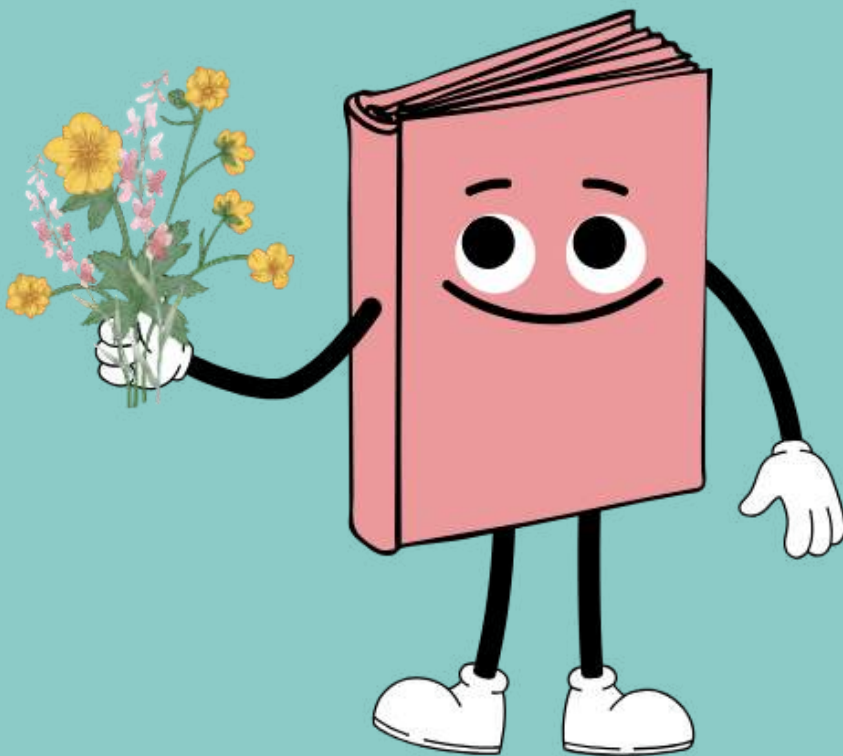


Word Nerd  
Collaborative

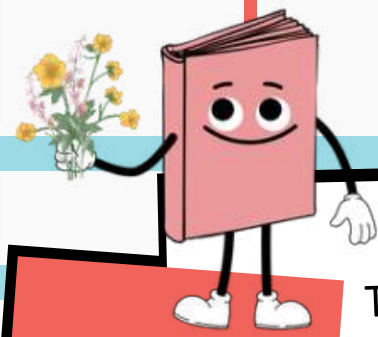
**ELA ENGAGEMENT  
GAME PLAN**



**L  
I  
R  
P  
A**

2026

# SMALL STEPS STILL MOVE US FORWARD.



Dear Teacher Friend,

There's something magical about short things that carry a lot of meaning. A poem that's only twelve lines long but somehow manages to make your chest tighten a little. A short story that leaves a class sitting quietly for a second after the final line.

A single sentence a student writes that suddenly shows you they get it.

Short doesn't mean simple. Often, it means powerful.

Poets know this well. They choose each word carefully, trimming away everything that isn't absolutely necessary until what remains feels sharp, clear, and meaningful. And honestly? There's a lesson there for us too.

Not every great teaching moment has to be a full-blown, bells-and-whistles production. Sometimes it's the small routines, the quick check-ins, the five-minute read aloud, or the brief conversation that ends up making the biggest impact.

This month, I've rounded up a few short and sweet resources to help you keep that momentum going. You'll find novels in verse that are low on word count but high on emotional impact—stories that can hook even reluctant readers and remind students that books don't have to be long to be meaningful. You'll also find a collection of short stories that are perfect for brushing up on the skills you've been building all year long. With testing season around the corner, these stories offer just the right balance of meaningful reading practice without overwhelming students (or teachers). Think of them as the literary version of a quick but powerful workout.

So this month, don't underestimate the power of small things. A short text. A quick strategy review. A brief but meaningful discussion. Sometimes the smallest moments in a classroom carry the most weight. I'm cheering you on as always,

— AMANDA



**Where  
words  
grow,  
minds  
follow.**



Small steps  
still move  
us forward.

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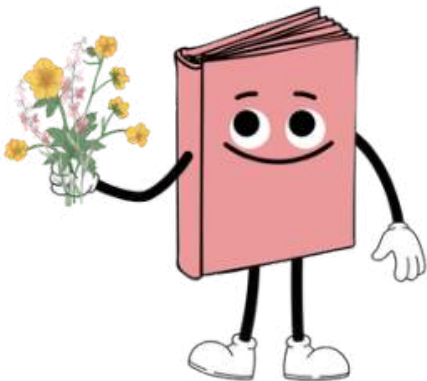
Additional Resources ... 140

EDITABLE  
CANVA FILE



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## OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT



### **May Planning Session (April 19th)**

LINK: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82003624150> (2pm CST)

### **Lunch Bunch Zoom (April 15th)**

LINK: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84702864396>

### **Word Nerd Collaborative Private Facebook Group**

LINK: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/427913560232081>



# April 2026

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wednes.	Thurs.	Friday	Satur.
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 May Planning Session	20	21	22	23	24 Author Lunch Bunch	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Notes:

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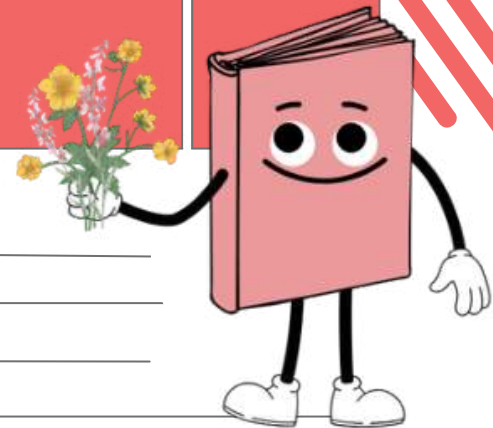
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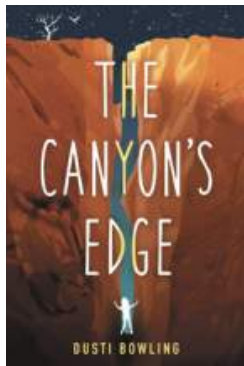
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# FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAYS

**Friday, April 3rd**



The Canyon's Edge  
by Dusti Bowling  
Realistic Fiction /  
Novel in Verse

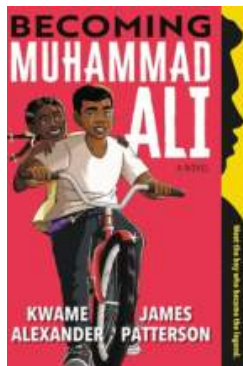
**Friday, April 10th**



Lifeboat 12  
by Susan Hood  
Historical Fiction /  
Novel in Verse

\*\* INCLUDES AUTHOR INTERVIEW

**Friday, April 17th**



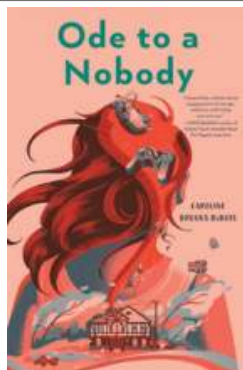
Becoming  
Muhammad Ali  
by Kwame Alexander  
& James Patterson  
Biographical Novel /  
Novel in Verse

**Friday, April 24th**



Enemies in the  
Orchard  
by Dana  
Vanderlugt  
Historical Fiction /  
Novel in Verse

**BONUS BOOK**



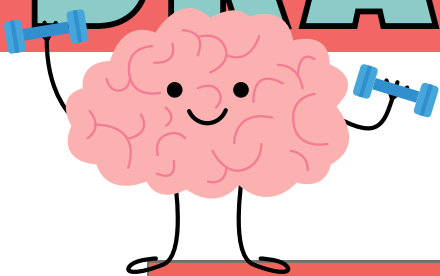
Ode to a Nobody  
by Caroline Brooks  
Dubois  
Realistic Fiction/  
Novel in Verse

**Lunch Bunch Attendees**

Friday, April 24th!  
11:15-11:45 am CST

Jasmine Warga,  
Alyson Gerber, &  
Christina Wyman

# 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 24 to keep track of student teams and scores throughout the month.

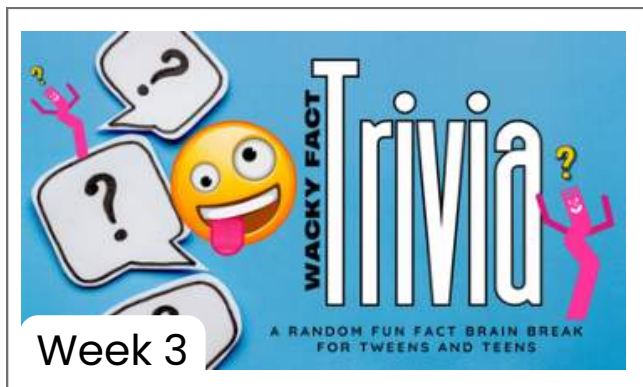
## Easter Trivia



## Pink Trivia



## Wacky Fact Trivia



## Earth Day Trivia



## Guess the Author



## 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](#)





# Writing Prompts

## Week 1

**Monday**  
March

**Tuesday**  
March

**Wednesday**  
I'm on a Boat!

**Thursday**  
Owl in Flight

**Friday**  
Free Write Friday

## Week 2

**Monday**  
Move Like an Animal

**Tuesday**  
What Now?

**Wednesday**  
Would You Rather: Houseboat  
of RV?

**Thursday**  
Shark Bait Ouh-Ha-Ha

**Friday**  
Free Write Friday

## Week 3

**Monday**  
Looks Like Spring

**Tuesday**  
Parental Problem

**Wednesday**  
What Did You Say?

**Thursday**  
Would You Rather: Zombies  
or Robots?

**Friday**  
Free Write Friday

## Week 4

**Monday**  
Adventures Await

**Tuesday**  
Stuck!

**Wednesday**  
Make a Milkshake

**Thursday**  
Science Class Snafu

**Friday**  
Free Write Friday

## Week 5

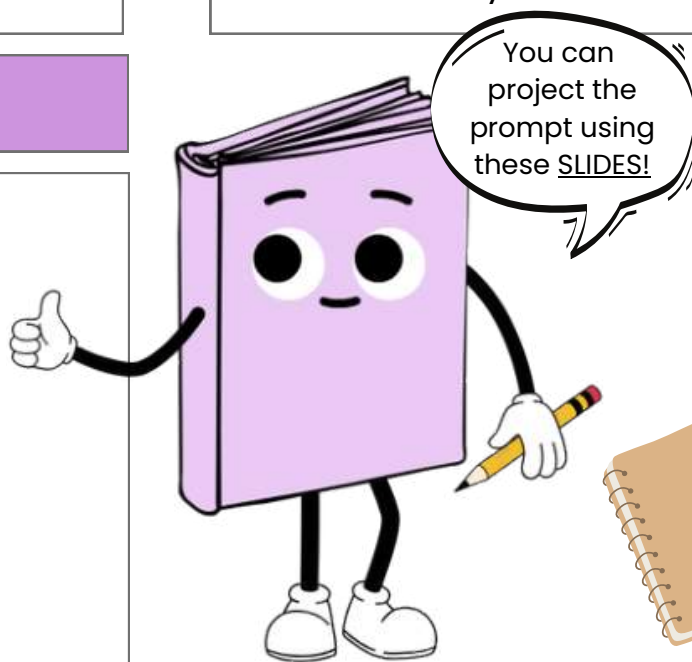
**Monday**  
Let's Go to the Carnival

**Tuesday**  
A Massive Explosion

**Wednesday**  
Look! A Lake!

**Thursday**  
Natural Comparison

**Friday**  
May



\*\* BONUS APRIL  
PROMPTS ALSO  
INCLUDED!!



# LESSONS



## 1 POETRY RESOURCES

This Canva Slides presentation previews 7 different kinds of poems including definitions, formats and examples, followed by a look at several poetic devices (including figurative language). The types of poems included are: limerick, haiku, cinquain, free verse, concrete, sonnet and acrostic. This item also includes a set of 7 posters to display in your room featuring the poetry techniques. An excellent addition to your classroom for poetry month or to your poetry unit!

**STANDARDS: CCSS: W6.4, RL 6.1, RL 6.2, RL 6.10**

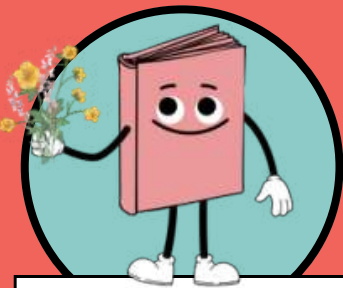
## 2 SHORT STORY COLLECTION + TEST PREP

This comprehensive collection includes 6 Short Stories across various genres, each accompanied by audio read aloud videos and standards based extension activities that will help students master foundational reading and writing skills. PERFECT FOR SPRING STANDARDIZED TEST PREP! Explore science fiction, mystery, realistic fiction, survival stories and more, each crafted to captivate middle school readers.

**STANDARDS: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY RL.6.1, RL.6.2, RL.6.3, 6.4, RL.6.5, RL.6.10, W.6.3, W.6.4, L.6**



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



April 2026

## 1 WOULD YOU RATHER - AROUND THE WORLD EDITION

Looking for a high-energy, classroom-safe brain break that also supports persuasive writing skills? This AROUND THE WORLD Edition of Would You Rather is packed with fun, debate-worthy questions your students will love. No prep. Just press play and let students think, move, and argue (politely!). No to mention, they'll likely learn a few new facts and be inspired to explore more of this wonderful wide world! 😊

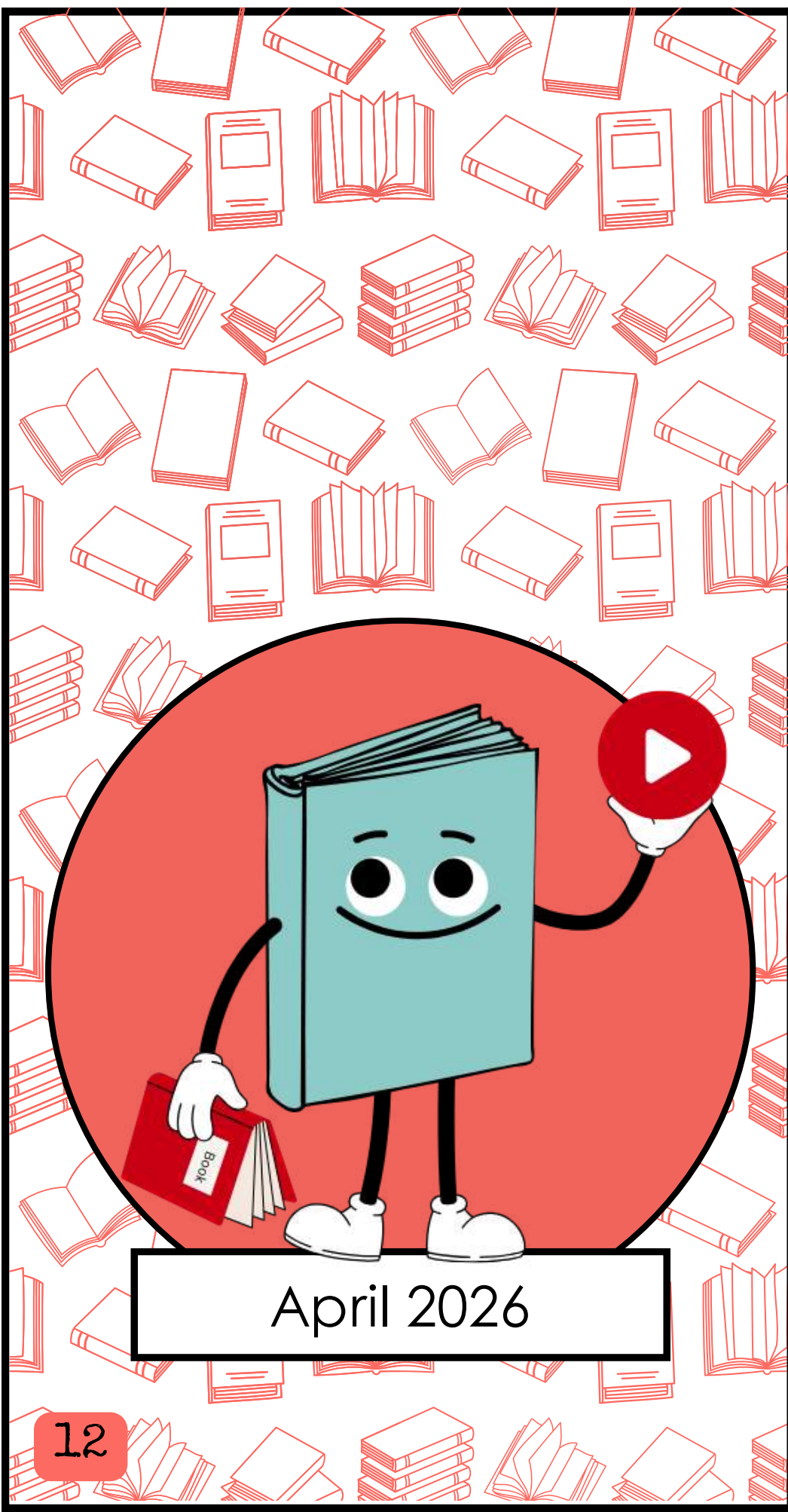
## 2 CURATED READING LISTS

The books in this thematic list highlight Novels in Verse and stories that take place in a different country. Hook even your most reluctant reader's with the quick hit win of a novel in verse and travel far, far away, while never having to leave your classroom!! I promise you there's a little something for ALL READERS on these lists. Print them out and hang them as "book advertisements" or created a browsing book for students who need ideas on what to read next.

## 3 5 FOR 5

This fun new resource series introduces students to individuals who pursued creative careers. Each video presents 5 facts in 5 different ways and is accompanied by two unique (and active!) note-taking opportunities and/or extension activities. So far the series includes a TV show host, picture book duo, screen writer, and graphic novelist.





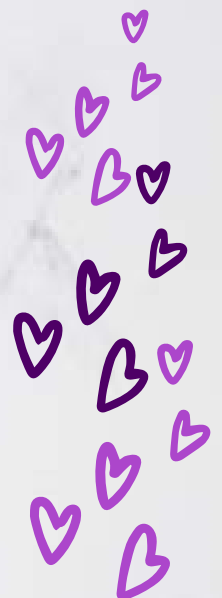
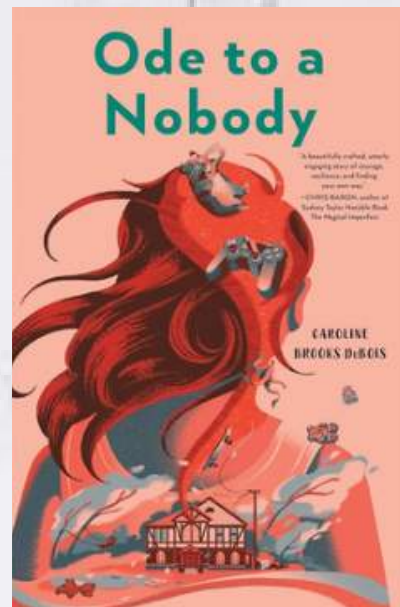
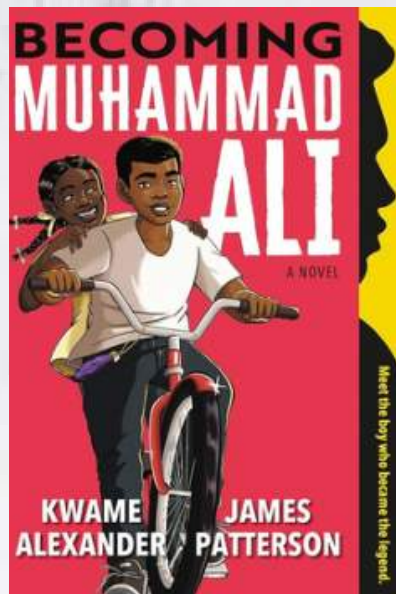
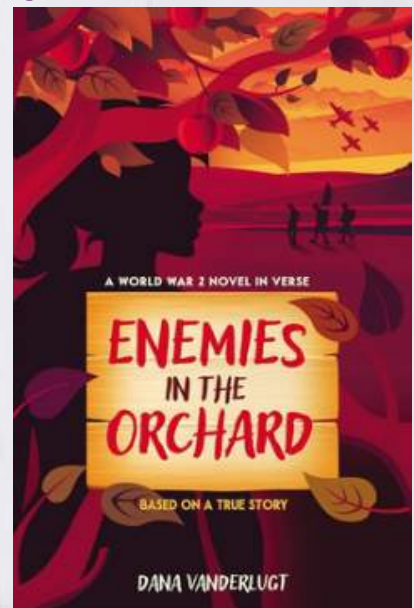
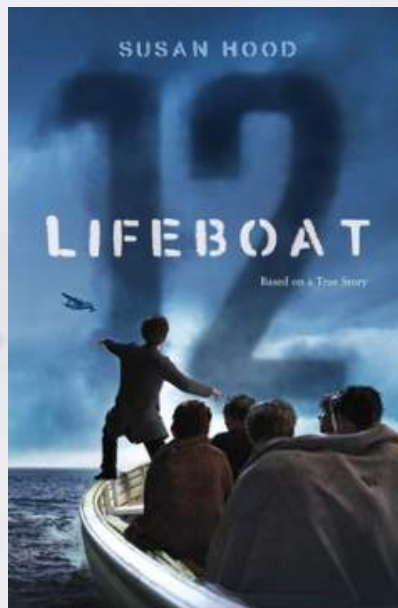
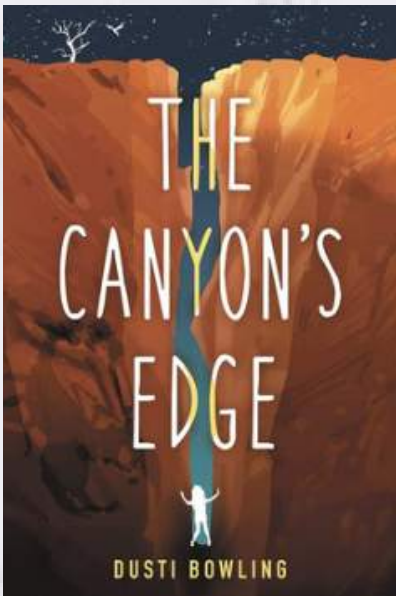
April 2026

# FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY SELECTIONS

# APRIL

Here are the books we're checking out this month!

FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAYS

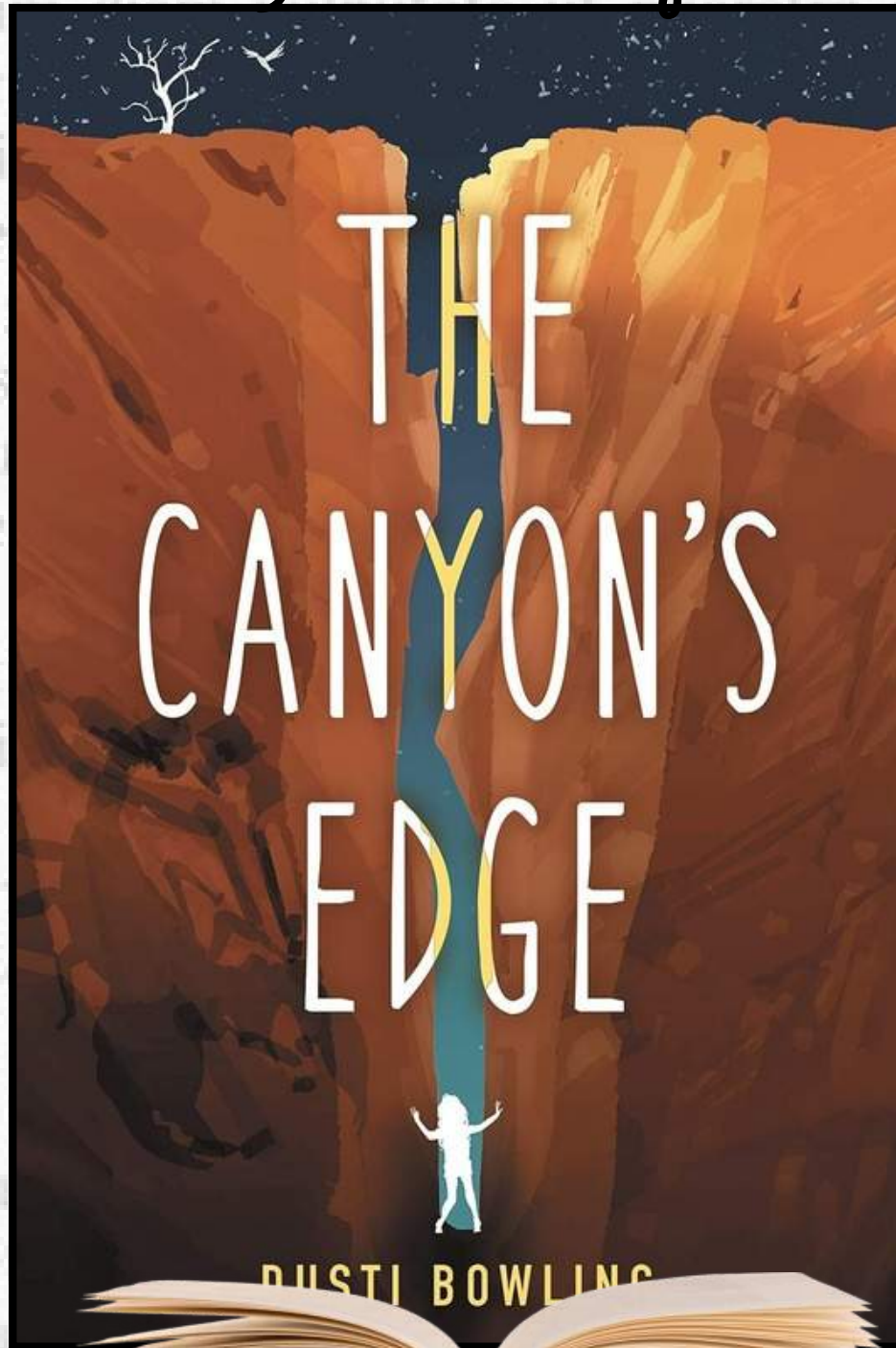


Happy Reading!



