

Summer Reading

2010

Methuen Public Schools Students Entering Grades 4 - 8

June 2010

Dear Parents and Students,

Again this year we are inviting all students to take a journey to new and different places by using their imaginations through the summer reading program. There is no more important activity to support learning than through reading fun and interesting stories. This summer, the books for each grade are based on a theme.

All students are expected to read two books during the summer before the 2010 - 2011 school year. The grade-level book lists are included in this packet. The books were carefully chosen to address diverse ability levels and interests, and we encourage parents to help their child find a "just right book." (Helpful hints on how to do this are included in this packet.) The Nevins Memorial Library, Barnes & Noble, Borders, and the Safe Haven Homework Center have stocked the titles in preparation for this program. The grammar schools also have copies of each book which students may borrow. Students are encouraged to share books.

Each book has follow-up assessments, which are detailed on the next pages. These assessments will help each child share what was learned this summer through reading.

Make reading a part of your summer and enjoy all the places and adventures you will find in these stories.

Sincerely,

Jennifer A. Smith, Ed.D.
Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Methuen Public Schools



Summer Reading Assessments

In order to get the most out of their reading and to be able to share what was learned with their new classmates, students are expected to complete the following:

Assessment I (to be completed at home):

Student Book Talk Sheet - Complete one for each of the two books you chose to read from the book list for the grade you will be entering. Complete the Book Talk sheet using complete sentences and well developed paragraphs. Share what you wrote with someone at home. Bring your two Book Talk sheets to your teacher by **Thursday, September 9, 2010**. Students are responsible for reading two books and completing a Book Talk sheet for each book.

Assessment II (to be completed at home):

Character Map - Students will also complete one Character Map to compare and contrast the main characters from the two books they read. Bring your character map sheet to your teacher by **Thursday, September 9, 2010**. Students are responsible for reading two books and completing one character map.

Assessment III (to be completed in school):

Students will participate in Literature Circles in class during the first three weeks of school. During the Literature Circles, students will share information about their book and discuss how their books relate to the grade level theme for summer reading.

Assessment IV (to be completed in school):

After the Literature Circles, students will complete a writing assignment using a writing prompt. This writing assignment will be evaluated using the following rubric (criteria):

Assessment IV - Writing Assignment Rubric Criteria for Evaluation

Advanced

- rich topic/idea development
- developed in an original, imaginative or insightful way
- applies appropriate details and examples from the story
- careful and/or subtle organization
- effective/rich use of language
- demonstrates skillful use of sentence structure

Proficient

- full topic/idea development - clear and interesting
- logical organization
- includes strong examples and details from the story
- appropriate use of language
- uses sentence variety

Apprentice

- basic topic/idea development and organization
- adequate supporting details - few examples from the story
- simplistic language/sentence structure

Novice

- limited or weak topic/idea development, organization, and/or details
- limited awareness of audience and/or task
- lacks evidence from the story
- lacks accurate sentence structure

HAVE FUN READING!



Choosing Just Right Books Tips for Parents

Part I

Selecting a just right book is important for improving the reading ability of students.

Children need books that are good for their learning. We call these books *Just Right Books*. The following is a description of books that would be too easy, just right, and too hard for children. It is okay to sometimes read a book that you know is too easy; adults do this all the time, but children are developing as readers and need to be challenged a bit in order to become better readers. Books that are too hard just cause frustration and may even help develop a poor attitude towards reading.

Too Easy

- Can read all the words
- Can understand and retell the story
- Reads with complete fluency - reads like talking and with expression

Just Right

- Can read most of the words - students do not struggle with more than three words on one page
- Should be able to use strategies to figure out most of the tricky words
- Can understand and retell the story
- Reads mostly with fluency except when attempting to figure out a tricky word

Too Hard (This may be a good book for a parent to read to a child.)

- Cannot read many words
- Does not have fluency
- Cannot retell much of the story
- Note - Even if a book is read with fluency, if a child cannot retell the story, the text is probably too difficult.

Part II

Children should be selecting books that are interesting to them. Before selecting a book, become familiar with the content.

- Talk to someone who has read the book.
- Look at the cover and ask: "What do you think this book is about?"
- Read the back cover to get an idea of the story's content.
- Read the first page to see if it is a "just right book."
- Look at the table of contents or chapter titles.
- Flip through and look at the pictures.



