the first piece of work that your fifth grade teachers will see. Finally, remember that you should be reading all summer long. There are lots of excellent suggestions on the attached sheets.

Happy reading!

The Fifth Grade Teachers

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1) What book did you read and who wrote it?

Title: _____

Author: _____

2) Why did you choose this book? _____

3) Describe the main character(s). _____

4) What about the main character's personality is similar to yours? _____



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(5) What is different? _____

(6) What does your choice of book tell your teachers about you? _____

7) What else would you like your teachers to know about you? _____



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Fifth Grade Summer Reading List 2006

The Beloved Dearly by Doug Cooney

Although his father has forbidden it, Ernie, a twelve-year-old business tycoon, makes a tidy profit in the pet funeral business, but when he refuses to give his star employee a raise and the business starts to fall apart, it takes the death of his own dog to bring everyone back together.

Bud Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis

Ten-year-old Bud, a motherless boy living in Flint, Michigan, during the Great Depression, escapes a bad foster home and sets out in search of the man he believes to be his father--the renowned bandleader, H.E. Calloway of Grand Rapids.

Chasing Vermeer by Blue Balliet

When seemingly unrelated and strange events start to happen and a precious Vermeer painting disappears, eleven-year-olds Petra and Calder combine their talents to solve an international art scandal.

The Conch Bearer by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni,

In India, a healer invites twelve-year-old Anand to join him on a quest to return a magical conch to its safe and rightful home, high in the Himalayan mountains.

Each Little Bird that Sings by Deborah Wiles

Comfort Snowberger is well acquainted with death since her family runs the funeral parlor in their small southern town, but even so the ten-year-old is unprepared for the series of heart-wrenching events that begins on the first day of Easter vacation with the sudden death of her beloved great-uncle Edisto.

From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler by E.L. Konigsburg

Having runaway with her younger brother to live in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, twelve-year-old Claudia strives to keep things in order in their new home and to become a changed person and a heroine to herself.

The Good Dog by Avi

McKinley, a malamute, is torn between the domestic world of his human family and the wild world of Lupin, a wolf that is trying to recruit dogs to replenish the dwindling wolf pack.

Harriet the Spy by Louise Fitzhugh

Harriet's ambition to become a writer motivates her to write down in a secret notebook everything she sees, which causes her to get into trouble when her notebook is found and read out loud by her classmates.

Heartbeat by Sharon Creech

Twelve-year-old Annie ponders the many rhythms of life the year that her mother becomes pregnant, her grandfather begins faltering, and her best friend (and running partner) becomes distant.

Homeless Bird by Gloria Whelan

When thirteen-year-old Koly enters into an ill-fated arranged marriage, she must either suffer a destiny dictated by India's tradition or find the courage to oppose it.

Hoot by Carl Hiaasen

Roy, who is new to his small Florida community, becomes involved in another boy's attempt to save a colony of burrowing owls from a proposed construction site.

Ida B. and her plans to maximize fun, avoid disaster, and (possibly) save the world by Katherine Hannigan

In Wisconsin, Ida B. spends happy hours being home-schooled and playing in her family's apple orchard, then her mother begins treatment for breast cancer and her parents must sell part of the orchard and send her to public school.



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In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson by Bette Lord

In 1947, a Chinese child comes to Brooklyn where she becomes Americanized at school, in her apartment building, and by her love for baseball.

Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell

Left alone on a beautiful but isolated island far off the coast of California, a young Indian girl spends eighteen years, not only merely surviving through her enormous courage and self-reliance, but also finding a measure of happiness in her solitary life.

Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key by Jack Gantos

To the constant disappointment of his mother and his teachers, Joey has trouble paying attention or controlling his mood swings when his prescription medicines wear off and he starts getting worked up and acting wired.

Journey to the River Sea by Eva Ibbotson

Sent with her governess to live with the dreadful Carter family in exotic Brazil in 1910, Maia endures many hardships before fulfilling her dream of exploring the Amazon River.

Last Summer with Maizon by Jacqueline Woodson

Eleven-year-old Margaret tries to accept the inevitable changes that come one summer when her father dies and her best friend Maizon goes away to a private boarding school.

Locomotion by Jacqueline Woodson

In a series of poems, eleven-year-old Lonnie writes about his life, after the death of his parents, separated from his younger sister, living in a foster home, and finding his poetic voice at school.

The Midwife's Apprentice by Karen Cushman

In medieval England, a nameless, homeless girl is taken in by a sharp-tempered midwife, and in spite of obstacles and hardship, eventually gains the three things she most wants: a full belly, a contented heart, and a place in this world.

My Daniel by Pam Conrad

Ellie and Stevie learn about a family legacy when their grandmother tells them stories of her brother's historical quest for dinosaur bones on their Nebraska farm.

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

In 1943, during the German occupation of Denmark, ten-year-old Annemarie learns how to be brave and courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis.

The School Story by Andrew Clements

After twelve-year-old Natalie writes a wonderful novel, her friend Zoe helps her devise a scheme to get it accepted at the publishing house where Natalie's mother works as an editor.

The Shimmershine Queens by Camille Yarbrough

Two fifth graders try to uplift themselves and their classmates out of a less than beautiful urban present by encouraging dreams and the desire to achieve them.

The Teacher's Funeral : a comedy in three parts by Richard Peck

In rural Indiana in 1904, fifteen-year-old Russell's dreams of quitting school and joining a wheat threshing crew are disrupted when his older sister takes over the teaching at his one-room schoolhouse after mean old Myrt Arbuckle "hauls off and dies."

Yolanda's Genius by Carol Fenner

After moving from Chicago to Grand River, Michigan, fifth grader Yolonda, big and strong for her age, is determined to prove that her younger brother is not a slow learner but a true musical genius.

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