# THE CANYON'S EDGE

by Dusti Bowling

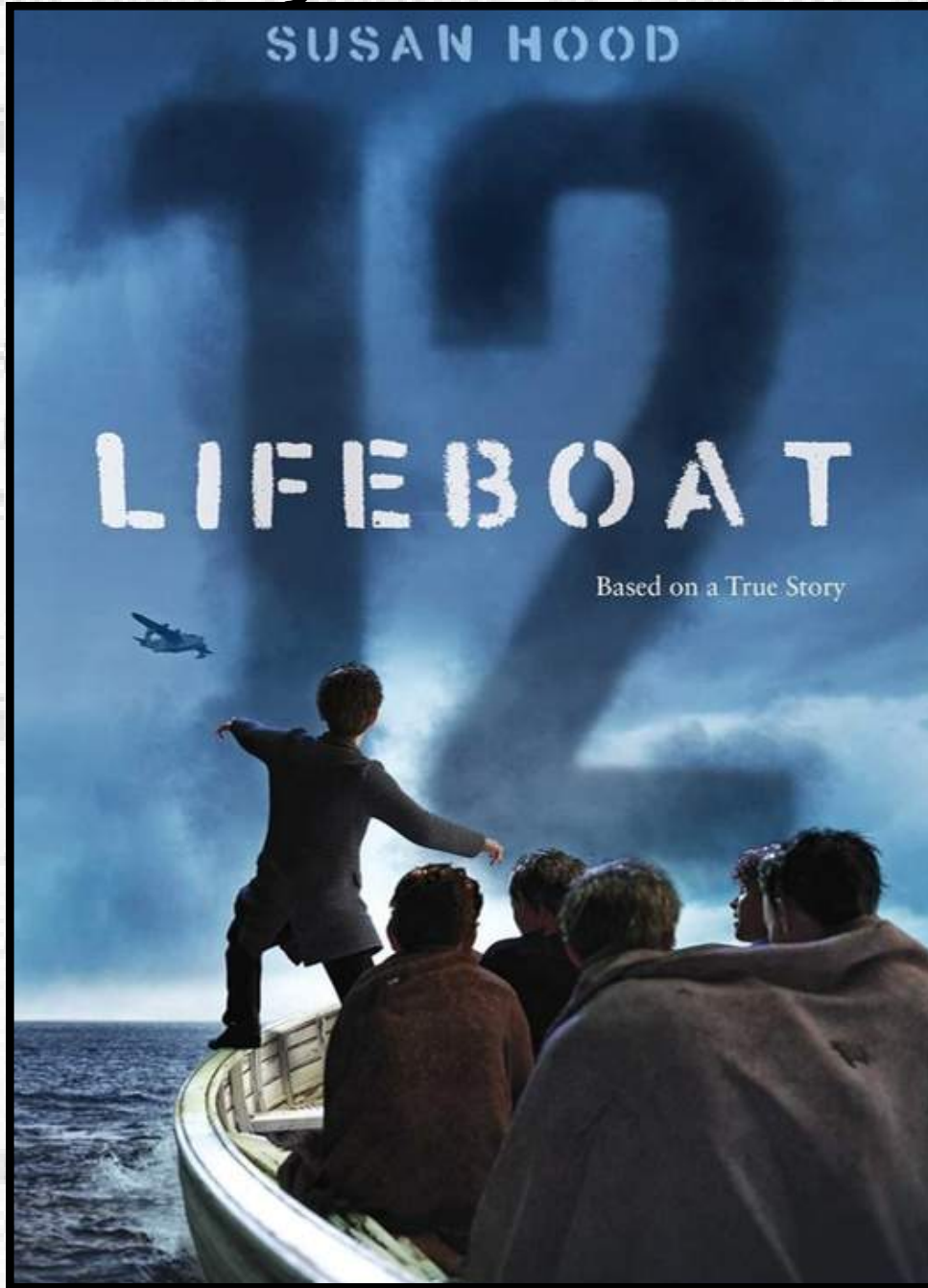


FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY



# LIFEBOAT 12

by Susan Hood

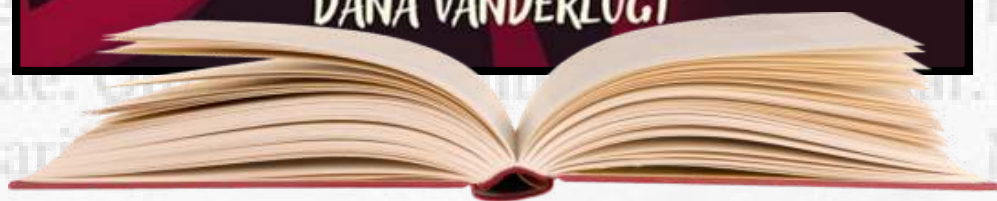
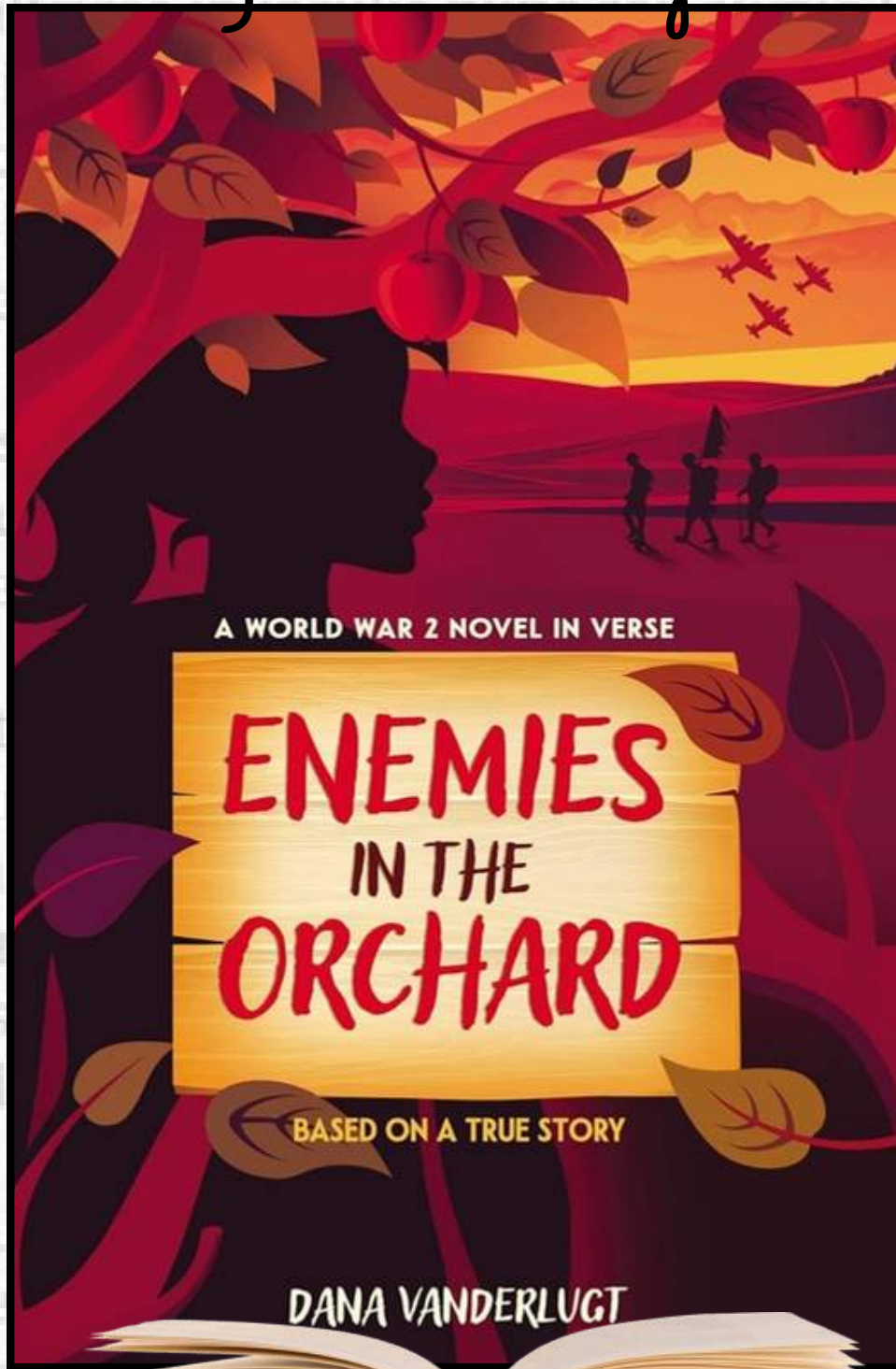


## FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY



# ENEMIES IN THE ORCHARD

by Dana Vanderlugt



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Enemies in the Orchard

## by Dana Vanderlugt



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?

It's October 1944, and while Claire's older brother, Danny, is off fighting in World War II, her dad hires a group of German POWs to help with the apple harvest on their farm. Claire wants nothing to do with the enemies in the orchard, until she meets soft-spoken, hardworking Karl. Could she possibly have something in common with a German soldier? Karl, meanwhile, grapples with his role in the war as he realizes how many lies Hitler's regime has spread—and his complacency in not standing up against them. But his encounters with Claire give him hope that he can change and become the person he wants to be. Inspired by the little-known history of POW labor camps in the United States, this lyrical verse novel is told in alternating first-person poems by two young people on opposite sides of the war. Against a vivid backdrop of home front tensions and daily life, intimate entries reveal Claire's and Karl's hopes and struggles, and their growing friendship even as the war rages on. What are their chances of connection, of redemption, of peace?

### Who Wrote It?

Dana VanderLugt is a writer and teacher who descends from a family of Michigan apple growers and storytellers. A former middle school English teacher, Dana now works as a literacy consultant and has an MFA in Creative Writing from The Sena Jeter Naslund-Karen Mann Graduate School of Writing at Spalding University. She lives in Michigan with her husband, three sons, and a spoiled golden retriever. And yes, she makes a mean apple pie.



Teachers! Dana has used her former middle school teacher skills to create an amazing educator's guide for using the novel in your classroom!

Find it on her website:  
[www.danavanderlugt.com](http://www.danavanderlugt.com)

AR Reading Level: N/A

Lexile Level: N/A

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆

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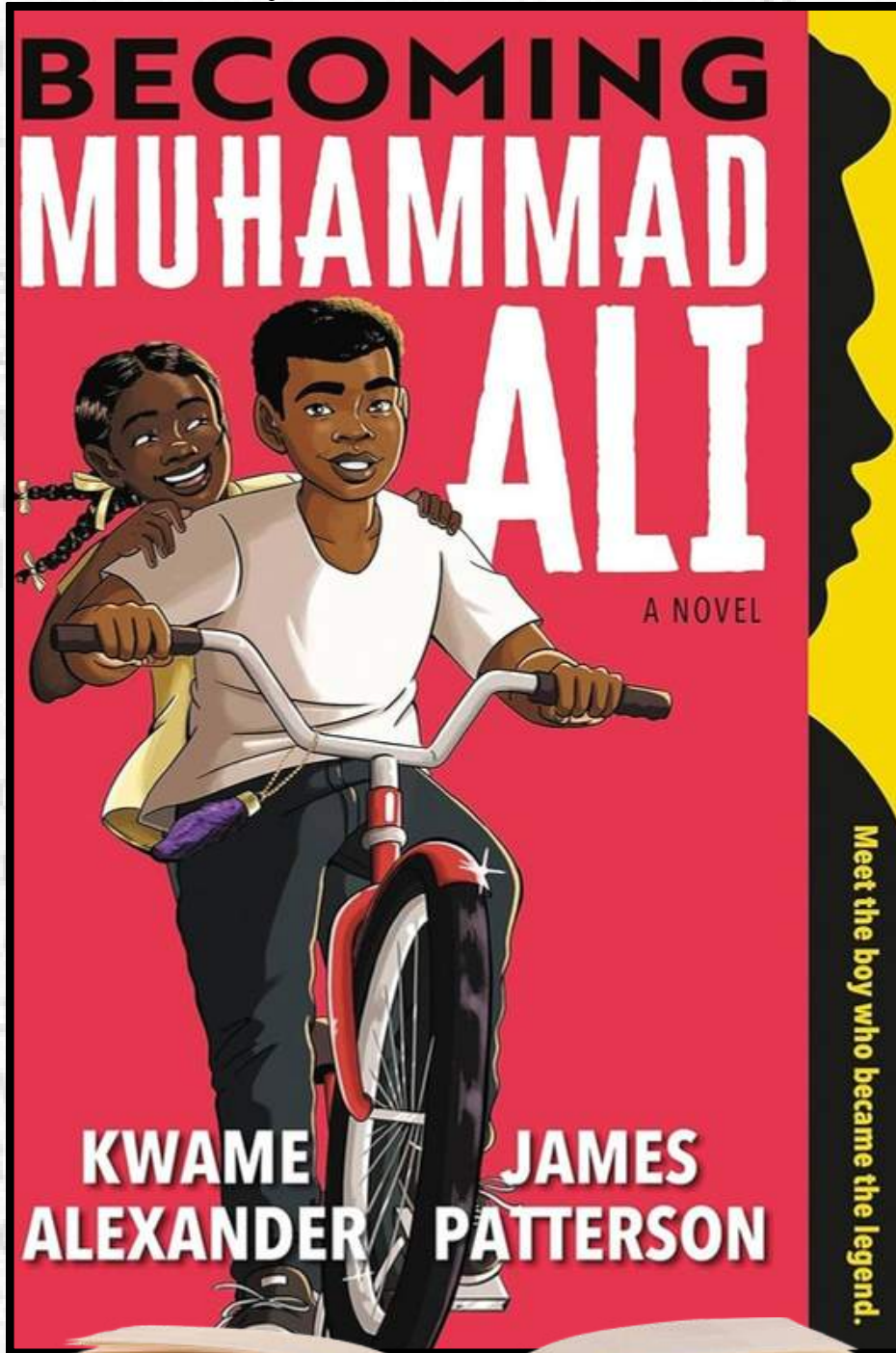


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# BECOMING MUHAMMAD ALI

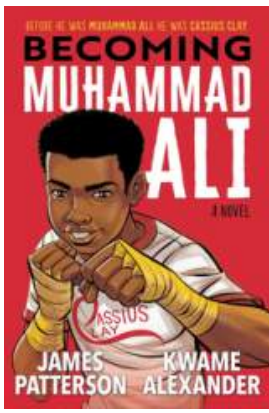
by Kwame Alexander & James Patterson



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Becoming Muhammad Ali

by Kwame Alexander  
and James Patterson



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?

Before he was a household name, Cassius Clay was a kid with struggles like any other. James Patterson and Kwame Alexander join forces to vividly depict his life up to age seventeen in both prose and verse, including his childhood friendships, struggles in school, the racism he faced, and his discovery of boxing. Readers will learn about Cassius's family and neighbors in Louisville, Kentucky, and how Cassius began training as an amateur boxer at age twelve. Before long, he won his first Golden Gloves bout and began his transformation into the unrivaled Muhammad Ali. Fully authorized by and written in cooperation with the Muhammad Ali estate, *Becoming Muhammad Ali* dynamically captures the budding charisma and youthful personality of one of the greatest sports heroes of all time

AR Reading Level: 5.4

### Who Wrote It?

#### Things Kwame and James have in common...

- Award Winning Authors
- Both have written more than 40 books!
- Advocates for Children's Literature
- Some of their books have been turned into movies and TV shows!
- They are philanthropists, which means they donate money to charitable causes.

#### Some differences...

- James lives in Florida.
- Kwame lives in London.
- James has a son.
- Kwame has a daughter.
- James writes prose.
- Kwame writes poetry.



Lexile Level: 1010L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆

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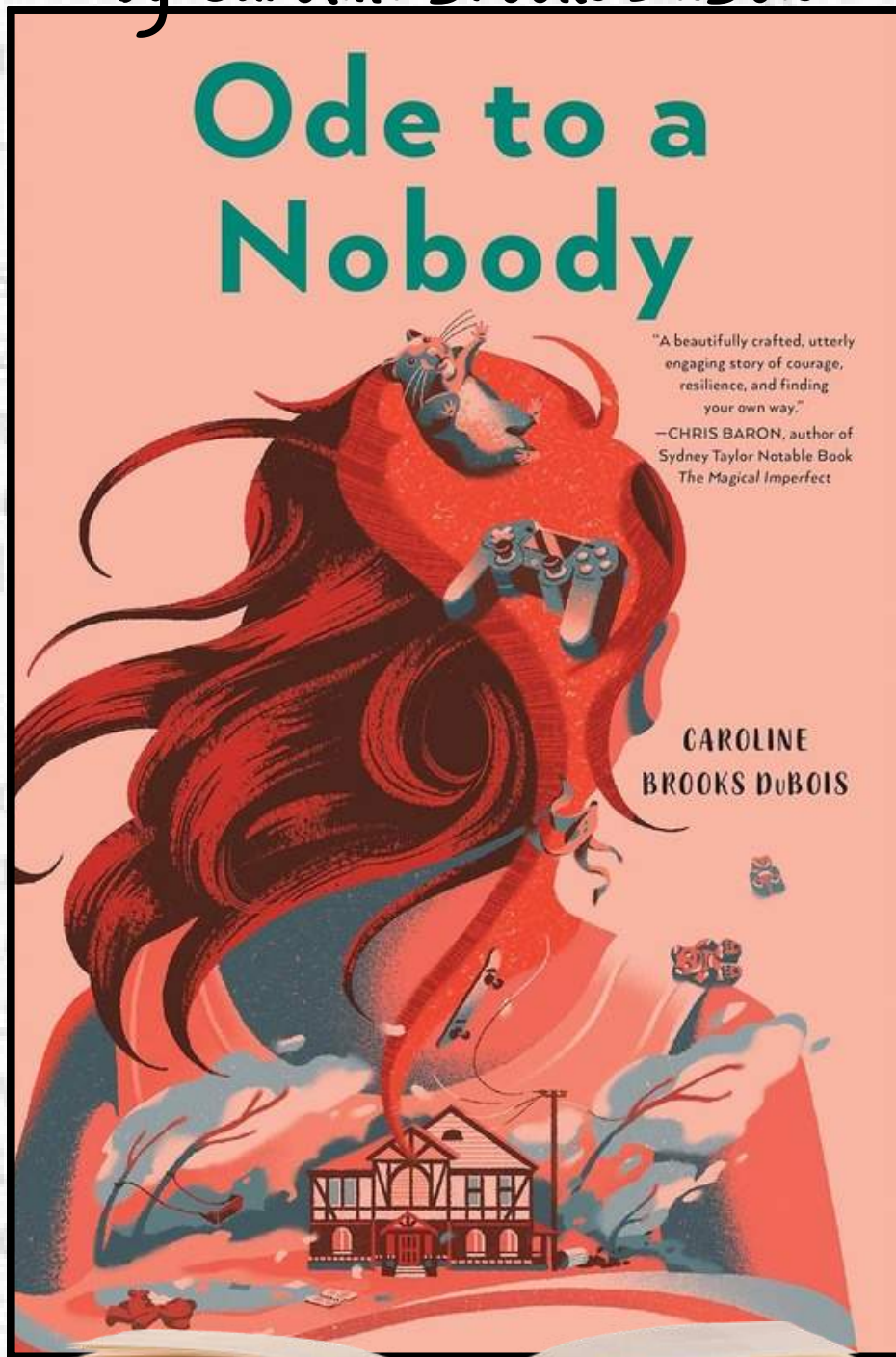


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# ODE TO A NOBODY

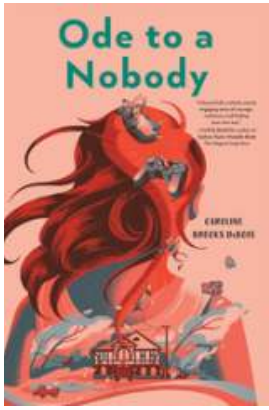
by Caroline Brooks DuBois



## FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Ode to a Nobody

## by Caroline Brooks Dubois



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.



Novel in Verse

### What's It About?

A devastating tornado tears apart more than just houses in this striking novel in verse about a girl rebuilding herself. Before the storm, thirteen-year-old Quinn was happy flying under the radar. She was average. Unremarkable. Always looking for an escape from her house, where her bickering parents fawned over her genius big brother. But after the storm, Quinn can't seem to go back to average. Her friends weren't affected by the tornado in the same way. To them, the storm left behind a playground of abandoned houses and distracted adults. As Quinn struggles to find stability in the tornado's aftermath, she must choose: between homes, friendships, and versions of herself. Told in rich, spectacular verse, Caroline Brooks DuBois crafts a powerful story of redemption as Quinn makes her way from Before to After. There's nothing average about the world Quinn wakes up to after the storm; maybe there's nothing average about her, either. This emotional coming-of-age journey for middle grade readers proves that it's never too late to be the person you want to be.

AR Reading Unavailable

### Who Wrote It?

Caroline has taught poetry workshops, creative writing and composition classes, and English at the middle school, high school, and college levels. In May 2016, she was recognized as a Nashville Blue Ribbon Teacher for her dedication to her students and excellence in teaching adolescents. Caroline is the director of the Literary Arts Conservatory at Nashville School of the Arts High School in Nashville, Tennessee. She lives with her singer-songwriter husband, with whom she's co-written songs, and their two children and dog.



Lexile Level: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

### ☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆

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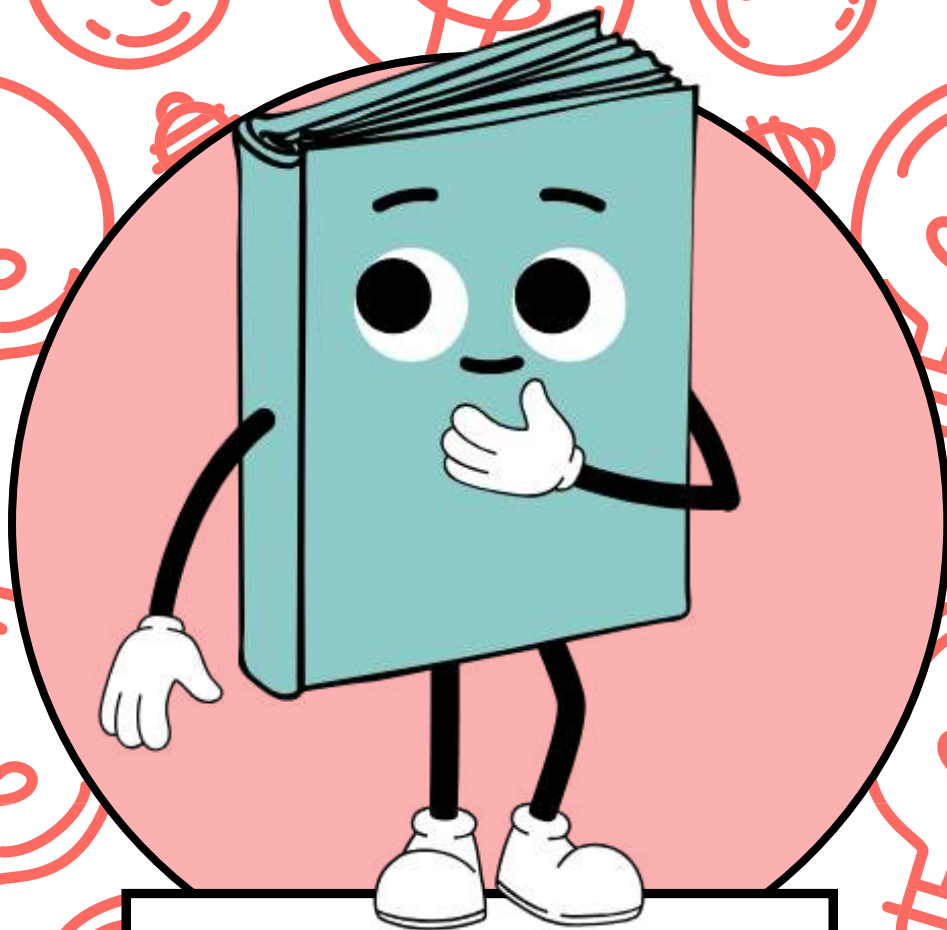


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April 2026

# 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 22)

## **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.



# April 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!

# EASTER TRIVIA VIDEO



This link will take you to the YouTube Video of Easter Trivia questions: [https://youtu.be/Fs3Nis\\_tKPU](https://youtu.be/Fs3Nis_tKPU)





# Easter 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 an  
Easter Trivia ROCKSTAR?!



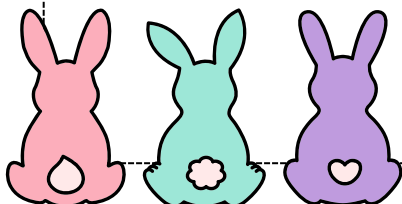
Trivia  
Video

# Easter Trivia

Are you a Easter Trivia Rockstar? Take this Trivia quiz and see!



- 1** Approximately how many chocolate bunnies are produced each year for Easter?  
a) 90 million   b) 90 thousand   c) 19 million   d) 19 thousand
- 2** Which country is credited with starting the tradition of the Easter Bunny?  
a) United States   b) Spain   c) Germany   d) Mexico
- 3** What flower is traditionally associated with Easter?  
a) Tulip   b) Iris   c) Sunflower   d) Lily
- 4** Which country holds the record for the largest Easter egg ever made?  
a) Italy   b) Japan   c) New Zealand   d) Russia
- 5** What popular Easter candy was first created in the 1950's and is known for its marshmallow center?  
a) Peek   b) Peep   c) Peet   d) Gross
- 6** Approximately how many jelly beans are consumed in the U.S. each Easter?  
a) 6 million   b) 500 million   c) 16 billion   d) 5 billion
- 7** What is the term for the decorated eggs used in Ukrainian Easter traditions?  
a) Pysanky   b) Wax Eggs   c) Kistka   d) Slavic Eggs
- 8** In the United States, what percentage of people eat the ears of a chocolate bunny first?  
a) 36%   b) 56%   c) 76%   d) 96%
- 9** In which Ancient Land did the tradition of decorating Easter eggs originate?  
a) China   b) Mesopotamia   c) Greece   d) Inca
- 10** Which country introduced the tradition of the Easter Bilby as an alternative to the Easter Bunny?  
a) Australia   b) Madagascar   c) South Korea   d) Nicaragua





**11 How much did the world's largest chocolate Easter egg weigh?**

- a) 15 pounds    b) 158 pounds    c) 1,587 pounds    d) 15,873 pounds

**12 Which country is known for its giant omelet tradition on Easter Monday, using thousands of eggs to feed the community?**

- a) Chile    b) New Zealand    c) Morocco    d) France

**13 The first Easter eggs were dyed what color?**

- a) red    b) yellow    c) green    d) blue

**14 Easter Island is part of which country?**

- a) China    b) Cuba    c) Chile    d) Croatia

**15 Which presidential administration hosted the first White House Easter Egg Roll?**

- a) Ulysses S. Grant  
b) Rutherford B. Hayes  
c) James A. Garfield  
d) Grover Cleveland

**16 Where is the largest Easter egg museum in the world?**

- a) Denmark    b) Jamaica    c) Namibia    d) Poland

**17 What's the most popular Easter candy in America?**

- a) Reese's Peanut Butter Eggs    b) Jelly Beans    c) Peeps    d) Cadbury Eggs

**18 Easter's date is determined by what?**

- a) the moon                      b) ancient traditions  
c) fables/folklore              d) religious calendar

**19 When were Cadbury Creme Eggs introduced?**

- a) 1915    b) 1924    c) 1963    d) 1976

**20 What percentage of parents steal candy from their children's easter baskets?**

- a) NONE    b) 58%    c) 81%    d) 100%





# Easter Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:  
Write your answers on  
the lines below.

Trivia Video



Name/Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1: A B C D

11: A B C D

2: A B C D

12: A B C D

3: A B C D

13: A B C D

4: A B C D

14: A B C D

5: A B C D

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: A B C D

19: A B C D

10: A B C D

20: A B C D

Score:

\_\_\_\_/20



## Easter Trivia Answer Key

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

Trivia Video

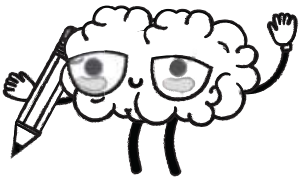


## ANSWER KEY

1. A) 90 Million
2. C) Germany
3. D) Lily
4. A) Italy
5. B) Peep
6. C) 16 Billion
7. A) Pysanky
8. C) 76%
9. B) Mesopotamia
10. A) Australia
11. D) 15,873 pounds
12. D) France
13. A) Red
14. C) Chile
15. B) Rutherford B. Hayes
16. D) Poland
17. A) Reese's Peanut Butter Eggs
18. A) The Moon
19. C) 1963
20. C) 81%

Thanks for playing!

[www.wordnerdcollaborative.com](http://www.wordnerdcollaborative.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!

## PINK TRIVIA BRAIN BREAK GAME



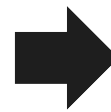
This link will take you to  
the YouTube Video of  
Pink color themed Trivia  
questions:  
<https://youtu.be/IdEGODerQOs>





Pink  
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 PINK TRIVIA ROCKSTAR?!?!



# Pink Color-Themed Trivia Answer Sheet

Trivia  
Video



Directions:  
Write your answers on the  
lines below.

Name/Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. A B C D

11. A B C D

2. A B C D

12. A B C D

3. A B C D

13. A B C D

4. True or False

14. A B C D

5. A B C D

15. A B C D

6. A B C D

16. True or False

7. A B C D

17. A B C D

8. A B C D

18. True or False

9. A B C D

19. A B C D

10. A B C D

20. A B C D

How did you do?  
Are you a PINK TRIVIA ROCKSTAR?!?!  Score: \_\_\_\_/20



# Pink Trivia Brain Break Game

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Trivia  
Video



**1** What color are flamingos when they first hatch?

- A: white
- B: pink
- C: black
- D: purple



**2** What is the name of the pink animal animated character who plays a detective?

- A: Pink Piggie
- B: Pinky and the Brain
- C: Pink Panther
- D: Pink Puma

**3** What famous amusement park in California has a castle that is pink?

- A: 6 flags
- B: Universal Studios
- C: Busch Gardens
- D: Disney Land

**4** True or False: The first cotton candy color was pink.

- A: True
- B: False

**5** What pink fruit is known for its sweet taste and high vitamin C count?

- A: watermelon
- B: grapefruit
- C: Pink Lady Apples
- D: Prunes

**6** Which popular video game character is known for his pink, round shape and ability to inhale enemies?

- A: Toadette
- B: Kirby
- C: Majin Buu
- D: Amy Rose

**7** What pink flower is often associated with the arrival of spring around the world, but specifically in Japan?

- A: Carnation
- B: rose
- C: Cherry Blossom
- D: Lily

**8** What pink gemstone is the birth stone for the month of October?

- A: Rose Quartz
- B: Tourmaline
- C: Topaz
- D: Garnet



**9** What pink colored fish is known for long and difficult migrations?

- A: Axolotl
- B: Salmon
- C: Corvina
- D: Grouper

**10** What flavor are pink starbursts?

- A: Raspberry
- B: Pink Lemonade
- C: Bubble Gum
- D: Strawberry





# Pink Trivia Brain Break Game



**11** What is the name of the pink Pokemon character that loves to sing lullabies?

- A: Jigglypuff
- B: Chansey
- C: Corsola
- D: Wigglytuff

**16** True or False: When the inventor of bubble gum first created it, the chewy treat was gray.

- A: True
- B: False



**12** In which famous movie does a group of high school girls call themselves "The Pink Ladies"?

- A: High School Musical
- B: Grease
- C: Save the Last Dance
- D: Teen Beach Movie

**17** Pink dolphins can be found in what country's river systems?

- A: Ecuador - The Amazon River
- B: India - The Ganges River
- C: Africa - The Nile River
- D: China - The Yangtze River

**13** What is the name of Barbie's Pink Convertible Car?

- A: Barbie Cruisin' Convertible
- B: Barbie-Mobile
- C: Barbie Glam Convertible
- D: Barbie's Sweet Ride



**18** True or False: Pink is believed to have a calming effect, promoting feelings of relaxation and contentment.

- A: True
- B: False

**14** What is the name of the chemical compound that makes some sunset skies appear pink?

- A: Phenolphthalein
- B: Potassium permanganate
- C: erythrosine
- D: Aerosols and Water Droplets

**19** What is the pop Singer P!nk's Real name?

- A: Ava Max
- B: Alecia Beth Moore
- C: Penelope Anderson
- D: Amelia Pinkerton

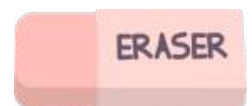


**15** Which famous fictional pig has a brother named George?

- A: Mercy Watson
- B: Wilbur
- C: Peppa Pig
- D: Miss Piggy

**20** Why are Erasers pink?

- A: Rubber is naturally pink
- B: The inventor's Daughter Loved Pink
- C: Cheapest color to dye the rubber
- D: Originally Made from Pink Volcano Stone





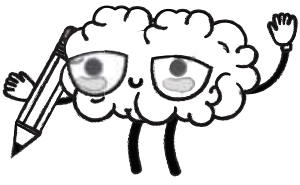
## Pink Color-Themed Answer Key

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

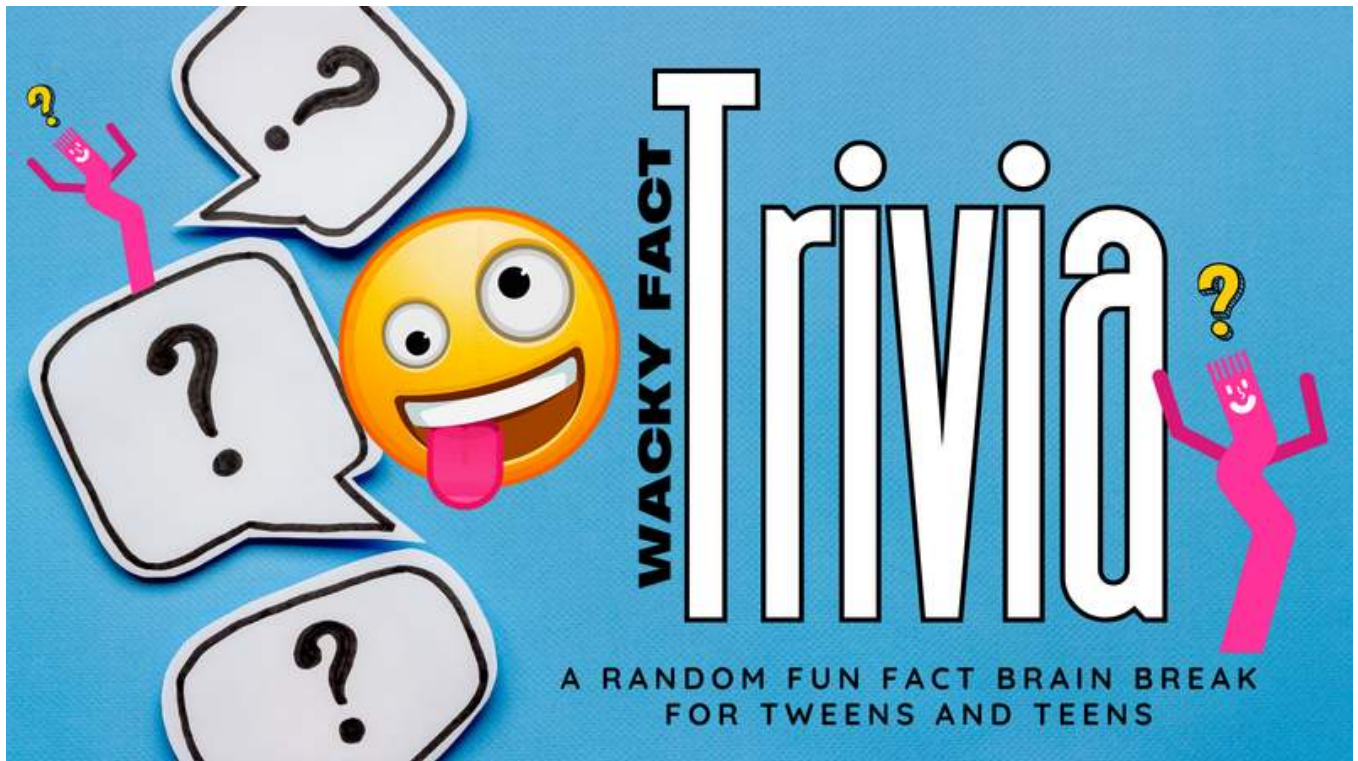
Thanks for playing!  
Check out more Brain Breaks on YouTube!



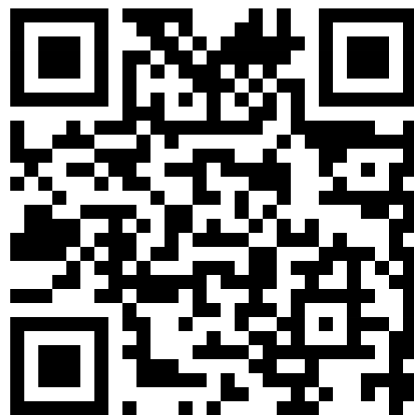
## Trivia Game Video Link

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

# WACKY TRIVIA BRAIN BREAK GAME



This link will take you to the YouTube Video of Blue Trivia questions: [https://youtu.be/9bRLo\\_Gw6Mk](https://youtu.be/9bRLo_Gw6Mk)





# Wacky Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:  
Write your answers on  
the lines below.

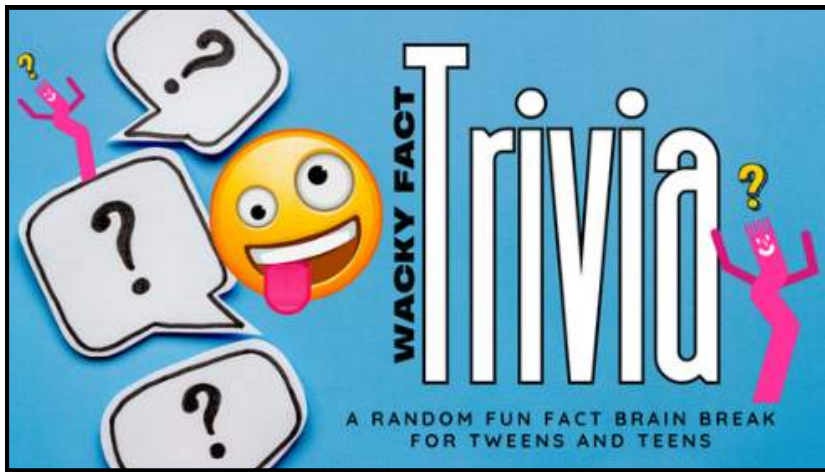
Trivia  
Video



Name/Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

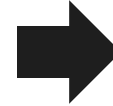
How did you do? Are you a mastermind  
when it comes to WACKY TRIVIA?!?!



# Wacky 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: A B C D

12: True or False

3: A B C D

13: A B C D

4: True or False

14: A B C D

5: \_\_\_\_\_

15: True or False

6: A B C D

16: A B C D

7: good time or blue moon

17: A B C D

8: Sand or Stars

18: A B C D

9: True or False

19: True or False

10: A B C D

20: A B C D

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



Score: \_\_\_\_/20

[www.amandazieba.com](http://www.amandazieba.com)



# Wacky Trivia Brain Break Game

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Trivia  
Video



**1** What is the world's fastest bird?

- A) Ostrich
- B) Peregrine Falcon
- C) Golden Eagle
- D) Gray Headed Albatross

**2** If all the blood vessels in your body were laid end to end, they would stretch how many miles?

- A) 600 miles
- B) 6,000 miles
- C) 60,000 miles
- D) 600,000 miles

?

**3** What is the largest animal on the planet?

- A) Giant Squid
- B) Saltwater Crocodile
- C) African Elephant
- D) Blue Whale



**4** True or False: Within the average lifetime, we eat about 20 insects as we sleep.

- A) True
- B) False

**5** What is the largest planet in the solar system?

\_\_\_\_\_

**6** What color is the milk of a hippopotamus?

- A: yellow
- B: white
- C: pink
- D: Blue



**7** Due to thermal expansion, the Eiffel Tower can "grow" up to how many inches in the summer?

- A) 2 inches
- B) 6 inches
- C) 12 inches
- D) 16 inches

**8** Are there more stars in the sky or grains of sand on Earth?

- A) Sand
- B) Stars

**9** True or False: Wearing headphones for an hour increases the bacteria in your ear by 700 times.

- a) True
- b) False

**10** Ancient Egyptians believed the earth was what shape?

- A: Rectangle
- B: Cylinder
- C: oval
- D: pyramid

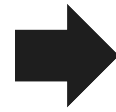




# Wacky Trivia Brain Break Game

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Trivia  
Video



**11** What is the hottest continent on the planet?

- A) Africa
- B) South America
- C) Asia
- D) Australia



**12** True or False: Ketchup was originally sold as medicine.

- a) True
- b) False

**13** What is Scotland's national animal?

- A) Loch Ness Monster
- B) Dragon
- C) Sasquatch
- D) Unicorn

**14** What is the world's largest waterfall?

- A) Tugela Falls (South Africa)
- B) Angel Falls (Venezuela)
- C) Niagara Falls (USA)
- D) Skógafoss waterfall (Iceland)

**15** True or False: Germany has more castles than there are McDonald's in the United States.

- A) True
- B) False

**16** If all the strawberries produced in California in one year were laid berry to berry, they would go around the world how many times?

- A) 4 times
- B) 15 times
- C) 21 times
- D) 30 times

**17** In the Great Barrier Reef, there's a coral reef that's taller than what manmade landmark?

- A) Statue of Liberty
- B) Empire State Building
- C) Big Ben
- D) Golden Gate Bridge

**18** A Grizzly Bear's bite is strong enough to crush which of these items?

- A) A watermelon
- B) A bowling Ball
- C) Human Skull
- D) All of the above



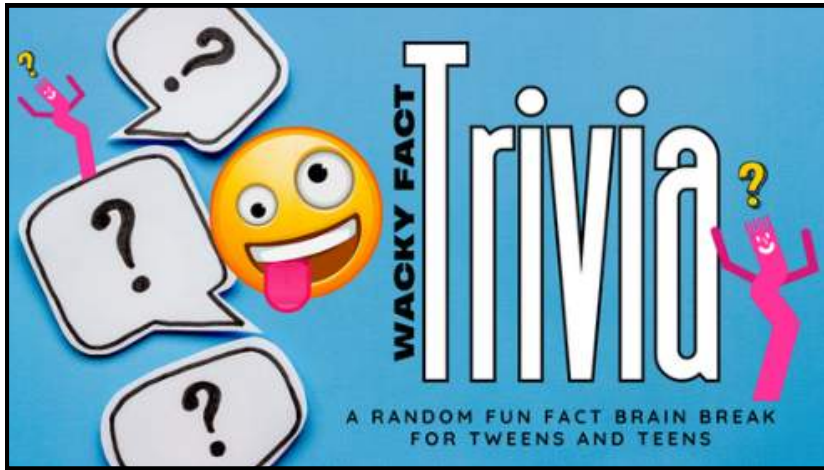
**19** True or False: Thomas Edison, the inventor of the light bulb was afraid of the dark.

- A) True
- B) False

**20** Armadillos almost always give birth to identical ...

- A) Twins
- B) Triplets
- C) Quadruplets
- D) Quintuplets

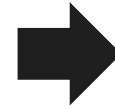




## Wacky Trivia Answer Sheet

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

Trivia  
Video



## ANSWER KEY

- |                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. B) Peregrine Falcon | 11. A) Africa                  |
| 2. C) 60,000 miles     | 12. True                       |
| 3. D) Blue Whale       | 13. D) Unicorn                 |
| 4. False               | 14. B) Angel Falls (Venezuela) |
| 5. Jupiter             | 15. True                       |
| 6. C) Pink             | 16. B) 15 Times                |
| 7. B) 6 inches         | 17. B) Empire State Building   |
| 8. Stars               | 18. D) All of the Above        |
| 9. True                | 19. True                       |
| 10. A) Rectangle       | 20. C) Quadruplets             |

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!

# EARTH DAY TRIVIA VIDEO



This link will take you to the YouTube Video of Earth Day Trivia questions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxFUIPCn3BE&t=2s>





# Earth Day 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 Earth Day Trivia CHAMPION?!?!



Trivia  
Video

Are you an Earth Day Trivia Rockstar?  
Take this Trivia quiz and see!

EARTH DAY

Trivia



- 1 In what year was Earth Day first celebrated?  
A) 1960 B) 1970 C) 1980 D) 1990
- 2 Gaylord Nelson, a senator from which state, started Earth Day?  
A) Arizona B) California C) Pennsylvania D) Wisconsin
- 3 What region on Earth produces 20% of the planet's oxygen?  
A \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Nearly 80 percent of all P \_\_\_\_\_ ever created by humans is still in the environment, according to Recycle Now.  
P \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Which US President helped start the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)?  
A) Harry S. Truman B) Woodrow Wilson C) Bill Clinton D) Richard Nixon
- 6 The United Nations has what name for Earth Day?  
A) International Mother Earth Day B) Earth Celebration Day  
C) Mother Nature Day D) Whole World Wins Day
- 7 A single tree produces enough air to supply in its life time for how many people for a year? (Guess a # 1-10)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8 In 2011, 28 million trees were planted in which country for the Earth Day "Plant Trees, Not Bombs" campaign?  
A) Afghanistan B) Brazil C) China D) Denmark
- 9 When did Google introduce their first Earth Day doodle?  
A) 1999 B) 2001 C) 2008 D) 2013
- 10 True or False: Most of Earth's breathable air comes from the ocean.  
A) True B) False

- 11 According to a report from Friends of the Earth, Humans today use about \_\_\_ percent more natural resources than we did 30 years ago.  
A) 30%    B) 40%    C) 50%    D) 60%
- 12 Today's average American generates about \_ pounds of trash per day, compared to 2.68 pounds in 1960, according to the EPA.  
A) 5 pounds    B) 8 pounds    C) 12 pounds    D) 14 pounds
- 13 True or False: According to a recent study by the University of Michigan, Using a dishwasher is more eco-friendly than hand-washing dishes.  
A) True    B) False
- 14 In 2019, Who took a zero-carbon voyage from Europe to the United States to raise awareness of climate change?  
G\_\_\_\_\_ Thunberg
- 15 The date of Earth Day, April 22, was chosen to appeal to which target audience?  
A) school age kids    B) College students  
C) Stay at home moms    D) Politicians
- 16 Which of the following greenhouse gases is the biggest contributor to global warming?  
A) Carbon Dioxide    B) Water Vapor    C) Methane    D) Nitrous Oxide
- 17 According to the World Wild Life Federation, Animal species populations saw an overall decline of \_\_\_ percent worldwide between 1970 and 2014, due to habitat loss, pollution, climate change and other factors.  
A) 30%    B) 40%    C) 50%    D) 60%
- 18 Which regions have experienced the most obvious and impactful effect of global warming so far?  
A) Tropical rainforests    B) Arctic regions  
C) Barren deserts    D) Urban Areas
- 19 Which country has the highest electric car use per capita?  
A) Norway    B) Japan    C) Netherlands    D) New Zealand
- 20 Who can participate in Earth Day and help make the world a cleaner, safer place? \_\_\_\_\_





# Earth Day 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 D
3. A \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_
4. P \_\_\_\_\_
5. A B C D
6. A B C D
7. Pick a # 1-10: \_\_
8. A B C D
9. A B C D
10. True or False
11. A B C D
12. A B C D
13. True or False
14. G \_\_\_\_\_ Thunberg
15. A B C D
16. A B C D
17. A B C D
18. A B C D
19. A B C D
20. E \_\_\_\_\_!

Score:  
\_\_\_\_/20



## Earth Day Trivia Answer Key

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

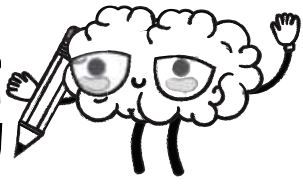
### ANSWER KEY

1. B) 1970
2. D) Wisconsin
3. Amazon Rain Forest
4. Plastic
5. D) Richard Nixon
6. A) International Mother Earth Day
7. 4
8. A) Afghanistan
9. B) 2001
10. True
11. C) 50%
12. A) 5 pounds
13. True
14. Greta Thunberg
15. B) College Students
16. A) Carbon Dioxide
17. D) 60%
18. B) Arctic Regions
19. A) Norway
20. EVERYONE! :)

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

Trivia Video

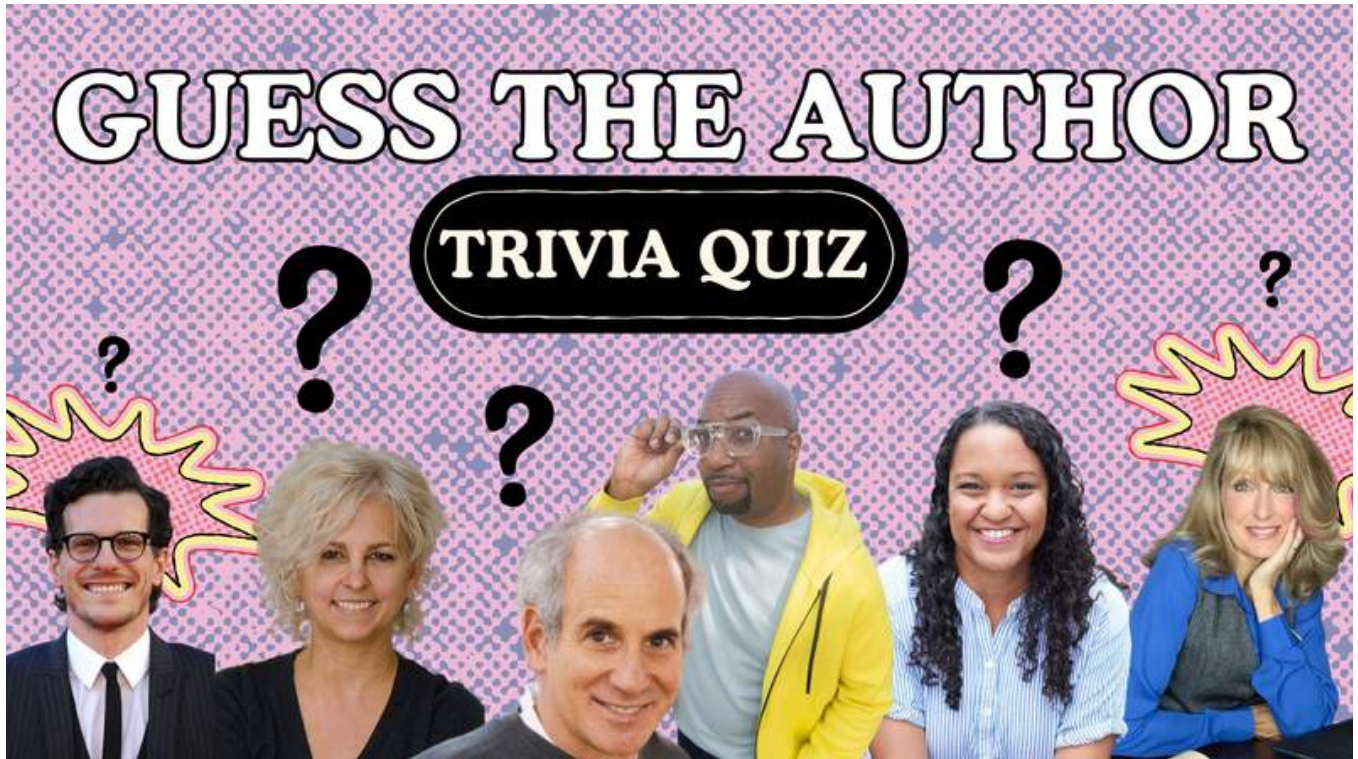




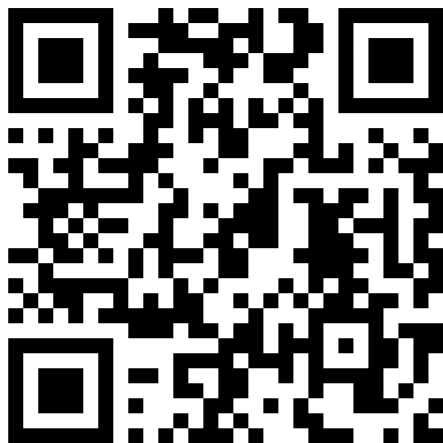
# Trivia Game Video Link

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



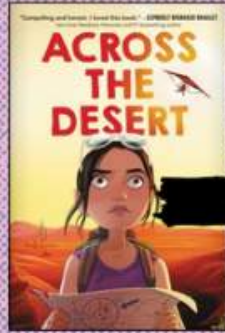
# Guess the Author Trivia Quiz

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.

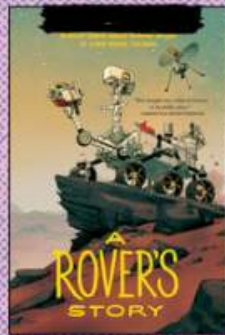
- A) LYNDA MULLALY HUNT
- B) JAMES PATTERSON
- C) TAE KELLER
- D) JOHN GRISHAM



#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.

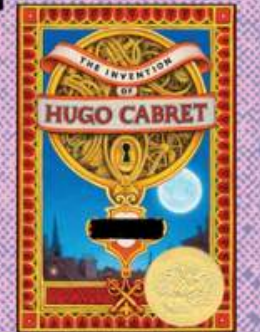
- A) JERRY CRAFT
- B) JASON REYNOLDS
- C) JARRETT LERNER
- D) SID FLEISCHMAN



#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!!

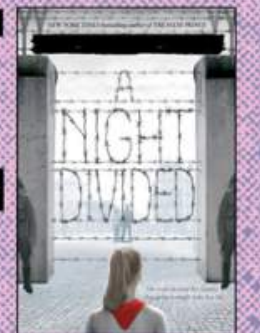
- A) CHRISTINA SOONTORNVAT
- B) LISA FIPPS
- C) CORNELIA FUNKE
- D) REBECCA STEAD



#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

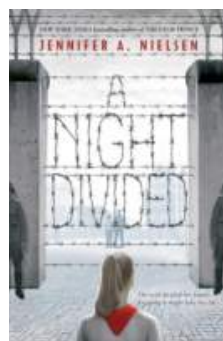
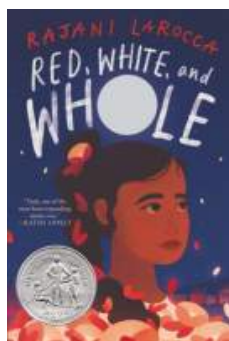
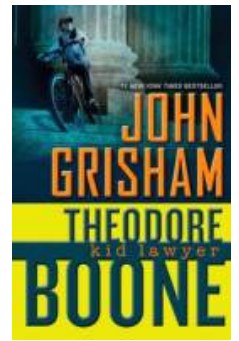
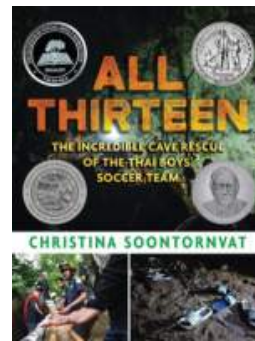
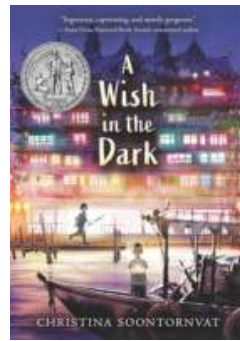
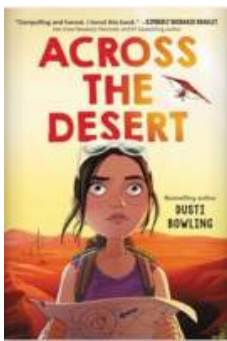


## Record Your Answers Here:

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.

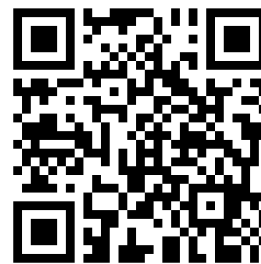
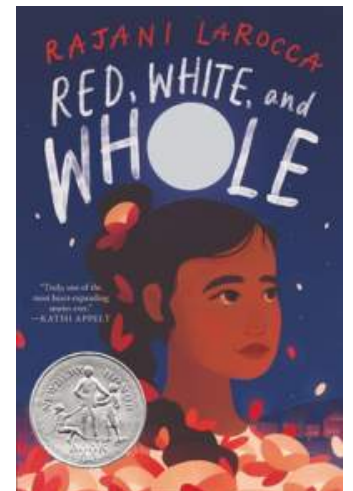
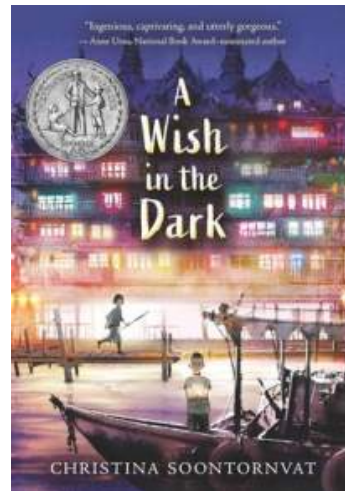
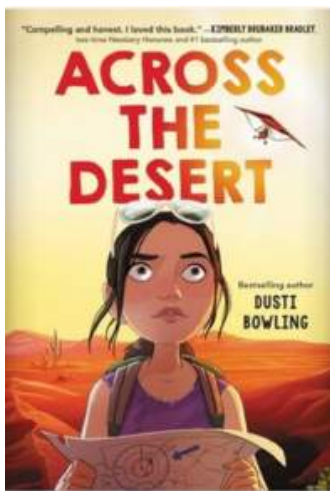


You can find 180+ First Chapter Friday Videos on my channel!

## Happy Reading! :)

# Write On!

These First Chapter Friday videos include interviews with the authors!



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

## Happy Reading! :)



## Author Trivia Answer Sheet

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

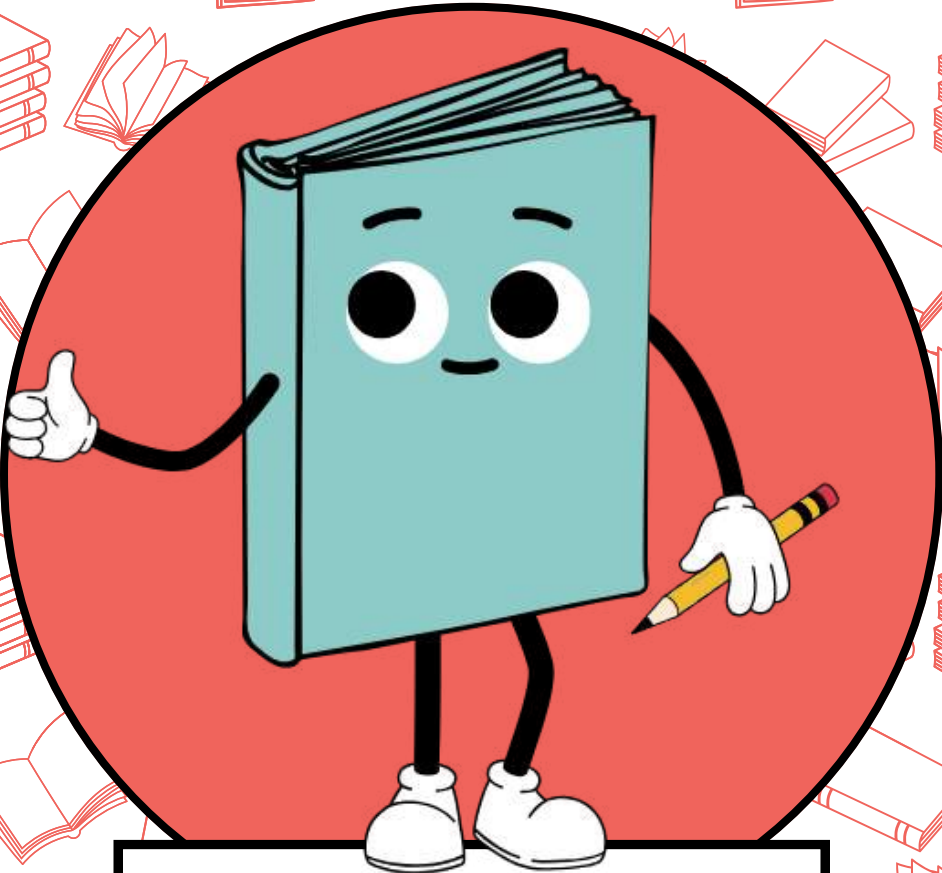
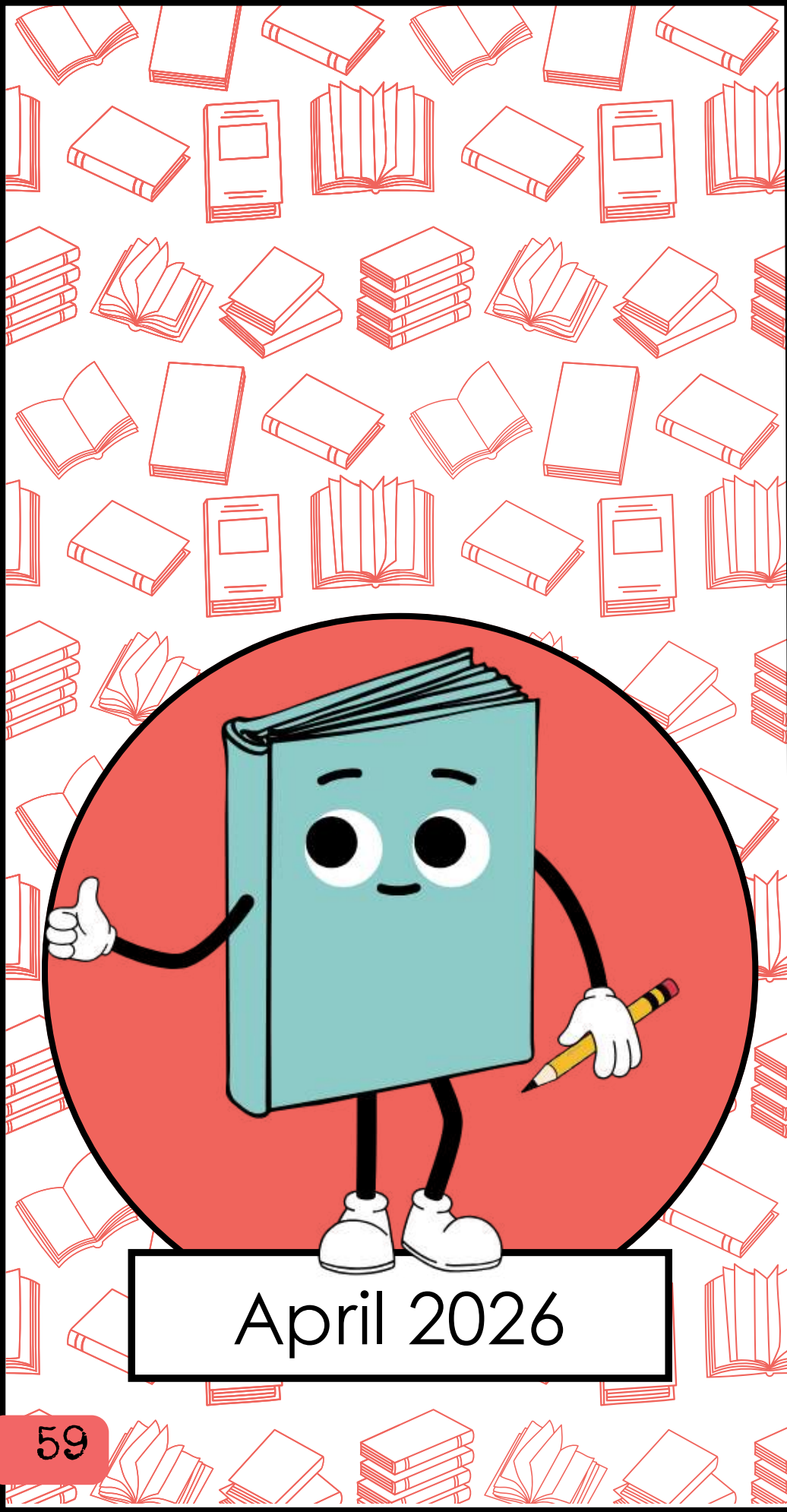
Trivia Video



## 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

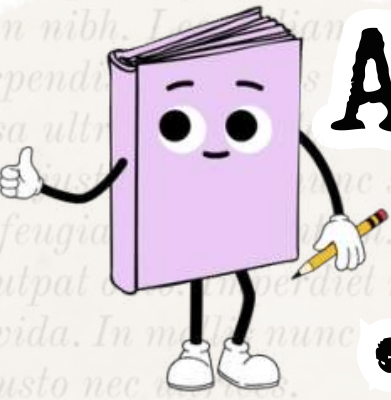
Thanks for playing!



April 2026

# WRITING PROMPTS





# APRIL WRITING CHALLENGE!



- **A - Alliteration Adventure**

- Using Alliteration, Write a short poem or paragraph about going on an adventure. Challenge yourself to include at least three examples of alliteration in your writing.

- **P - Persona Poem**

- Write from the perspective of an object (umbrella, puddle, flower). Great personification practice! Use the image provided for inspiration.

- **R - Rhyming Rockstar**

- Write a poem that includes a rhyming pattern (AABB, ABAB, etc.). Bonus challenge: Try writing a rap-style poem or spoken word piece using rhyme and rhythm.

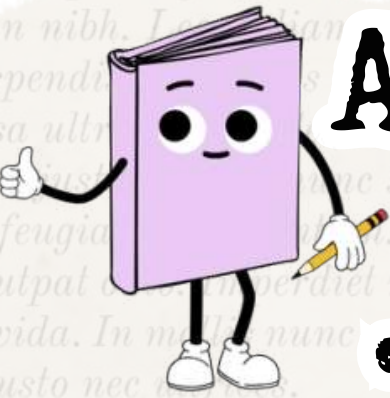
- **I - Incredibly Imagery**

- Write a short poem or paragraph that describes a spring scene using vivid imagery. Challenge Yourself to include at least three sensory details.

- **L - Letter to Self**

- Write a letter to yourself one year from now. What do you hope will change? What goals are you working toward? What advice would you give your future self?





# APRIL WRITING CHALLENGE!



There are lots of ways you can use these 5 challenge prompts.

- Mix them in as regular daily prompts (slides and printables are below with the rest of the month's prompts).
- Focus on one prompt each week, giving students multiple days to craft their responses.
- Allow students to choose 1 or 2 from the list to work on.

## After Writing...

- Have students submit their favorite of their completed writing pieces to you via Google docs, remove their names and share them with students. Then, allow students to read and offer blind feedback to one another. (Via Google doc comments, post it notes, comments on the back of the printed paper, etc. Then, vote and award prizes to the favorite pieces. (Ideas for awards are listed below... but there are dozens of clever awards you could give!)
  - A – Alliteration Ace
  - P – Poetic Personality Award
  - R – Rhyme Time Champ
  - I – Imagery Illustrator
  - L – Legendary Letter

HAVE FUN AND HAPPY WRITING!



# 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**

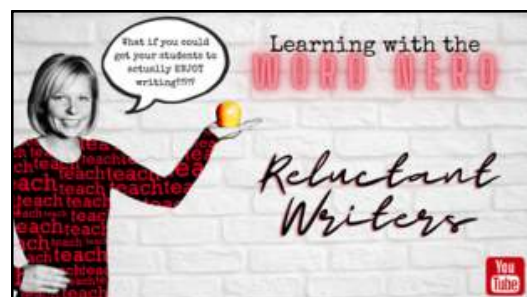
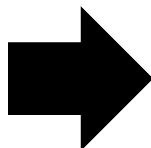
If you want, keep these “curriculum and standard” pieces of information to yourself, go for it! There is no need to let the kids know we have a secret plan to trick them into being better writers and hating it a little bit less each day!

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](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: \_\_\_\_\_

Row of Place/Date Written: \_\_\_\_\_

 <b>GEMS</b> LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITERS DOES WELL	 <b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> 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.)			
<b>Total Points = ___/10</b>			





# GEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES



My Name:

Name of classmate I am reviewing:

Date:

---

Title of Piece/Date Written



## GEMS

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITER DOES WELL

- .
- .
- .
- .
- .
- .
- .

## OPPORTUNITIES



LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WRITER TO IMPROVE

- .
- .
- .
- .
- .
- .
- .

## FINAL COMMENTS

WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:



My Name:

Name of classmate I am reviewing:

Date:

My Name:

Name of classmate I am reviewing:

Date:

Title of Piece/Date Written

Title of Piece/Date Written

**GEMS**

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITERS DOES WELL

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**OPPORTUNITIES**

LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WRITER TO IMPROVE

- 
- 
- 
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### FINAL COMMENTS

WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:

**GEMS**

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITERS DOES WELL

- 
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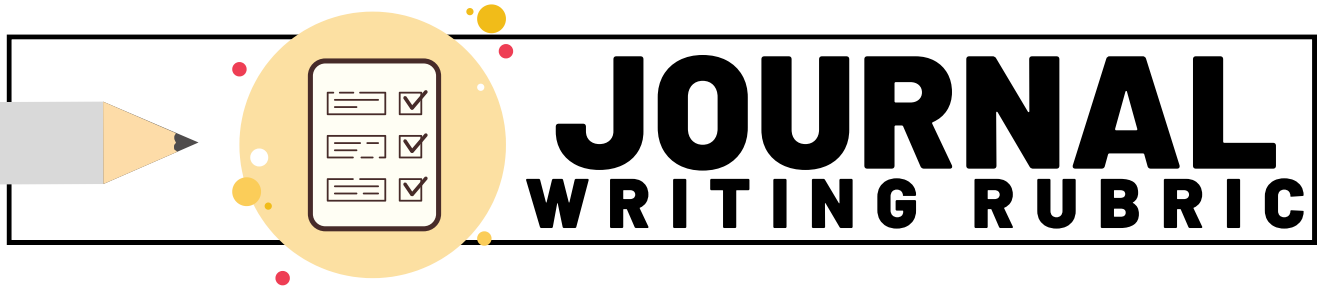
**OPPORTUNITIES**

LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WRITER TO IMPROVE

- 
- 
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### FINAL COMMENTS

WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:



The header features a pencil on the left pointing towards a yellow circle containing a checklist icon. To the right, the words 'JOURNAL' and 'WRITING RUBRIC' are written in large, bold, black capital letters within a black rectangular border.

# JOURNAL WRITING RUBRIC

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

## April Challenge Prompts

### Alliteration

A - Alliteration Adventure

Style/Skills:  
Alliteration, word choice

### Personification

P - Persona Poem

Style/Skills:  
Personification

### Rhyme

R - Rhyming Rockstar

Style/Skills:  
Rhyming, word choice

### Imagery

I - Incredible Imagery

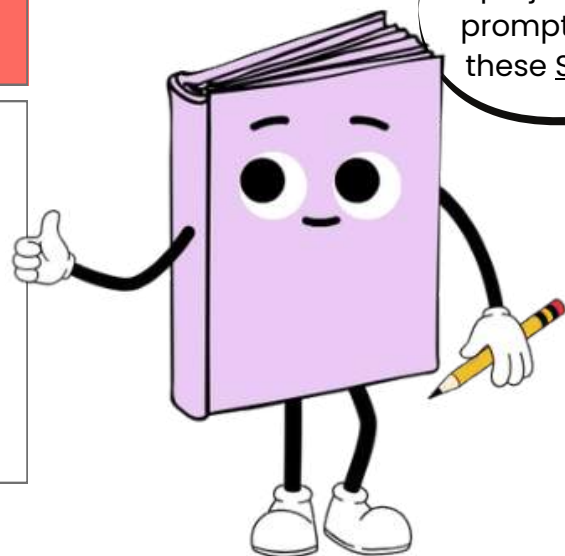
Style/Skills:  
Sensory Details,  
descriptive language

### Letter

L - Letter To Self

Style/Skills:  
Format: Friendly Letter

Style: Personal  
Reflection













# WRITING PROMPTS

## April 1-3

### Monday

March



### Tuesday

March



### Wednesday

I'm on a Boat!

Style/Skills:  
Descriptive Writing  
Sensory Details

### Thursday

Owl in Flight

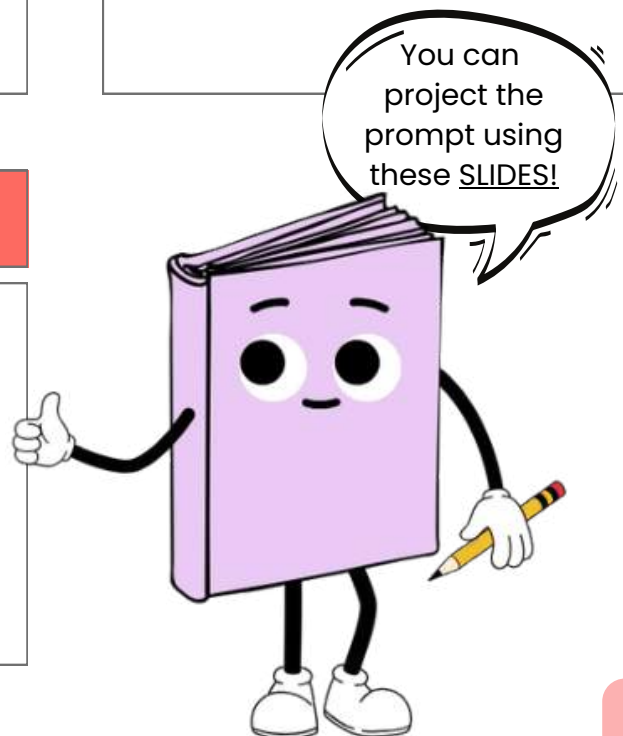
Style/Skills:  
Narrative Writing  
Word Choice

You can project the prompt using these [SLIDES!](#)

### Friday

Free Write Friday

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







# WRITING PROMPTS

## April 6-10

### Monday

Move like an Animal

Style/Skills:  
Comparison  
Creative Writing

### Tuesday

What Now?

Style/Skills:  
Creative Thinking  
Chronological  
Plotting



### Wednesday

Would You Rather:  
Houseboat or RV?

Style/Skills:  
Argumentative  
Writing

### Thursday

Shark Bait Ouh-Ha-Ha

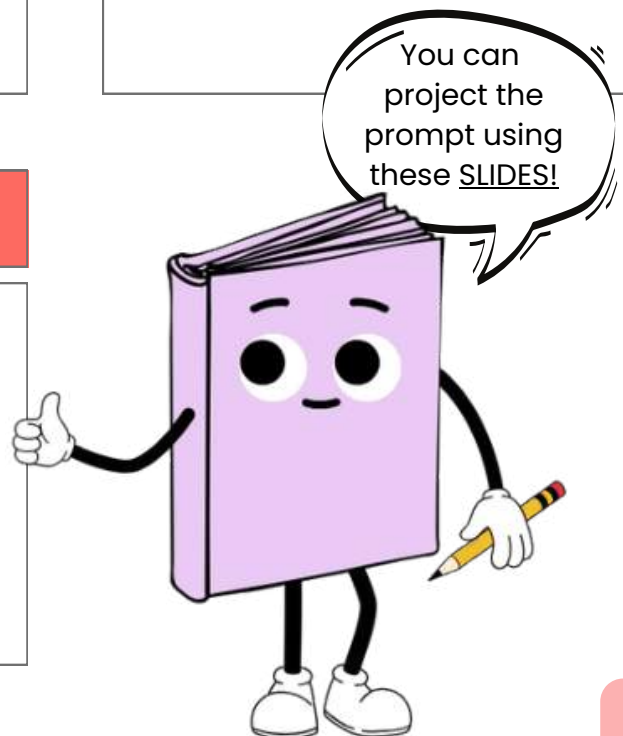
Style/Skills:  
Captions  
Non Fiction Writing

You can  
project the  
prompt using  
these SLIDES!

### Friday

Free Write Friday

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









NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

# Caption this!!

Do a quick 2 minute Google search and then create a one sentence factual caption to go along with this picture.



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▼ 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

## April 13-17

### Monday

Looks Like Spring!

Style/Skills:  
Descriptive Writing  
Figurative Language

### Tuesday

Parental Problem

Style/Skills:  
Narrative Writing  
Creative Writing

### Wednesday

What Did You Say?

Style/Skills:  
Creative Writing  
Dialogue

### Thursday

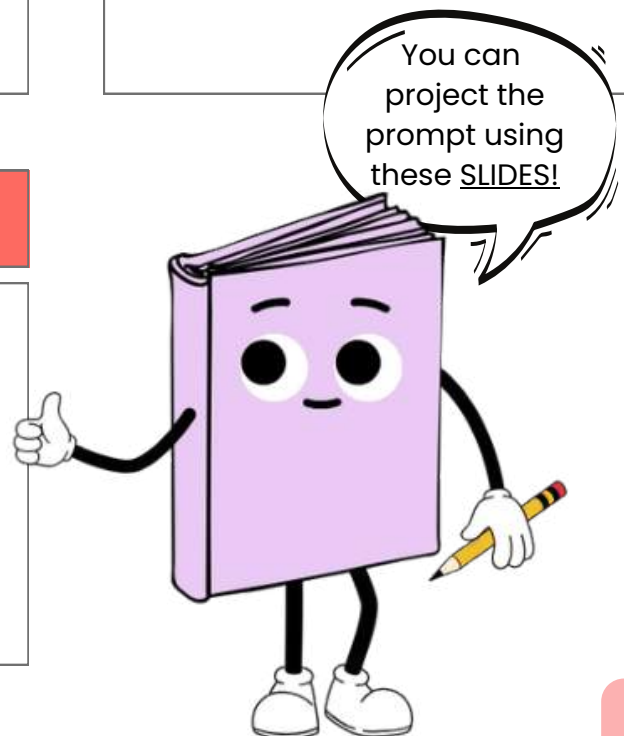
Would You Rather:  
Zombies or Robots?

Style/Skills:  
Argumentative Writing

### Friday

Free Write Friday

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











# WRITING PROMPTS

## April 20-24

### Monday

Adventures Await

Style/Skills:  
Creative Writing  
Sensory Details

### Tuesday

Stuck!

Style/Skills:  
Figurative Language  
Creative Writing



### Wednesday

Make a Milkshake!

Style/Skills:  
Description  
Concise Writing  
Direction Writing

### Thursday

Science Class Snafu

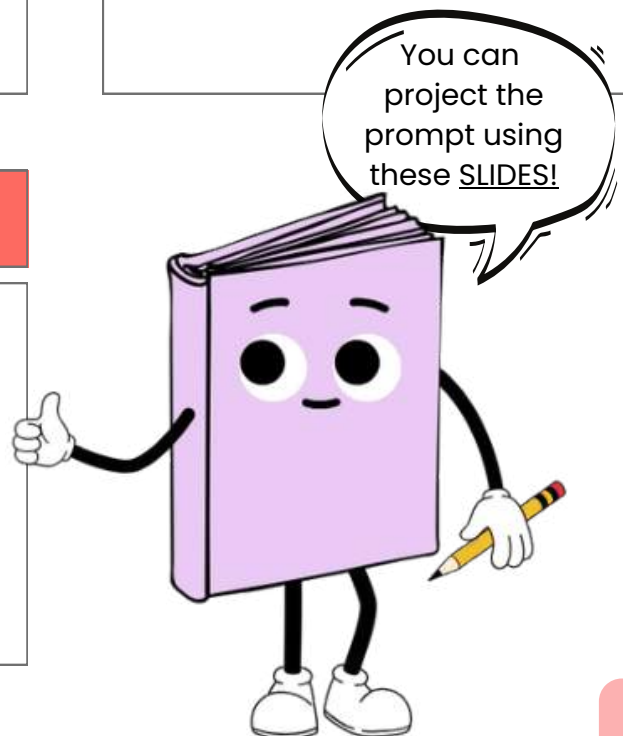
Style/Skills:  
Creative Writing  
Continue the Story

You can project the prompt using these [SLIDES!](#)

### Friday

Free Write Friday

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





NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CREATE A COMPARISON  
AND THEN WRITE!

"I find Dr. Woodn't-You-Like-to-Know  
planted as firmly in her chair as cotton  
in the South Plains.

- from: Starfish by Lisa Fipps

What other things in life are "rooted  
firmly", stuck tight, or won't budge?

- a lid jar
- foot in a too small shoe
- chewing gum in hair

What could you compare them too?

- a bad mood
- an opinion
- a person in "their spot" on the  
couch/in the cafeteria



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▼ 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

## April 27-30

### Monday

Let's go to the Carnival!

Style/Skills:  
Figurative Language  
Sensory Details

### Tuesday

A Massive Explosion

Style/Skills:  
Captions  
Non Fiction Writing



### Wednesday

Look! A Lake!

Style/Skills:  
Creative Writing  
Genre: Fantasy  
Descriptive Writing

### Thursday

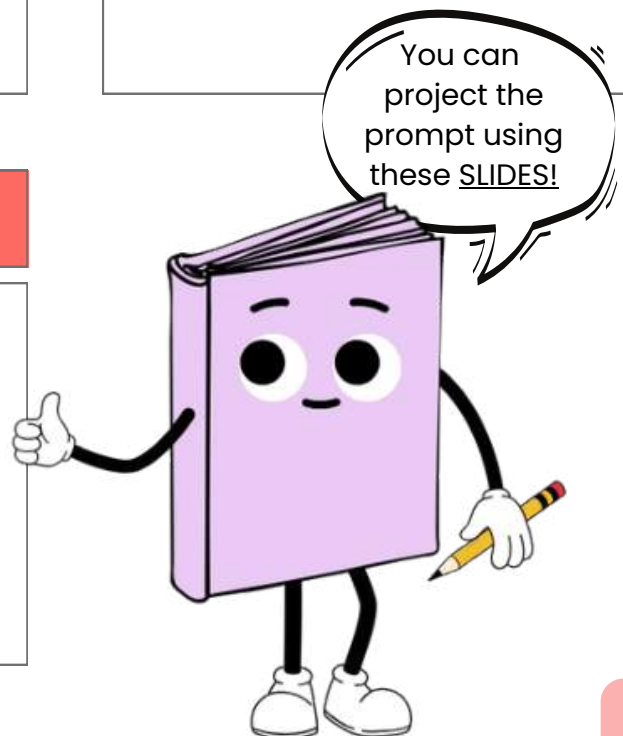
Natural Comparison

Style/Skills:  
Figurative Language  
- Simile  
Novel in Verse

You can project the prompt using these [SLIDES!](#)

### Friday

May

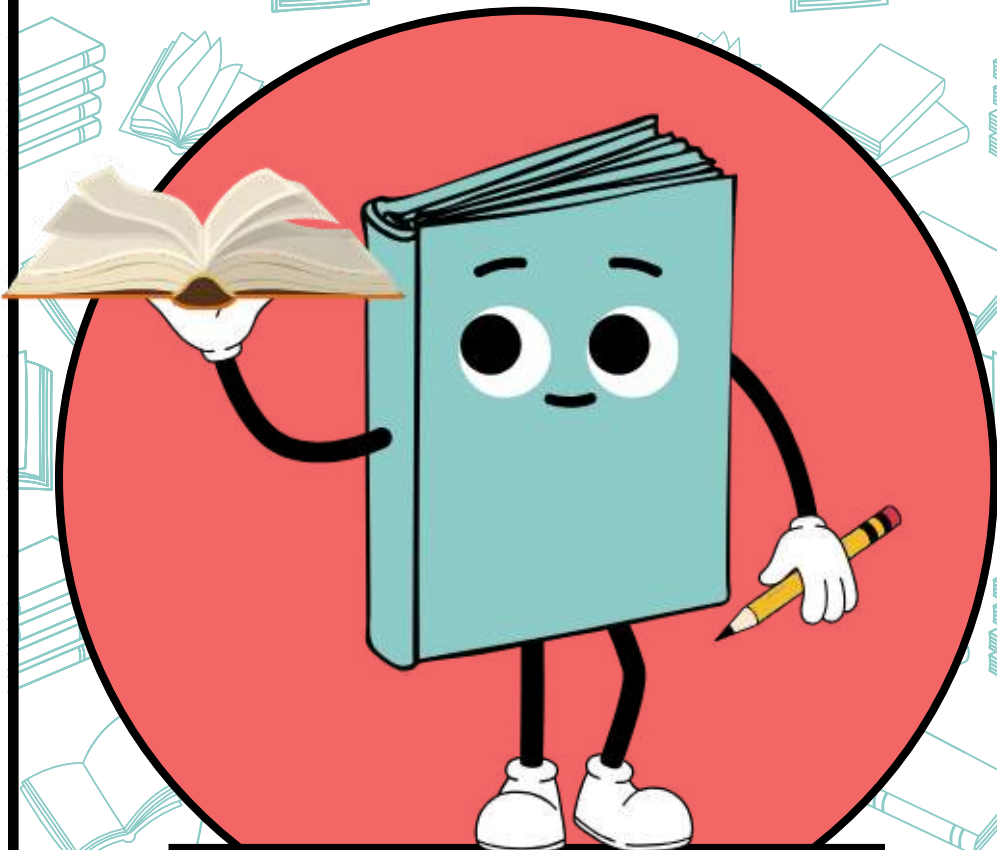








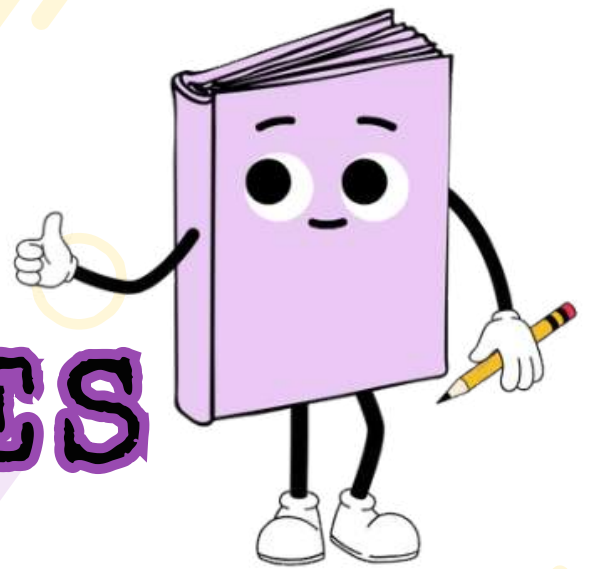




April 2026

# SEL S O M S

# POETRY RESOURCES



This slide show introduces students to several formats of poetry as well as poetic devices. Many examples are also provided!



[Click here to download poetry technique posters to display in your classroom.](#)

# NOVEL FORMATS MINI LESSON

In this video students will learn the difference between the 3 book formats of prose, novel in verse and graphic novel. She'll also tell you what makes each format appealing and the kind of reader that might enjoy each style. Finally, Amanda will share her favorite reading recommendations for each format. It's a perfect addition to your classroom reading or library lesson!

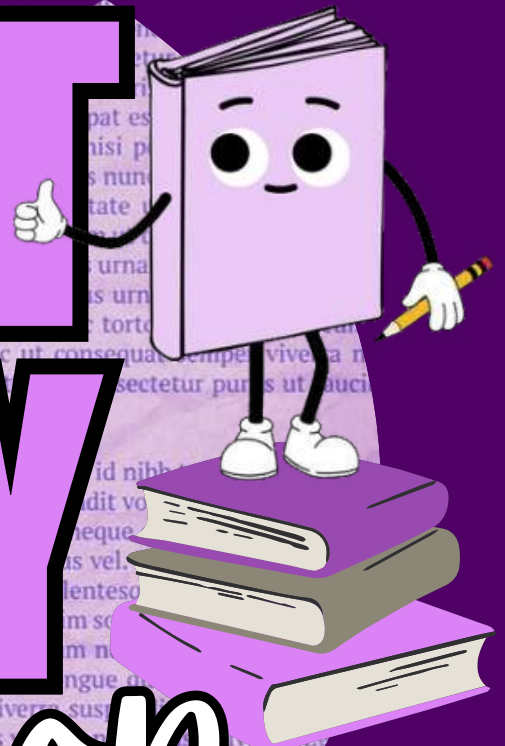


**12 READING  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
INCLUDED!**

In case you need to copy and paste this link for students, here it is:  
<https://youtu.be/nwJAHLfBItE>



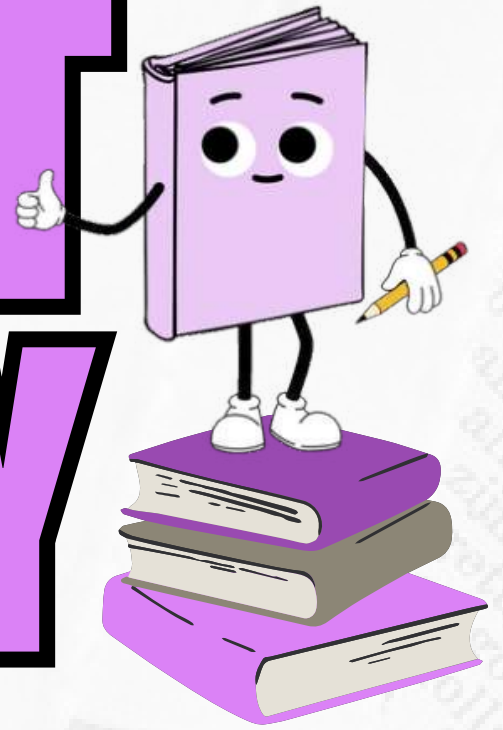
# SHORT STORY Collection



From the Word Nerd

# SHORT STORY

*genre*



A short story is a work of fiction that typically focuses on a single incident or event and is limited in length. It usually develops a single plot, has a limited number of characters, and is concise and tightly written. A short story can be written in a variety of genres, such as science fiction, horror, romance, or mystery.

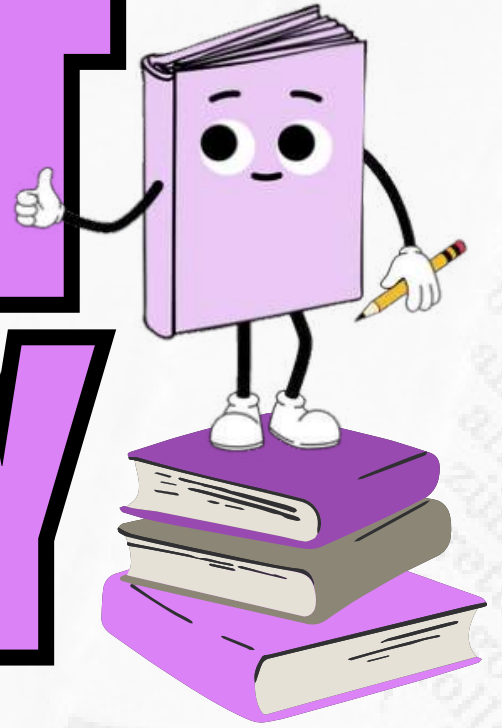


Key characteristics include:

- **In media res** - the story often starts in the middle of the action, to grab the reader's attention and generate interest
- **Limited time frame** - some short stories take place in a matter of minutes, others can be hours, but they don't usually cover extended lengths of time
- **Single point of view** - the story is usually narrated from one consistent point of view, unlike novels which can switch between different perspectives
- **Limited number of characters** - often includes a protagonist, an antagonist (although not necessarily another person) and one or two minor characters
- **Surprise ending or twist** - often there's a revelation that upends the reader's expectations and adds an additional layer of interest to the story.

# SHORT STORY

genre



## This Resource Includes

- 6 Short Stories covering a variety of genres
- Audio Read Aloud Videos for each story
- Extension Activities for each story
- Answer Keys/Rubrics for each extension activity
- A teacher guide with story and standard information for each story.

\*\* Stories appear in order of reading level difficulty. Remember, with these stories we are assessing students skills with GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS, thus it is okay to use text at lower grade levels.

- A Sky Full of Maybe (Level 4.7)
- Digging in the Dirt (Level 4.7) .
- Who Will Save the Day (Level 4.8)
- Spoonfuls of Peanut Butter (Level 4.9)
- Winter is Coming (Level 5.2)
- Fishy Business (Level 6.7)

Every short story in this collection will cover the below standards.

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.10

By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Additionally, each story will have focus standards. After reading, students will get the opportunity to practice these focus standards with extension activities.

# WRITING

## Rubric



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. There is a space for you to write in and assess each short story's focal standard.

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.

On the next page there are 2 rubrics to print and cut for use with these or other writing tasks.

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.)			
Focus standard, CCSS ELA _____ shows mastery/progress (circle one)			

Total Points = \_\_\_/12

Additional Feedback:

# A SKY

## Full of Maybe

Jacey is no ordinary girl—she's a reluctant survivor stranded on a desolate planet, torn from her vibrant home among two glorious moons. Seven years of grit and working in the crystal mines have turned her dreams of escape into flickering hopes. When a mysterious flash of green light streaks across the sky, Jacey dares to believe it might be her chance for rescue.

Join Jacey on a night when hope, fear, and the unbreakable bond of home combine to create a story that will ignite your imagination and spark your longing for the stars.



**Word Count:**

346 words

**Grade Level:**

ATOS: 4.7

**Genre:**

Science Fiction

**Standards**

CC.6.L.6 Vocabulary

Acquisition and Use:

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

*Listen*  
to the story here:



# LEARN to Annotate



Annotating is a fancy word that means taking what you are thinking about in your brain while you are reading and putting it down on the page. You don't want this to take too long and pull you out of the flow, so jot down these symbols or a quick note and then keep reading!

## Annotation Symbols



Emojis - Note how do you feel while reading with an emoji. Also note, how does the character feel?



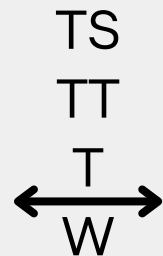
Hearts and Stars - mark your favorite or important parts with a heart or star, so you can easily find these sections again.



Exclamation points - if you find a part that shocks or surprises you, mark it with a !! Or a short phrase like WOW or HOLY COW!



Questions - when you have a question, write down a ?? or write out your full question.



Connections - note when you connect to the text or when it connects with another story or the real world

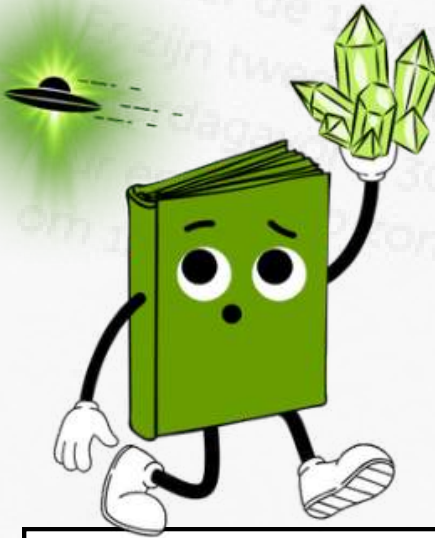
Underlining and circling important text/words are still more ways you can annotate.

Mark up the text so that when you come back to it, you can jog your memory to remember what you've already read without having to reread the entire text.

If you aren't thinking about anything while you are reading, that's your clue to STOP, go back and read again. Think of it like seeing the words play out like a movie in your brain. If you aren't seeing anything in your head, that's your sign to find a place free of distractions and try reading again.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# A SKY FULL OF MAYBE



Jacey is no ordinary girl—she's a reluctant survivor stranded on a desolate planet, torn from her vibrant home among two glorious moons. Seven years of grit and working in the crystal mines have turned her dreams of escape into flickering hopes. When a mysterious flash of green light streaks across the sky, Jacey dares to believe it might be her chance for rescue. Join Jacey on a night when hope, fear, and the unbreakable bond of home combine to create a story that will ignite your imagination and spark your longing for the stars.



## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

It flashed through the sky and then was gone. Jacey was sure she had seen... something. Something larger than a shooting star. Maybe they would find her. Maybe she could finally leave this putrid planet. Maybe it was just wishful thinking, but maybe? Maybe.

Jacey came here seven years ago. Well, "came here" implies willingness, which there was none of. Forced. Coerced. Abducted. Those words would have been more accurate.

As she watched the brilliant green light of the "maybe spacecraft" fade, her hopes sank, physically pulling her to her knees and then the ground. The gravel cut into her knees and the hot wind blew across her face. She hated everything about this planet. She hated the relentless scorching sun. She hated the terrible flesh-eating creatures. She hated the unquenchable thirst that was always with her.

She wanted to go home. She missed the cool purple skies of her planet. She missed the two glorious moons and the way water sounded as it flowed ceaselessly over rocks in the river. Mostly,



# A SKY FULL OF MAYBE

## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

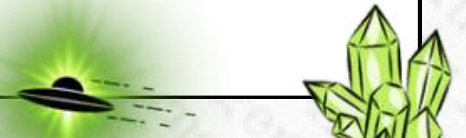
she missed her people. She wondered if they missed her too.

Jacey tipped her head up to the sky, so far back that the inky darkness filled her entire field of vision. Her back and neck hurt from her long day working in the crystal mines, but the chance of seeing another rescue drone was worth the pain. Minutes passed and then an hour. Jacey refused to give up her vigil and lay flat on her back, allowing her numb knees and kinked neck a much needed break. The shift came at a price, however. In this more comfortable position, sleep tried to claim her. Her eyes watered with the effort of trying to keep them open. Her blinks became longer until she lost the battle and fell into a rabbit hole of sleep.

The sound of crunching gravel woke her. She sat up with a start, her heart and mind racing to catch up with what she had missed.

"Jacey," a booming voice called through the night.

"About time we found you."

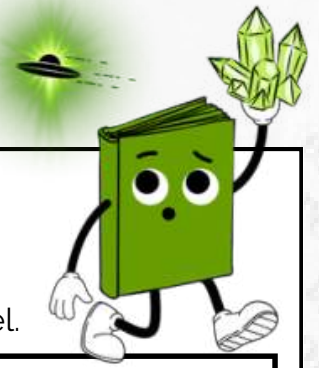


**DO YOU THINK JACEY WAS  
FOUND BY SOMEONE  
FRIENDLY OR UNFRIENDLY?**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# A SKY FULL OF MAYBE EXTENSION ACTIVITIES



## Activity #1 - Vocabulary Acquisition

Choose a word from the list and complete the chart below. Use context clues, a dictionary and/or a thesaurus to help you understand this word on a deeper level.

### Word List

- Coerced
- Relentless
- Unquenchable
- Vigil

### MY WORD:

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Use this word in a sentence:

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-----  
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Definition	Synonym	Antonym
Person	Situation	Visual

## Activity #2 - Genre Identification and Exploration

What clues tell you this book belongs in the genre of science fiction?

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Use these ideas to design/draw a book cover for A Sky Full of Maybe. Be sure to include a title, the author, and several genre specific elements. If you are struggling with idea, look in your library for other science fiction books and study their covers for similarities.

# A SKY FULL OF MAYBE

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES ANSWER KEY



### Activity #1 - Vocabulary Acquisition

Choose a word from the list and complete the chart below. Use context clues, a dictionary and/or a thesaurus to help you understand this word on a deeper level.

#### Word List


- Coerced
- Relentless
- Unquenchable
- Vigil

MY WORD:

**Coerced**

Use this word in a sentence:

My Aunt Sophia coerced me into doing the dishes by bribing me with extra desert.

Definition <b>to forcefully convince someone to do something.</b>	Synonym <b>intimidate obligated Convince</b>	Antonym <b>encourage release unrestricted</b>
Person <b>bully</b>	Situation <b>Peer Pressure</b>	Visual 

### Activity #1 - Vocabulary Acquisition

Choose a word from the list and complete the chart below. Use context clues, a dictionary and/or a thesaurus to help you understand this word on a deeper level.

#### Word List


- Coerced
- Relentless
- Unquenchable
- Vigil

MY WORD:

**relentless**

Use this word in a sentence:

Toby was relentless when he played fetch. If you don't want to throw sticks for an hour, don't pick up the stick in the first place.

Definition <b>to keep at it, never stopping</b>	Synonym <b>uncompromising single-minded</b>	Antonym <b>flexible surrendering</b>
Person <b>professional athlete</b>	Situation <b>toddler throwing a fit</b>	Visual 

# A SKY FULL OF MAYBE

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES ANSWER KEY



### Activity #1 - Vocabulary Acquisition

Choose a word from the list and complete the chart below. Use context clues, a dictionary and/or a thesaurus to help you understand this word on a deeper level.

#### Word List


- Coerced
- Relentless
- Unquenchable
- Vigil

#### MY WORD:

unquenchable

Use this word in a sentence:

Rodney's ambition to become president of the card collecting club was unquenchable.

Definition <b>always wanting more, never enough</b>	Synonym <b>insatiable urgent never ending</b>	Antonym <b>enough satisfied fulfilled</b>
Person <b>someone walking through the desert  someone desperate to achieve their goal</b>	Situation <b>thirsty, needing water</b>	Visual 

### Activity #1 - Vocabulary Acquisition

Choose a word from the list and complete the chart below. Use context clues, a dictionary and/or a thesaurus to help you understand this word on a deeper level.

#### Word List


- Coerced
- Relentless
- Unquenchable
- Vigil

#### MY WORD:

vigil

Use this word in a sentence:

Alayna kept vigil over the fresh batch of cupcakes, determined to be the first to eat one when they were cool.

Definition <b>to watch carefully, for a long time</b>	Synonym <b>patrol observe</b>	Antonym <b>ignore disregard</b>
Person <b>Detective on a stakeout</b>	Situation <b>Nurse taking care of a patient</b>	Visual 

# A SKY FULL OF MAYBE EXTENSION ACTIVITIES ANSWER KEY



Book cover images will vary, but look to see that science fiction elements are included as well as the title and author. Below you will see a few genre specific book covers to give you comparisons and ideas.

## Activity #2 - Genre Identification and Exploration

What clues tell you this book belongs in the genre of science fiction?

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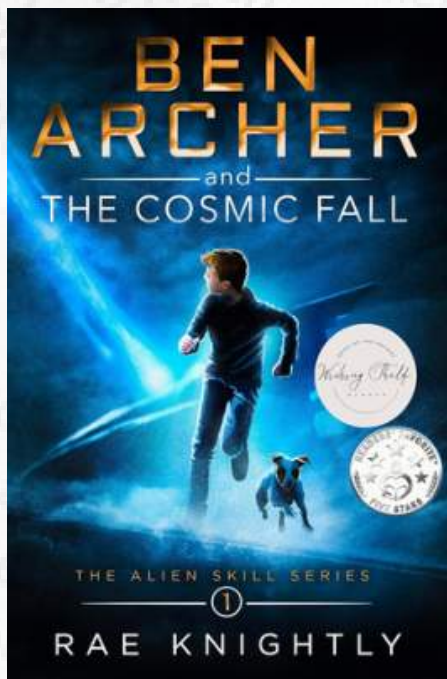
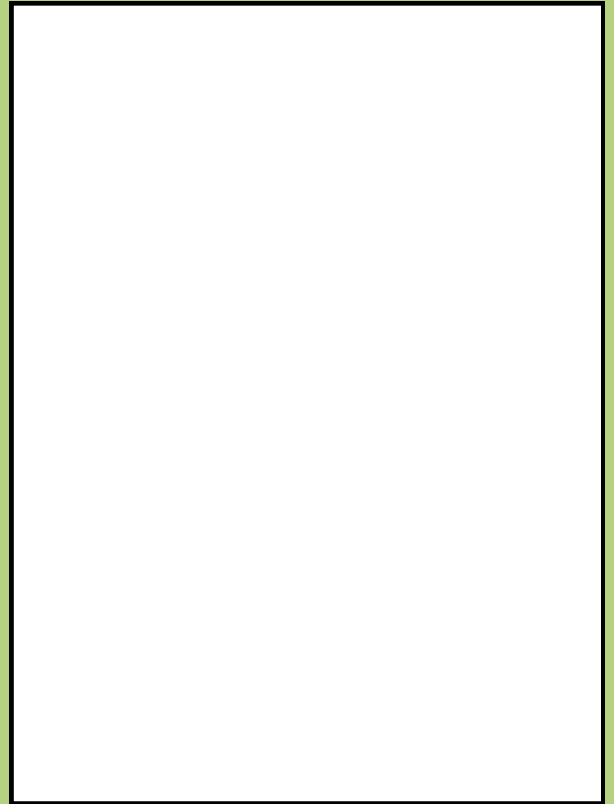
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Use these ideas to design/draw a book cover for A Sky Full of Maybe. Be sure to include a title, the author, and several genre specific elements. If you are struggling with idea, look in your library for other science fiction books and study their covers for similarities.



# DIGGING

## in the Dirt

Mya can't believe she's actually at archaeology camp! It's what she's been dreaming of forever! But now that she's here, things are quite what she imagined. Instead of discovering ancient artifacts, she's found nothing but dirt for three days. While her fellow campers dig up exciting discoveries, Mya feels frustrated and unsure if she has what it takes to be an archaeologist. Can she stay positive and persist long enough to reignite her passion for what she thought was her dream career? Or will she pack it up and go home early? Join Mya on her journey of exploration and self-discovery, where she learns that sometimes the best finds are the ones you didn't expect—and a little bit of humor can make the journey worthwhile!



### Word Count:

359 words

### Grade Level:

ATOS: 4.7

### Genre:

Realistic Fiction

### 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.

*Listen*  
to the story here:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# DIGGING IN THE DIRT



Mya can't believe she's actually at archaeology camp! It's what she's been dreaming of forever! But now that she's here, things are quite what she imagined. Instead of discovering ancient artifacts, she's found nothing but dirt for three days. While her fellow campers dig up exciting discoveries, Mya feels frustrated and unsure if she has what it takes to be an archaeologist. Can she stay positive and persist long enough to reignite her passion for what she thought was her dream career? Or will she pack it up and go home early? Join Mya on her journey of exploration and self-discovery, where she learns that sometimes the best finds are the ones you didn't expect—and a little bit of humor can make the journey worthwhile!

*Listen*  
to the story here:



## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

Mya dug in the dirt. Frustrated, she threw down her hand shovel and sat back on her heels. She had been looking forward to archeology camp all summer. Now here she was, and it stunk. She had been digging at this site for three days and found nothing.

Other campers had found animal bones and pottery shards, but not her.

"Sometimes archeologists dig for weeks or months or even years at a site before they make a find. If you can't be patient, maybe archeology isn't for you," Professor Dearing said.

But Mya really did want to be an archaeologist. At least, she thought she did. Mya closed her eyes and pictured her bedroom and all the books stacked up on her desk at home. Ancient Egyptian pyramids, dinosaur bones, the terracotta army, the Rosetta stone, mummies. There were so many exciting discoveries, and yet, Mya believed there were more out there, just waiting. Waiting for her.



# DIGGING IN THE DIRT

## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

Mya looked around the dry landscape that surrounded her. It was perfect for preserving history. Who knew? She could be sitting on top of an ancient artifact right now. Mya picked up her shovel.

"I can be patient," she told herself. "And persistent and positive. I am positive I am going to find something."

"Hang in there Mya," the professor said.

Mya squinted her eyes at the sectioned off dig site in front of her, consulted her map, and then continued to dig. After she removed two more layers of soil, Mya saw a change in the dirt. She switched to a brush. Dusting away the layers of earth revealed a long thin shape. She continued to patiently remove sand and tiny pieces of debris. Slowly a shape emerged. She kept at it. Even when the other students took a break for lunch, Mya continued to work until finally, she had uncovered the whole object. A pole with a curved stone plate attached to the end.

"Hey! Professor Dearing! I found something!" Mya called.

"Good work Mya. I knew you would find something if you were patient."

"Yeah," Mya laughed. "I went to archeology camp, and all I found was a shovel!"





# DIGGING IN THE DIRT EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Comprehension Questions.

Using complete sentences, answer the questions below about the story, Digging in the Dirt.

1. What challenges does Mya face at archaeology camp?

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2. If you were at archaeology camp, what discovery would you hope to make while digging in the dirt?

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3. It was Mya's dream to go to archaeology camp. If you could go to any kind of camp, which would you choose and why?

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4. Persistence is a theme throughout this story. Find and share two pieces of evidence that show proof of this theme.

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5. Tell about a time when you needed to be persistent as well as the results of your efforts.

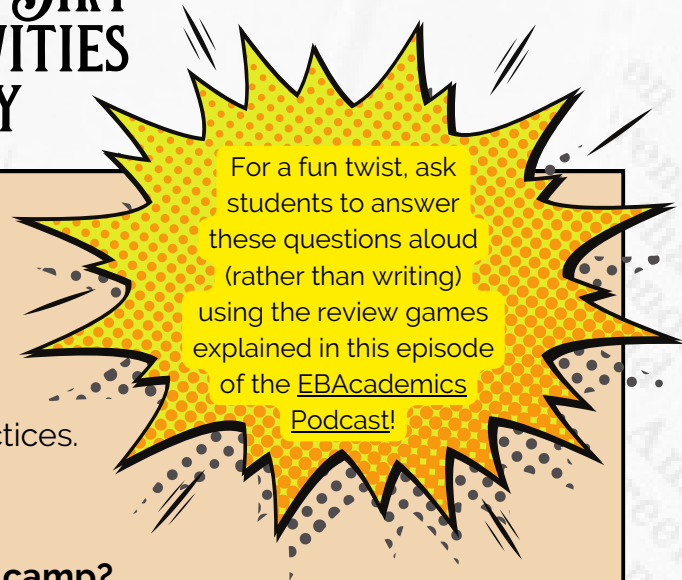
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# DIGGING IN THE DIRT EXTENSION ACTIVITIES ANSWER KEY



For a fun twist, ask students to answer these questions aloud (rather than writing) using the review games explained in this episode of the [EBAcademics Podcast!](#)

## Comprehension Questions.

Using complete sentences, answer the questions below about the story, Digging in the Dirt. Give points for completion, correctness, and/or spelling/grammar as you see fit and aligns with your classroom grading practices.

### 1. What challenges does Mya face at archaeology camp?

Mya must battle her own feelings of frustration and disappointment. She really thought she was going to love camp and now that she is not finding anything is questioning her dreams as well as not having a fun time at camp - something she was very much looking forward to.

### 2. If you were at archaeology camp, what discovery would you hope to make while digging in the dirt?

Answers will vary, but a few ideas might include artifacts from ancient civilizations, dinosaur or animal bones, buried treasure or a sarcophagus (like King Tut).

### 3. It was Mya's dream to go to archaeology camp. If you could go to any kind of camp, which would you choose and why?

Answers will vary, but a few ideas might include art camp, music camp, sports camp, animal camp, etc.

### 4. Persistence is a theme throughout this story. Find and share two pieces of evidence that show proof of this theme.

Mya did not go home early, even when the professor suggested that not all people were well suited for archaeology. Mya gave herself a pep talk and kept digging. She continued to work until she made a discovery.

### 5. Tell about a time when you needed to be persistent as well as the results of your efforts.

Answers will vary, but a few ideas might be accomplishing a big chore, achieving an athletic accomplishment, earning money, training a pet or any number of things. Remind students that this is a 2 part question and to remember to answer both parts. (Good test prep!!)

# WHO

## Will Save the Day?

Gabe is tired of living in the shadow of his perfect brother, Luke, the Eagle Scout and honor student. On their first weekend of summer, Gabe would rather be at the amusement park than camping in the woods. When Luke discovers a dark cave and jumps in, Gabe reluctantly follows, but danger follows too. Can Gabe rise to the challenge and prove he can be a hero too? Join the brothers on an adventure where courage and brotherhood are put to the test!

## Listen

to the story here:



**Word Count:**

609 words

**Grade Level:**

ATOS: 4.8

**Genre:**

Realistic Fiction &  
Survival Story

**Standards**

CCSS.ELA-

Literacy.RL.6.3

Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

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.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# WHO WILL SAVE THE DAY?



Gabe is tired of living in the shadow of his perfect brother, Luke, the Eagle Scout and honor student. On their first weekend of summer, Gabe would rather be at the amusement park than camping in the woods. When Luke discovers a dark cave and jumps in, Gabe reluctantly follows, but danger follows too. Can Gabe rise to the challenge and prove he can be a hero too? Join the brothers on an adventure where courage and brotherhood are put to the test!

Listen  
to the story here:



## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

"C'mon! Over here!"

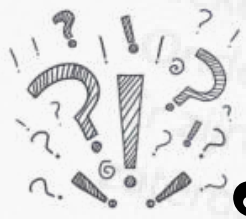
Gabe trudged in the direction of his brother's voice. His brother, the Eagle Scout. His brother, the honor student. His oh-so-much-better brother. It wasn't that Gabe disliked his brother. It was that, just once, he wanted to be the hero, but it wasn't likely to happen this weekend on their camping trip.

Gabe sighed, "Coming!"

"Look, look here!" Luke pointed enthusiastically to a dark hole. "I think it's a cave."

Luke did exactly what Gabe didn't want him to do. He plunged inside that deep, dark hole. Gabe inspected the outer edge of the rocks for bats and then ducked in after his brother.

Luke ran ahead whooping and hollering in the dark damp space. Echoes bounced off the rock walls and crashed against Gabe's ears. Gabe moved slowly, shuffling one foot in front of the other. As he walked, he let his fingers trail against the rock wall, ready to catch himself if his feet failed him, as they often did.



# WHO WILL SAVE THE DAY?

## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

Gabe would have rather spent their first weekend of summer at the amusement park, riding the go-carts, playing mini golf, and taking swings in the batting cages. It wasn't that he was a total wuss, he just preferred the predictability of civilization. Being out here in the wilderness where anything could happen made him nervous. What if something went wrong? What if he didn't know what to do in a crisis? Luke seemed to thrive off of those situations, but not Gabe.

"Hey Luke, I think we should-" Gabe's request was cut off by a sharp cry from Luke ahead. Immediately Gabe took off running. He ran with his head low and his arms up. "Luke! Luke!"

The cave was slanting downward and the air was getting colder with every step. Gabe wished he'd brought his flashlight, but it was back at the campsite in the tent. Suddenly Gabe tripped and then skidded to a stop, gravel cutting into his palms and knees. He turned behind him to see what caused him to fall and saw Luke, laying on the ground and clutching his ankle.

What were they going to do now? This was exactly the kind of thing Gabe was trying to avoid. Gabe took a moment to let his eyes adjust to the dim light of the cavern and then looked to his brother. Luke would likely know what to do. He was an Eagle Scout after all. But one look at Luke's face contorted with pain and Gabe knew his brother was in no condition to continue leading this expedition.





# WHO WILL SAVE THE DAY?

## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

"Gabe," Luke almost whispered. "What are we going to do?"

Gabe scanned their surroundings, taking in as many details as possible, trying to ignore the panic creeping into his chest. He closed his eyes. If he looked at his brother, he wouldn't be able to hide his own fear. Behind his eyelids Gabe was surprised to see a memory flashing. More like pieces of memories. Memories from Luke's boy scout troop meeting Gabe had been forced to attend. He'd been doodling in his social studies notebook more than he was listening, but maybe a bigger part of him had been listening than he knew. Because right now, he knew what to do.

Gabe opened his eyes. "Don't worry, Luke," he said. "I've got this."

An hour later the brothers returned to the campsite bruised and bloody. Luke's arm was draped over Gabe's shoulder as they hobbled to the picnic table. Together they sank onto the wooden plank bench, completely out of breath.

"What happened?" their mother cried.

"Gabe saved me," Luke explained.

Gabe smiled. "He's right, I did."



Written by Amanda Zieba for the Word Nerd Collaborative

# WHO WILL SAVE THE DAY EXTENSION ACTIVITIES



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity #1 - Character Development Chart

Complete this chart, showcasing character traits and details from the story. Use both concrete facts from the story and your own implied conclusions.

	GABE	LUKE
<b>Initial Traits:</b> Describe how is this character introduced in the story.		
<b>Challenges Faced:</b> List the main challenges each character faces.		
<b>Responses to Challenges:</b> Explain how each character responds to their challenges.		
<b>Growth and Change:</b> Describe how Gabe and Luke change by the end of the story. What do they learn about themselves and each other?		
<b>Theme Connection:</b> How did each characters' experiences relate to the themes of courage and brotherhood.		

## Activity #2 Diary Entry

Write a short diary entry from the perspective of either Gabe or Luke after their adventure. They should reflect on what they learned and how they feel about their brotherly relationship. Use the space below to brainstorm a few key elements and then write your diary entry on a separate piece of paper or new computer document.



# WHO WILL SAVE THE DAY? EXTENSION ACTIVITIES - ANSWER KEY

## Activity #1 - Character Development Chart

Complete this chart, showcasing character traits and details from the story. Use both concrete facts from the story and your own implied conclusions.

	GABE	LUKE
<b>Initial Traits:</b> Describe how is this character introduced in the story.	Gabe is nervous to be in the outdoors and feels inferior to his brother Luke. Gabe doubts his own abilities.	Luke is a good student and a capable Eagle Scout. We do not know much about how he treats his brother, only that his brother looks up to him.
<b>Challenges Faced:</b> List the main challenges each character faces.	Gabe battles his nervousness in the wilderness while camping. Gabe follows his brother into the cave even though he is afraid. Gabe must rely on himself instead of his brother when Luke gets injured.	Luke falls in the cave and injures his ankle.
<b>Responses to Challenges:</b> Explain how each character responds to their challenges.	When Luke is injured and asks Gabe for help, Gabe takes note of his surroundings and then closes his eyes to try and get calm. Once he has an idea, he puts it into action.	When Luke is injured, he asks for help.
<b>Growth and Change:</b> Describe how Gabe and Luke change by the end of the story. What do they learn about themselves and each other?	I think that Gabe grows in confidence. He has shown himself, his brother and his mother that he can handle a crisis-type situation. Perhaps he will be less nervous and more confident moving forward. He may also see that his brother is not perfect and think more kindly toward him.	We do not really know how Luke changes in this story because we aren't inside his head. Maybe he will be more careful? We also don't know how he treated Gabe before the accident, but we know that afterward he is grateful and gives Gabe the credit.
<b>Theme Connection:</b> How did each characters' experiences relate to the themes of courage and brotherhood.	Gabe found the courage both to follow his brother and also to step up and help him when he was in need. Even though he was often jealous of his brother, Gabe helped him when he was in trouble. This shows both courage and brotherhood.	Again, we are not in Luke's head so it is difficult to know what he was thinking, but his facial expressions showed that when he fell in the cave he was scared. He showed courage by asking for help, something that is sometimes hard to do. He also trusted Gabe to help him, when Gabe didn't even trust himself. These actions show a strong sense of brotherhood.

## Activity #2 Diary Entry

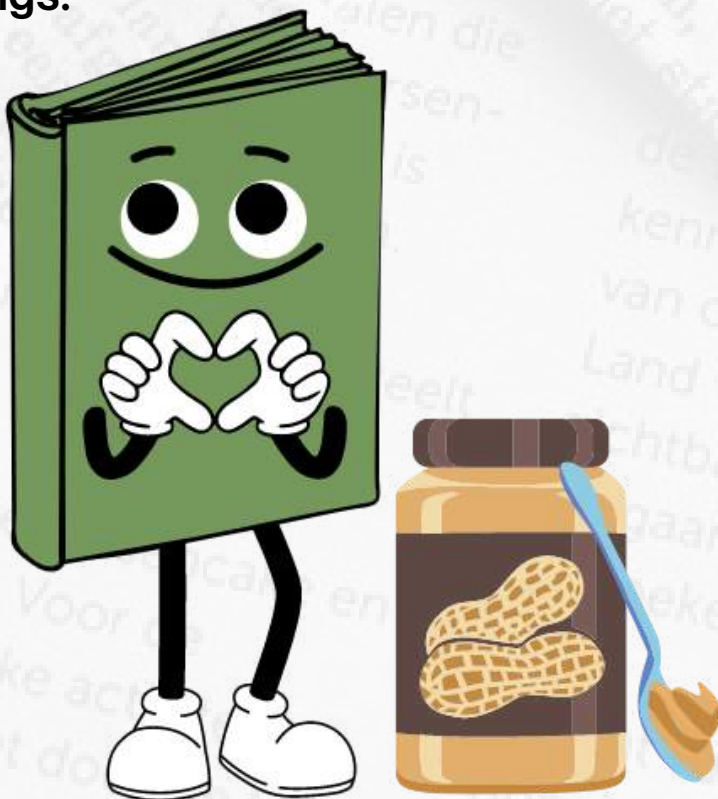
Answers will vary, but should showcase a chronological replay of the events of the day and character emotions/thoughts. Using the character chart as a prewriting activity, you could also look for themes of brotherhood and courage.

## GRADING:

Answers will vary. Use the basic writing rubric included in this resources to assess if students met writing objectives.

# SPOONFULS of Peanut Butter

Owen can't resist the creamy goodness of peanut butter, especially on a day when he just wants to feel good. As he dips his spoon into the jar again and again, he finds comfort in the rich taste and sweet memories of his mother, who also loved indulging in the same treat during tough times. Join Owen on a heartfelt journey of nostalgia and comfort food, where every scoop brings back memories that nourish his spirit, reminding him that love can always be found in the simplest things.



## Word Count:

272 words

## Grade Level:

ATOS: 4.9

## Genre:

Realistic Fiction

## Trigger Topic:

This story is about parental sickness and grief. If you have a student experiencing these struggles, please use your discretion.

## Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3

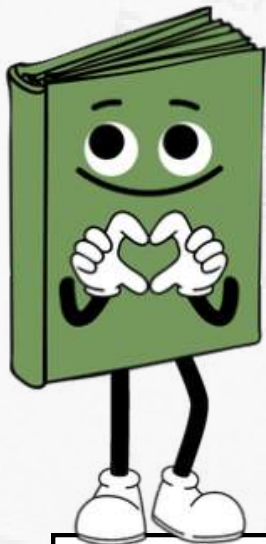
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

*Listen*  
to the story here:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# SPOONFULS OF PEANUT BUTTER



Owen can't resist the creamy goodness of peanut butter, especially on a day when he just wants to feel good. As he dips his spoon into the jar again and again, he finds comfort in the rich taste and sweet memories of his mother, who also loved indulging in the same treat during tough times. Join Owen on a heartfelt journey of nostalgia and comfort food, where every scoop brings back memories that nourish his spirit, reminding him that love can always be found in the simplest things.

Listen  
to the story here:



## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

Owen dipped the spoon into the jar for a fourth time, or maybe it was the fifth. He'd lost count. He'd only ever eaten the whole jar once before, but maybe today would be the second.

Six spoonfuls. It tasted so good. Rich and creamy. He rubbed his tongue on the top of his mouth, relishing the way the peanut butter slid down his throat so easily.

Seven spoonfuls. He didn't think that at this moment, he loved anything more than he loved peanut butter.

Eight spoonfuls. He remembered his mother doing the same thing. When some mothers had a tough day, they'd drink a glass of wine, or scarf a whole bowl of ice cream. Not his mother. Owen had seen her once or twice when he was really young, savoring a spoonful within the depths of her closet. When she got really sick, she didn't hide her guilty pleasure. She'd sit curled up on the couch, shoveling spoonful after spoonful into her awaiting mouth. When her husband eyed her quizzically she'd respond with, "What? The doctors said I need to gain weight."

# SPOONFULS OF PEANUT BUTTER

## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

Nine spoonfuls. One day Owen gathered his courage and a spoon from the kitchen. He crawled up next to her, a question plainly written on his ten year old face. His mother had smiled at him indulgently and passed the jar.

Ten spoonfuls. Each time he ate peanut butter he thought of her. Her memory, plus the sugar high and comfort of a full belly, got him through whatever was bothering him.

Eleven spoonfuls. Owen scraped the bottom of the jar, licked the spoon clean, and sighed contentedly.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# SPOONFULS OF PEANUT BUTTER EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

## Activity #1 - Memory Mapping

In the space to the right, create a memory mind map about a favorite food or meal. Include as many of the below pieces of information as possible.

- **Food:** What food do you want to write about?
- **Memory:** Describe a specific memory associated with this food.
- **Feelings:** What emotions do you feel when you think about this memory?
- **Details:** List descriptive details that capture the scene (who was there, what it looked like, sounds, smells, etc.).



## Activity #2 - Writing Narrative

Using their Memory Mapping Worksheet, have students write a narrative about their chosen food and the memories it evokes. Use the space below to jot down some ideas and brainstorm plot actions. Then write your story on a separate sheet of paper or a computer document.

Please include:

- A clear beginning, middle, and end.
- Descriptive language to paint a vivid picture of their experience.
- Emotions that convey how the food and memory make them feel.

# SPOONFULS OF PEANUT BUTTER EXTENSION ACTIVITIES - ANSWER KEY

## Activity #1 - Memory Mapping

In the space to the right, create a memory mind map about a favorite food or meal. Include as many of the below pieces of information as possible.

- **Food:** What food do you want to write about?
- **Memory:** Describe a specific memory associated with this food.
- **Feelings:** What emotions do you feel when you think about this memory?
- **Details:** List descriptive details that capture the scene (who was there, what it looked like, sounds, smells, etc.).

## GRADING:

Because they are a visual representation of the way students think, the mind maps they produce will vary greatly. Typically I assign points for completing the activity and including the suggested items, in this case: food, memory, feelings and details.

## Activity #2 - Writing Narrative

Using their Memory Mapping Worksheet, have students write a narrative about their chosen food and the memories it evokes.

Encourage them to include:

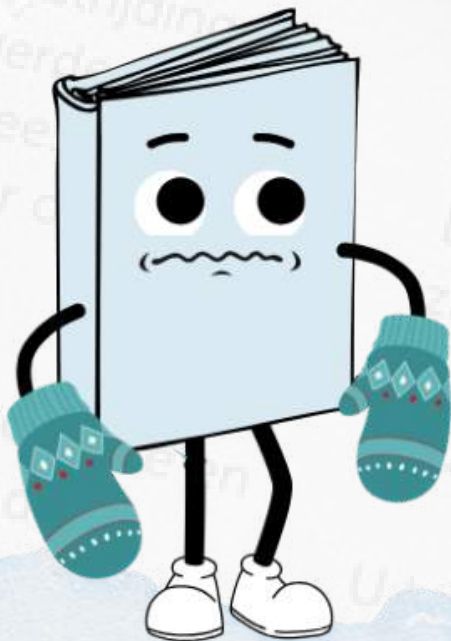
- A clear beginning, middle, and end.
- Descriptive language to paint a vivid picture of their experience.
- Emotions that convey how the food and memory make them feel.

## GRADING:

Answers will vary. Use the basic writing rubric included in this resources to assess if students met writing objectives.

# WINTER is Coming...

In a world where winter brings not just cold, but dangerous creatures, Kalea gets ready for the coming blizzards and their hidden beasts. As the first snowflake falls, she and her brother, Otto, remember the fear from last year. While they work together to prepare their home, a sense of worry grows with each chilly breeze. This story shows how Kalea fights not only the beasts outside but also her own fears. Will she be ready when the snowstorm arrives? Get ready for an exciting adventure filled with courage and the unknown!



## Word Count:

363 words

## Grade Level:

ATOS: 5.2

## Genre:

Fantasy

## Standards:

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.

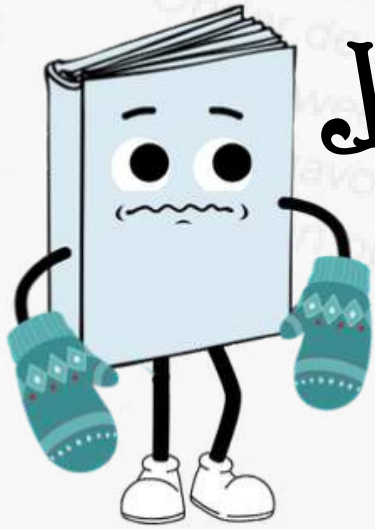
Specifically, figurative language in the form of ALLITERATION will be utilized and practiced with this short story.

# Listen

to the story here:

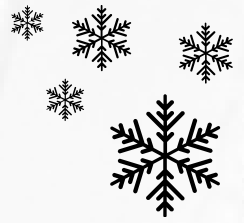


Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# WINTER IS COMING...

In a world where winter brings not just cold, but dangerous creatures, Kalea gets ready for the coming blizzards and their hidden beasts. As the first snowflake falls, she and her brother, Otto, remember the fear from last year. While they work together to prepare their home, a sense of worry grows with each chilly breeze. This story shows how Kalea fights not only the beasts outside but also her own fears. Will she be ready when the snowstorm arrives? Get ready for an exciting adventure filled with courage and the unknown!



Listen  
to the story here:

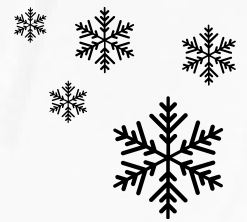


## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

The wind whispered through the dark, empty trees like a warning in a foreign language. Kalea snapped her head up from her small garden and stared at the slate gray sky, scanning it for the first signs. But even without visual proof, she knew what was coming. Winter was coming, and with winter, came the blizzards. And with the blizzards came the beasts.

The beasts were nearly impossible to see. They blended in with the flurry and fury of the flying flakes, their translucent skin and white fur camouflaging their presence. The puffs of hot air from their strong and steady lungs shrouded them in a fog that further hid them from view. They traveled in packs and cornered their victims. Once you were surrounded, the most you could pray for was a quick death.

She saw it then. Kalea shuddered in fear as a single snowflake, the first of the season, fell and landed on her nose. Winter. Blizzards. Beasts. They were all coming. Kalea stooped to pick up her basket overflowing with the last of the garden's harvest and quickly walked inside.



# WINTER IS COMING...

## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

"The first flake fell," she announced to her brother Otto as she entered the kitchen. She hung up her coat in the mudroom and deposited the vegetables on the counter, leaving them only long enough to wash her hands. There was so much to be done.

She looked up from the sink to see her brother's eyes wide with fear.

"It will be okay," she told him.

"But last year - " Otto started to protest.

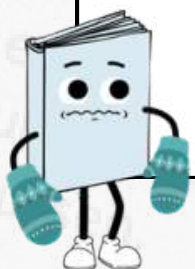
"It won't happen again," Kalea said, hoping to cut off the thought, the memory.

"But,"

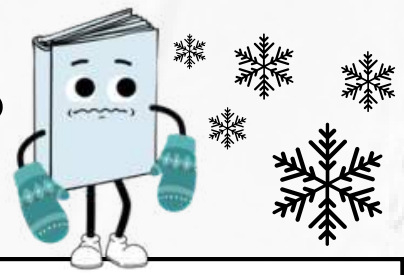
"No buts." Kalea stopped peeling and locked her eyes on his. "It won't."

Otto nodded and then came to help. Together they cleaned, and cooked, and canned the vegetables. Then they turned to tackle the rest of their winter preparations.

Even though the beasts were near impossible to see and closing the curtains would have kept the house a bit warmer, Kalea refused to be caught unaware a second time. She sat huddled on the couch under a mountain of blankets while she watched and waited. Winter was coming. Soon.



# WINTER IS COMING EXTENSION ACTIVITIES



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity #1 - Alliterative Phrases

Alliteration is the repetition of the same sound at the start of a series of words in succession whose purpose is to provide an audible pulse that gives a piece of writing a lulling, lyrical, and/or emotive effect.

There are several alliterative phrases in this story. Find and record two below. Then share how they impact or improve the story.

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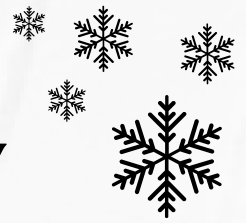
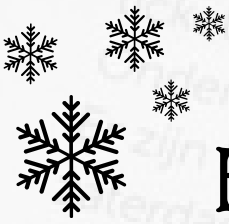
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## Activity #2 Creative Writing

This story happens during a brief moment in time. There is a lot that happened before this scene and likely a lot that will happen afterward. Choose - Write what happened last winter or write what happens next. Attempt to include a few of your own alliterative phrases. Use the space below to jot down some ideas and brainstorm plot actions. Then write your story on a separate sheet of paper or a computer document.



# WINTER IS COMING

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES - ANSWER KEY

### Activity #1 - Alliterative Phrases

Alliteration is the repetition of the same sound at the start of a series of words in succession whose purpose is to provide an audible pulse that gives a piece of writing a lulling, lyrical, and/or emotive effect.

There are several alliterative phrases in this story. Find and record two below. Then share how they impact or improve the story.

#### Alliterative Phrases:

- Kalea snapped her head up from her small garden and stared at the slate gray sky, scanning it for the first signs.
- They blended in with the flurry and fury of the flying flakes, their translucent skin and white fur camouflaging their presence.
- She saw it then. Kalea shuddered in fear as a single snowflake, the first of the season, fell and landed on her nose.
- She sat huddled on the couch under a mountain of blankets while she watched and waited. Winter was coming.

These sentences containing figurative language impact the story positively by making the language sound interesting when it is read aloud by adding to the rhythm or lyrical quality of the piece. They also help the reader create more vivid images in their mind while reading.

### Activity #2 Creative Writing

This story happens during a brief moment in time. There is a lot that happened before this scene and likely a lot that will happen afterward. Choose - Write what happened last winter or write what happens next. Attempt to include a few of your own alliterative phrases. Use the space below to jot down some ideas and brainstorm plot actions. Then write your story on a separate sheet of paper or a computer document.

Answers will vary. Use the basic writing rubric included in this resources to assess if students met writing objectives.

#### GRADING:

Answers will vary. Use the basic writing rubric included in this resources to assess if students met writing objectives.

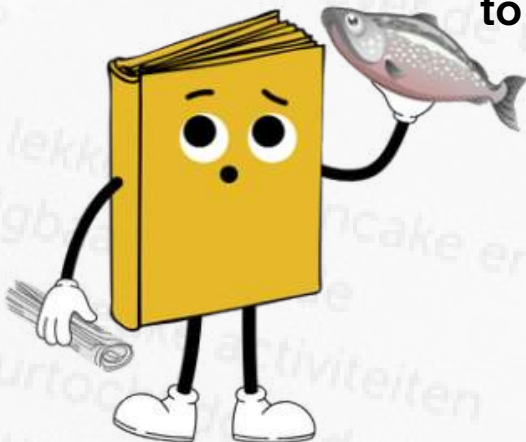
# FISHY

## Business



In the busy heart of Seattle's Pike Place Market, reporter Becca Davenport sniffs out a story that stinks—literally. Tasked with uncovering a silver smuggling ring, she's led to the market by a cryptic tip about a fishy connection to upscale restaurants and the Italian mafia. As Becca navigates the chaotic stalls, she can't shake the feeling that beneath the surface of fresh seafood lies a world of deception. But in a city where secrets swim just below the surface, will she be able to hook the story of a lifetime—or will she become the next catch in a murky underworld?

*Listen*  
to the story here:



### Word Count:

621 words

### Grade Level

ATOS: 6.7

### Genre

Realistic Fiction and  
Mystery

### Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1

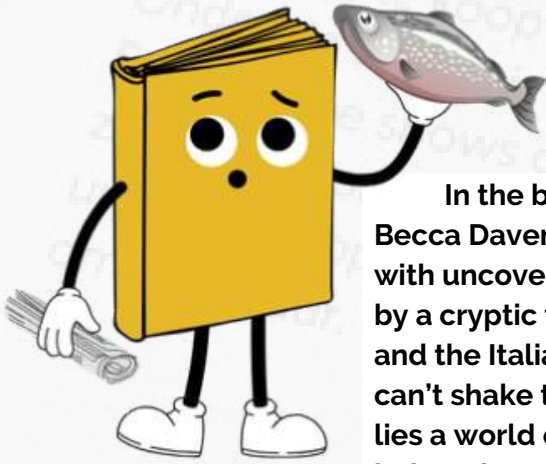
Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.4

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.

Specifically, PUNS will be utilized and practiced with this short story.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# FISHY BUSINESS

In the busy heart of Seattle's Pike Place Market, reporter Becca Davenport sniffs out a story that stinks—literally. Tasked with uncovering a silver smuggling ring, she's led to the market by a cryptic tip about a fishy connection to upscale restaurants and the Italian mafia. As Becca navigates the chaotic stalls, she can't shake the feeling that beneath the surface of fresh seafood lies a world of deception. But in a city where secrets swim just below the surface, will she be able to hook the story of a lifetime—or will she become the next catch in a murky underworld?



A **pun** is a joke that leans into the different possible meanings of a word or the fact that there are words which sound alike but have different meanings.

There are several puns in this short story. When you find one, underline it!

Hint! There are 3!

## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

Reporters are trained to develop a sixth sense for when a story smells fishy. And something about this one wasn't right. First of all, there was the actual fish smell.

Becca hadn't spent much time down at the famous Pike Place Market since moving to Seattle, but now that she was here, she could definitely say it was a smell that didn't appeal to her. She watched the fishmongers in black t-shirts and orange coveralls ably toss fish from the display case to the clerk to be wrapped and paid for. She had to give them credit. Throwing thirty-five pounds of slippery, wiggly flesh couldn't be easy. Catching it, she thought, had to be darn near impossible.

Becca sighed, resolved to breathe only through her mouth, and walked closer to the counter to have a better look. Rebecca Davenport, reporter for the Seattle Times, was not a quitter, no matter how fishy the situation got. The story she was working on was already pretty fishy. Someone in town was running a silver smuggling ring, but no one could figure out who was involved nor how it operated. Many local authorities were placing bets on a notorious



# FISHY BUSINESS



## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

network of upscale seafood restaurants in town, more than one of which had supposed connections to the Italian mafia.

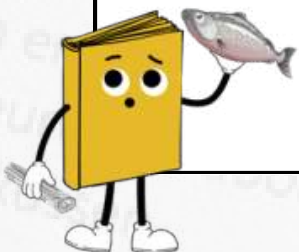
Her source had told her to start here at the fish market, and that if she looked closely, the whole story was laid out for all to see in the plain light of day. They also let it slip that if she found what she was looking for and wanted to “place an order”, to say it was for Mr. Stevenson. She assumed that was a code name, a nod to the author of *Treasure Island*... Long John Silver and all that. But it wasn't a whole lot to go on. Typically, Becca preferred that her sources just spill what they knew, all of what they knew. But rarely was it ever that easy.

Becca shook her hands at her sides, trying to dispel the nervous energy pooling in her gut, and stepped up to the closest display, pretending to inspect the day's catch. Her eyes wandered over the shimmering scales, gaping mouths, and beady eyes. Walleye, halibut, salmon, grouper.

“What could you possibly have to do with a smuggling operation?” Becca asked the cold, dead fish.

“Looking at the silver, aye?” a burly fishmonger asked.

“What?” Becca said, her hand flying to her chest. “Oh! You startled me. What did you say?”



# FISHY BUSINESS

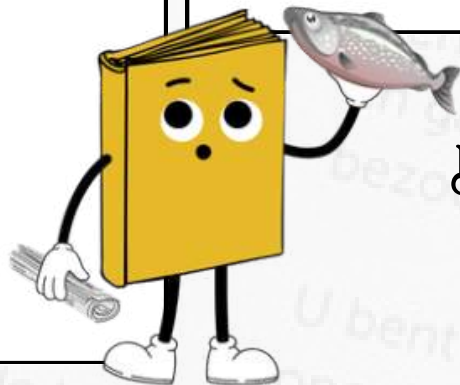
## TEXT ANNOTATIONS

"The silver snapper," he said and pointed. "A nice meaty fish. Want me to wrap one up for ya?"

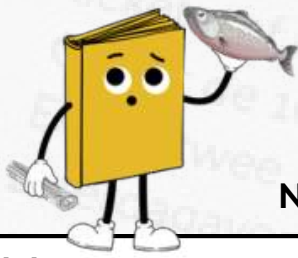
Becca was more of a steak and potatoes kind of girl, but all of a sudden, she wanted that fish more than anything else in the entire market. She had absolutely no intention of eating the fish, but was feeling more confident with every passing second that she had found exactly what her source had sent her to find.

"Yes, please," Becca said, trying to remain calm. "The order isn't for me though. I'm doing a grocery pick up run for a friend. Mr. Stevenson."

The fishmonger picked up the heavy fish, threw her a wink, and then went to wrap up what was surely going to be tomorrow morning's headline. As Becca carried her bag away from the market, much heavier than she thought a single fish should weigh, Becca began to allow herself to daydream about a promotion at the newspaper. All she had to do was be brave enough to sift through the innards of a smelly fish to find proof for the theory she was building in her head. Well, brave enough to do that and to tell the truth.



**DO YOU KNOW HOW THE SILVER  
IS GETTING TRANSPORTED  
AROUND THE CITY?**



# FISHY BUSINESS EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity #1 - Newspaper Article

Write a newspaper article as if you were Rebecca Davenport using what you just learned about the silver smuggling. Feel free to fill in additional made up details. Begin by listing important pieces of the story below. Then write your story on a separate sheet of paper or a computer document.

**Who:**

**What:**

**Where:**

**When:**

**Why:**

**How:**

## Activity #2 Text Features

Using a real life newspaper, go on a scavenger hunt to find the following text features. After listing each required piece of information, add why that feature is important and/or helpful to the reader's understanding.

**Title:**

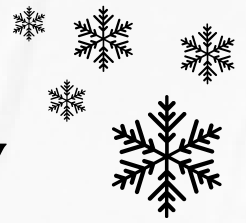
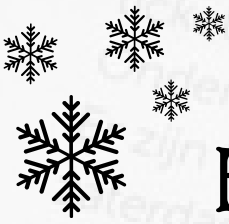
**Subtitle/Subheading:**

**Author/by line:**

**Publication Name and Date:**

**Graphs/Infographic/Diagram/Map/other visuals:**

**Photo Caption:**



# FISHY BUSINESS

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES - ANSWER KEY

### Activity #1 - Newspaper Article

Write a newspaper article as if you were Rebecca Davenport using what you just learned about the silver smuggling. Feel free to fill in additional made up details. Begin by listing important pieces of the story below. Then write your story on a separate sheet of paper or a computer document.

**Who:** fishmongers

**What:** silver smuggling ring

**Where:** fish market in Seattle

**When:** open business hours of the market

**Why:** to pass the silver around undetected

**How:** sneaking silver into fish

### GRADING:

Articles written by students will vary. Use the basic writing rubric included in this resources to assess if students met writing objectives.

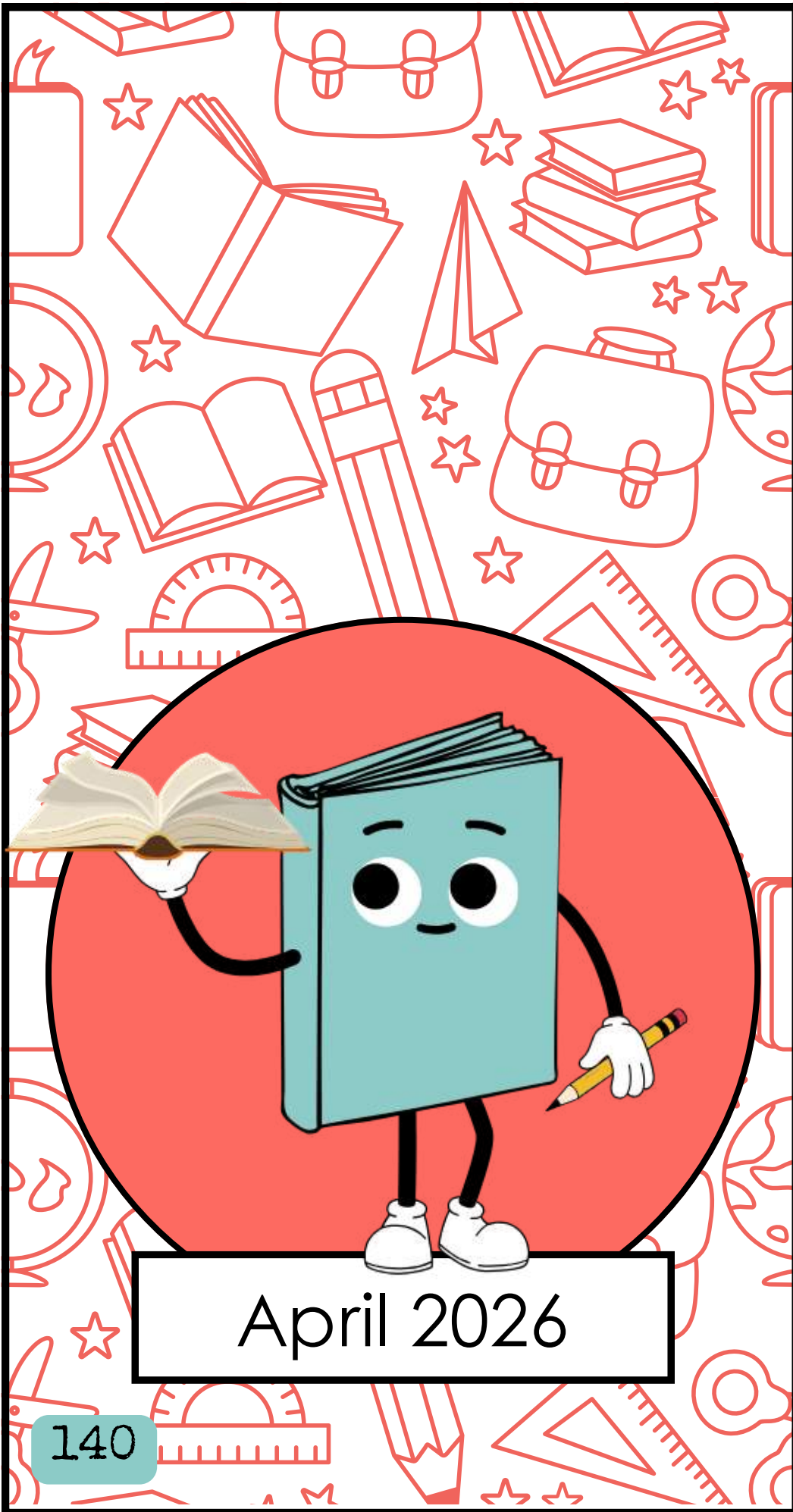
### Activity #2 Text Features

Text features found by students will vary article to article. Use this diagram on the next page to help you know if they have identified the text features correctly.

### Activity #3 PUNS!

Below is a list of puns found in this short story.

- Rebecca Davenport, reporter for the Seattle Times, was not a quitter, no matter how fishy the situation got.
- She assumed that was a code name, a nod to the author of Treasure Island... Long John Silver and all that.
- The fishmonger picked up the heavy fish, threw her a wink, and then went to wrap up what was surely going to be tomorrow morning's headline.

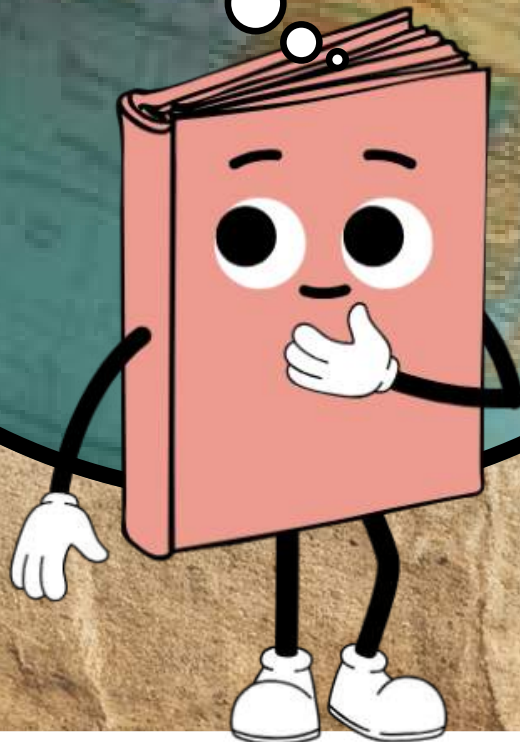
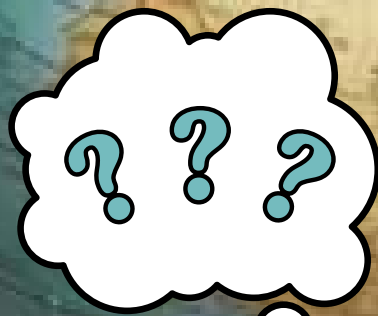


**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**  
**BECAUSE YOU DESERVE THEM!**

**Would You Rather...**

PERSUASIVE WRITING WORKSHEETS

# Around the World Edition



CREATED BY THE WORD NERD

# Table Of CONTENTS

In this resource you will find...

**03**

Instructions + Link

**04**

CCSS ELA Standards

**5–8**

Writing Critique + Rubric Sheets

**09**

Student Tip Sheet

**10–14**

Location Introduction (Fact Sheets)

**15**

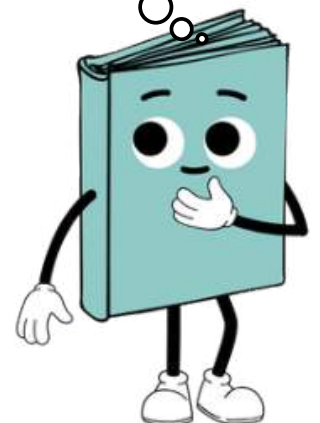
Link + Question List/Brain Break Sheet

**16–26**

Student Writing Prompt Sheets

**23**

Would You Rather Line Up  
(future topics) More Resources



# 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:

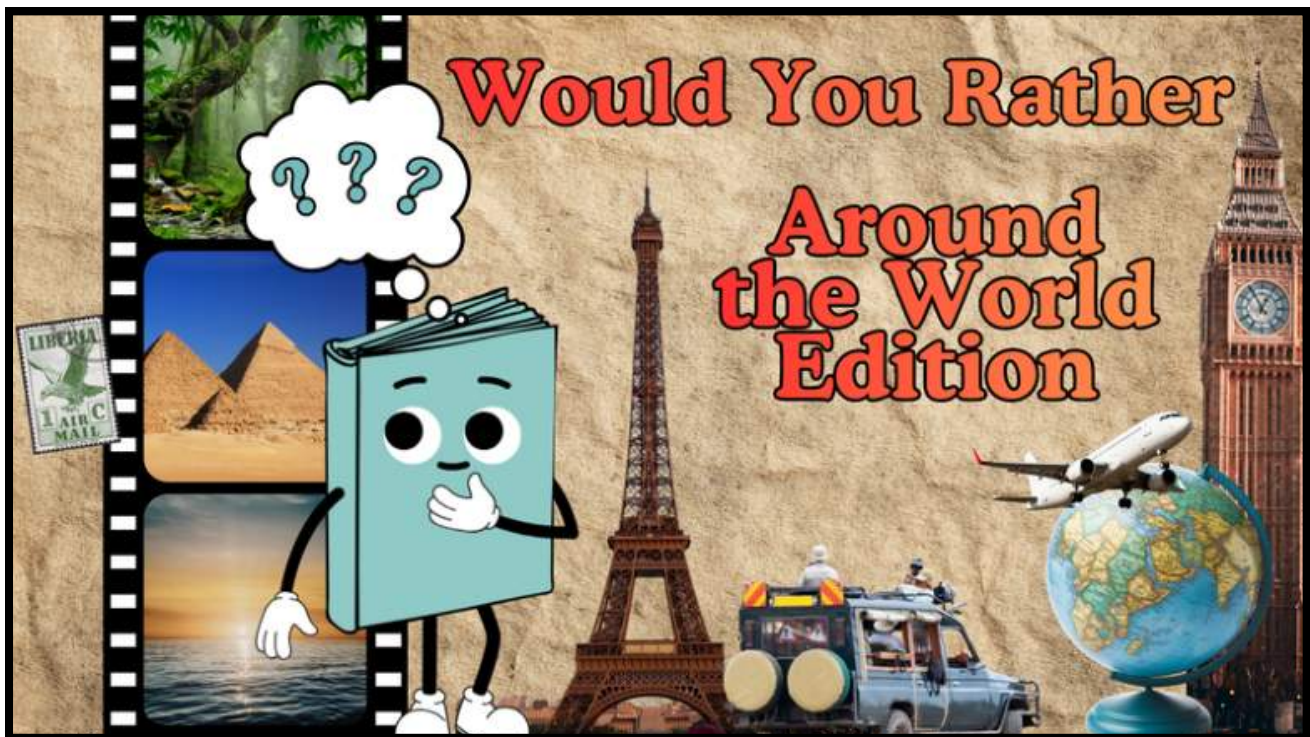
- Choosing a side → Making a clear claim.
- Backing it up → Giving 2-3 strong reasons with evidence or examples.
- Using transitions → Showing relationships between ideas.
- Acknowledging the other side → Strengthening their argument.
- Concluding clearly → Wrapping up their reasoning in a persuasive way.



**READ THE LOCATION  
FACTS SHEETS AND THEN,  
SPARK STUDENT  
ENGAGEMENT -  
START WITH THE VIDEO!**



Video Link



CREATED BY THE WORD NERD

# 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.**

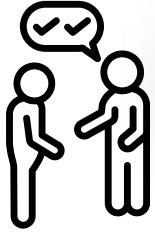
- Skill Focus: Use transition words like for example, in addition, because, however, and therefore to guide readers.

### **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 AROUND THE WORLD



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Read about these amazing places all around the world. Then, think about which places you'd like travel to and see as you play Would You Rather. Finally, share your thoughts in writing. 😊



← PLAY THE  
YOUTUBE GAME  
VERSION HERE!



## ITALY – GONDOLAS IN VENICE

Venice is a famous city in Italy built on many small islands. Instead of streets with cars, Venice has canals filled with water. People travel through the city by boat. One special boat is called a gondola. Gondolas are long, narrow boats that are pushed through the water by a gondolier using a long pole. Riding a gondola is a traditional way to see Venice and its beautiful bridges and buildings.

Learn more [here](#).



## AMAZON RIVER – SOUTH AMERICA

Based on the amount of water it carries, the Amazon River is the largest river in the world. It is the second longest river, stretching over 4,000 miles. It flows through several countries in South America, including Brazil and Peru. The river runs through the Amazon Rainforest, one of the most biodiverse places on Earth. Many animals live there, such as pink river dolphins, monkeys, and colorful birds. People often explore the river by boat.

Learn more [here](#).



## GREAT WALL OF CHINA

The Great Wall of China is one of the most famous structures in the world. It stretches more than 13,000 miles across northern China. The wall was built over many years to help protect China from invading armies. Today, many people visit the wall and hike along its paths and towers. It is made of earth, wood, bricks, stones and lime. The wall is so large that it can be seen from space with special cameras.

Learn more [here](#).



## PYRAMIDS OF GIZA – EGYPT



The Pyramids of Giza are ancient stone structures built more than 4,500 years ago in Egypt. They were built as tombs for powerful Egyptian rulers called pharaohs. The largest pyramid, the Great Pyramid, was once the tallest building in the world. Research shows it took more than 20,000 people to build these impressive structures. The pyramids are one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and still stand today in the desert near Cairo. While climbing the outside of a pyramid is illegal, you can buy tickets to tour the inside!

Learn more [here](#).



## EFFEL TOWER – PARIS, FRANCE



The Eiffel Tower is a tall iron tower in Paris, France. It was built in 1889 for a world's fair. The structure took 2 years, 2 months, and 5 days (1887–1889) to build. The tower, nicknamed “the iron lady” stands about 1,083 feet tall, making it one of the most famous landmarks in the world. Visitors can ride elevators or climb stairs to viewing platforms near the top. From there, people can see the city of Paris spread out below.

Learn more [here](#).



## BIG BEN – LONDON, ENGLAND



Big Ben is the nickname for the large bell inside the famous clock tower in London, England. The tower itself is called Elizabeth Tower and stands next to the Houses of Parliament. The clock has four large faces that can be seen from far away. Big Ben has been ringing every hour since the 1800s and is one of the most well-known symbols of the United Kingdom. The clock tower even kept ticking during World War II bombings (though bells were silenced to avoid drawing attention from enemy aircraft), symbolizing British endurance,

Learn more [here](#).



## CARIBBEAN CRUISE



The Caribbean Sea is a warm, blue body of water located near North and South America. Many tropical islands are found there, such as Jamaica, the Bahamas, and Barbados. People often explore this region by taking a Caribbean cruise, which is a vacation on a large ship that travels between islands. The Caribbean has over 7,000 islands, islets, and cays (sandy island formed on top of a coral reef) In the Caribbean there are 19 active volcanoes, pink sand beaches, and the world's shortest commercial runway!

Learn more [here](#).



## AFRICAN SAFARI



An African safari is a trip where people travel through nature to see wild animals in their natural homes. Safaris often take place in national parks in countries like Kenya, Tanzania, or South Africa. Visitors may see animals such as lions, elephants, giraffes, zebras, and rhinos. Many safaris are done in special vehicles that allow people to safely watch wildlife. Modern safaris fund anti-poaching units and habitat protection, as a way to help the give back to the animals and be sure they continue to survive and exist.

Learn more [here](#).



## ICELAND GLACIERS



Iceland is a country known for its amazing natural landscapes, including glaciers, volcanoes, and waterfalls. A glacier is a huge mass of ice that slowly moves across land. In Iceland there are 269 named glaciers and they cover approximately 11% of the entire country. Some of Iceland's glaciers are thousands of years old. Visitors can hike across the ice with special guides and equipment to safely explore these frozen landscapes. Sadly, the glaciers are melting at a rate of 7% a year due to global warming.

Learn more [here](#).



## GRAND CANYON - UNITED STATES



The Grand Canyon is a massive canyon in Arizona in the United States. It was formed over millions of years as the Colorado River slowly carved through rock. The canyon is about 277 miles long and more than a mile deep in some places. The Grand Canyon is so large that the entire state of Rhode Island could fit inside it! This National Park is home to over 70 mammal species, 250 bird species, and rare creatures like the pink rattlesnake and the endangered California condor. People visit the Grand Canyon to hike, take photos, and see the colorful rock layers.

Learn more [here](#).



## GREAT BARRIER REEF - AUSTRALIA



The Great Barrier Reef is the largest coral reef system in the world. It is located off the coast of Queensland, Australia. The reef stretches for more than 1,400 miles and is home to thousands of kinds of sea life, including fish, turtles, and sharks. It has been growing for over 8,000 years, since the end of the last ice age. Some threats to the reef are climate change, pollution and overfishing. Snorkeling and diving are popular ways to explore the reef in want to get in the water. You can also view the coral from a glass bottom boat!

Learn more [here](#).



## MOUNT RUSHMORE – UNITED STATES



Mount Rushmore is a large monument carved into a mountain in South Dakota. The faces of four U.S. presidents—George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln—are carved into the rock. Each face is about 60 feet tall. , representing 150 years of American history. It was carved between 1927 and 1941 by Gutzon Borglum with the help of 400 workers, and a lot of dynamite. The project cost almost one million dollars and saw no deaths. Today the monument is visited by millions of people each year.

Learn more [here](#).



## COLOSSEUM – ROME, ITALY



The Colosseum is a large ancient stadium in Rome, Italy. It was built nearly 2,000 years ago during the Roman Empire. Long ago, people gathered there to watch events like gladiator fights and animal shows. This outdoor arena could hold 50,000 people! Tickets to all events held at the Colosseum were free! It had a retractable roof and two full levels below ground where they held the gladiators and animals until it was their time to fight. Today, only  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the original building is still standing, the other  $\frac{2}{3}$  lost to vandalism and earthquakes, but the Colosseum is one of the most famous historical sites in the world. **Learn more [here](#).**



## MACHU PICCHU – PERU



Machu Picchu is an ancient city located in a cloud forest, high in the Andes Mountains of Peru. It was built by the Inca people around the 1400s as a royal estate for Emperor Pachacutec. The city was hidden in the mountains for many years until it was rediscovered in 1911. Today, visitors hike up the mountain to see the stone buildings and amazing views. This ancient wonder is amazing for many reasons including its earthquake proof construction and stone placement that mimics planets in the sky.

Learn more [here](#).



## STONEHENGE – ENGLAND



Stonehenge is a mysterious circle of giant stones located in England. The stones were placed there more than 4,000 years ago. No one knows exactly why Stonehenge was built, but some scientists think it may have been used for ceremonies or to track the sun and seasons. Recent researchers think the arrangement of the stones may have been designed to amplify sound within the circle, like a sound chamber. Each stone in the circle weighs around 25 tons (50,000 pounds!) and was put in place before machinery existed!

Learn more [here](#).





## PETRA – JORDAN

The ancient city of Petra is located in the country of Jordan in the Middle East in the red sandstone desert. It was built by a nomadic Arab tribe. Petra is famous because many of its buildings were carved directly into red rock cliffs. The city was an important trading center over 2,000 years ago. Today, visitors walk through a narrow canyon called the Siq for almost a mile in order to reach the famous stone buildings. Only 15 % of the city has been excavated (explored)!

**Learn more [here](#).**



## MOUNT EVEREST – NEPAL/TIBET

Mount Everest, Sagarmatha in Nepali and Chomolungma in Tibetan, is the tallest mountain on Earth. It stands about 29,032 feet above sea level and sits on the border between Nepal and Tibet. The mountain grows about 4mm yearly due to tectonic activity!! Climbing Everest is very difficult because of cold temperatures, strong winds, and thin air. Only experienced climbers attempt to reach the top.

**Learn more [here](#).**



## VICTORIA FALLS – ZAMBIA/ZIMBABWE

Victoria Falls, discovered by David Livingstone in 1855, is one of the largest waterfalls in the world. It is located on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe in Africa. The waterfall is more than one mile wide and drops 350 feet into the Zambezi River below. When the water crashes down, it creates a huge mist that can be seen from far away. Known locally, as Mosi-oa-Tunya ("The Smoke That Thunders"), it is one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World.

**Learn more [here](#).**



## WOULD YOU RATHER AROUND THE WORLD

Now that you know a bit about each of these incredible places, play this WOULD YOU RATHER GAME and pick which places you'd like to visit most!

Finally, pick one WYR question and explain your answer using personal opinion and true facts from these informational introductions!



# 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 ride a gondola through Italy or a boat on the Amazon River?
2. Would you rather climb the Great Wall of China or the Pyramids of Giza?
3. Would you rather stand atop the Eiffel Tower or Big Ben?
4. Would you rather go on a Caribbean Cruise or an African Safari?
5. Would you rather hike on a glacier in Iceland or through the Grand Canyon?
6. Would you rather travel by train or airplane?
7. Would you rather see the Great Barrier Reef or Mt. Rushmore?
8. Would you rather walk through the Colosseum or Machu Picchu?
9. Would you rather photograph Stone Henge or the Ancient City of Petra?
10. Would you rather stand atop Mt. Everest or Victoria Falls?

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

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---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

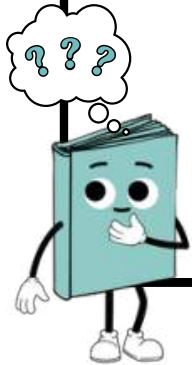
# Around the World EDITION



# Would You Rather...

\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ ??

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



Large empty rectangular box for writing a response to the 'Would You Rather...' prompt.

### ▼ 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.)			
<b>Total Points = ___/10</b>			

Comments:







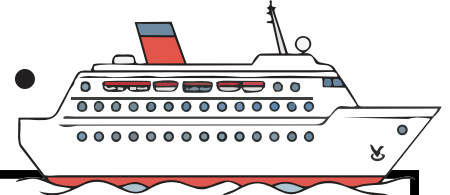
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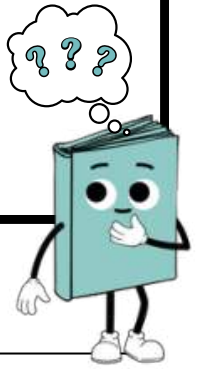
# Around the World EDITION

# Would You Rather...

go on a Caribbean Cruise or an African Safari?



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



Large writing area with horizontal lines for student 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.)			
<b>Total Points = ___/10</b>			

Comments:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

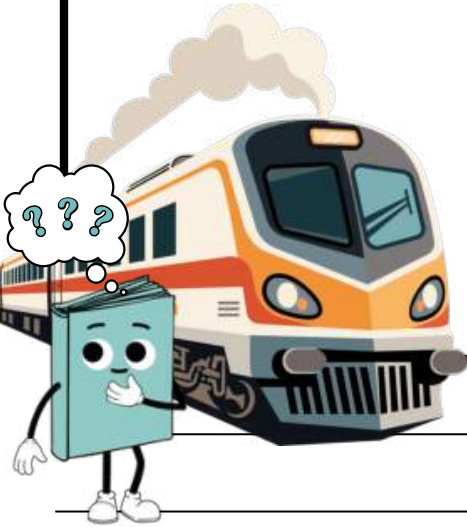
# Around the World EDITION



# Would You Rather...

travel by train or airplane?

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



Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple horizontal lines for writing a 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.)			
<b>Total Points = ___/10</b>			

Comments:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

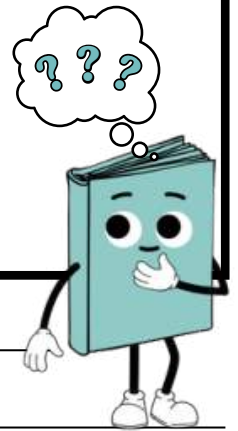
# Would You Rather...

see the Great Barrier Reef or Mt. Rushmore?



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

Large empty rectangular box for writing a response.



Series of horizontal lines for writing a response.

## Around the World EDITION

### ▼ 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.)			
<b>Total Points = ___/10</b>			

Comments:







# WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

## NOVELS IN VERSE



# NOVELS IN VERSE

The books on this list are written in the format of narrative poems.



**Alone** by Megan E. Freeman

**Becoming Muhammad Ali** by James Patterson and Kwame Alexander

**Brown Girl Dreaming** by Jaqueline Woodson

**The Canyon's Edge** by Dusti Bowling

**Closer to Nowhere** by Ellen Hopkins

**The Crossover** by Kwame Alexander

**Eb and Flow** by Kelly Baptist

**Enemies in the Orchard** by Dana VanderLugt

**Finding Baba Yaga** by Jane Yolen

**Good Different** by Meg Eden Kuyatt

**Hidden** by Helen Frost

**House Arrest** by K.A. Holt

**Inside Out and Back Again** by Thanhha Lai

**Iveliz Explains it All** by Andrea Beatriz Arango

**Kareem Between** by Shifa Safadi

**Lifeboat 12** by Susan Hood

**Ode to a Nobody** by Caroline Dubois

**Other Words for Home** by Jasmine Warga

**Out of the Dust** by Helen Frost

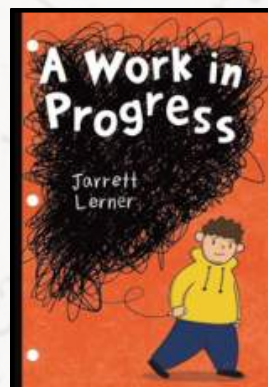
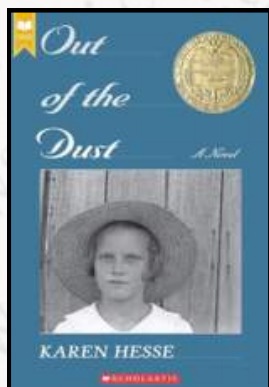
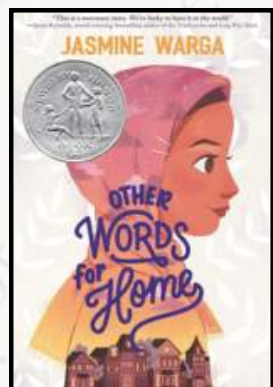
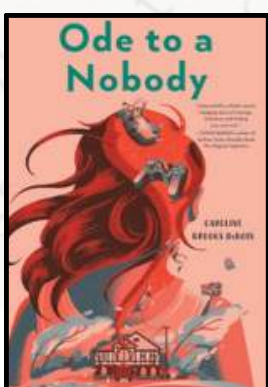
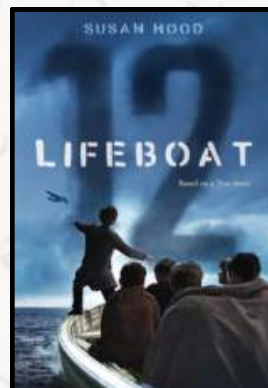
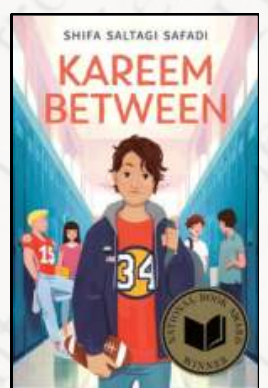
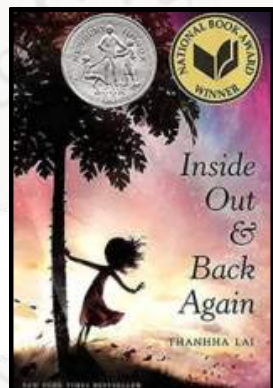
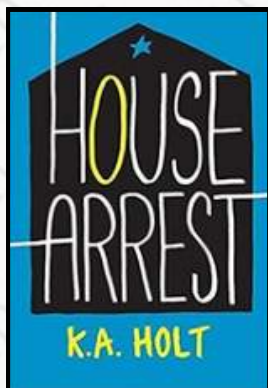
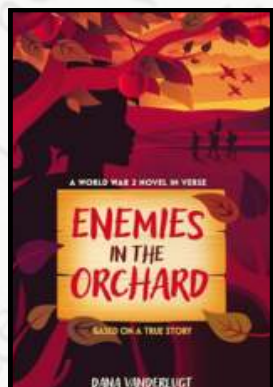
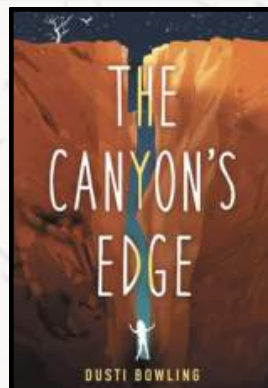
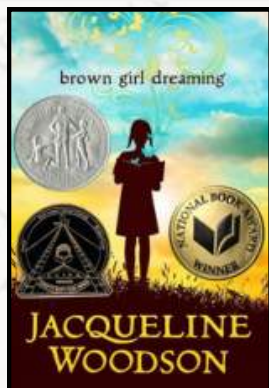
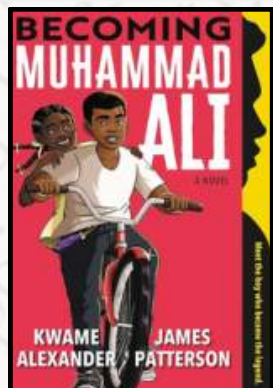
**Red, White, and Whole** by Rajani La Rocca

**A Work in Progress** by Jarrett Lerner



WNC BOOK LISTS \* TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

# NOVELS IN VERSE



WNC BOOK LISTS \* TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

# WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

# ANOTHER COUNTRY



# ANOTHER COUNTRY

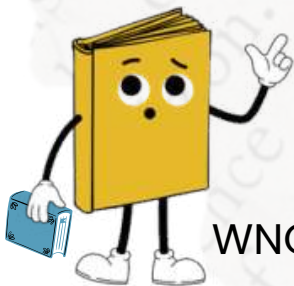
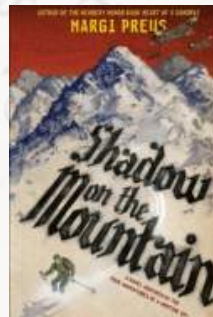
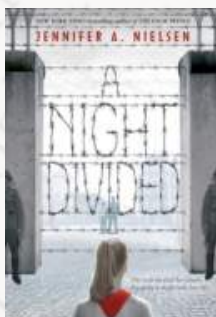
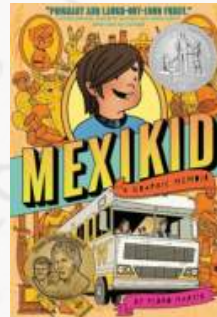
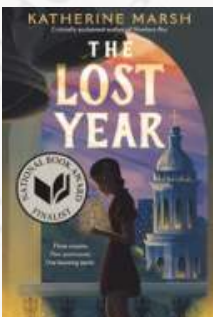
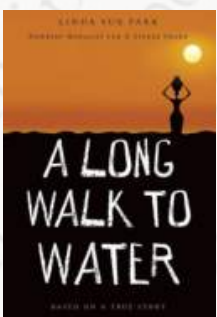
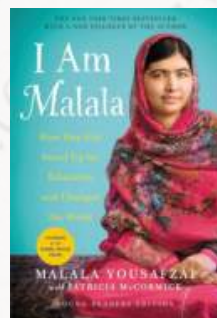
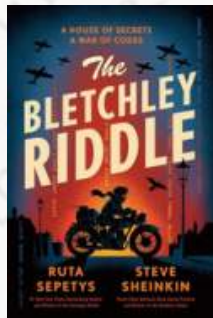
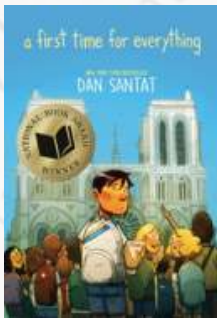


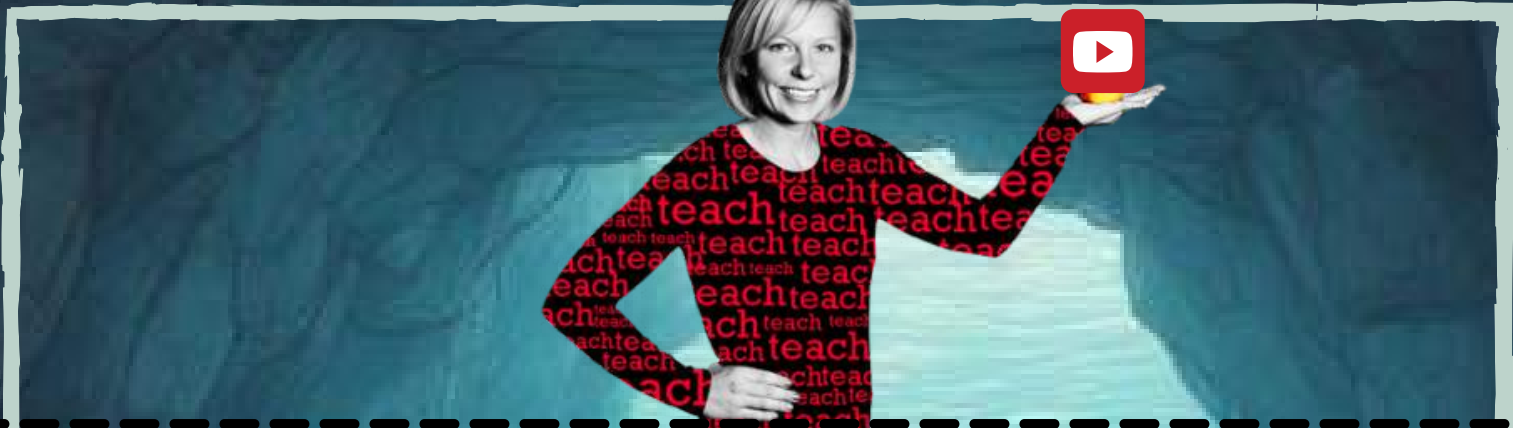
Portions of, or all off, these books take place in another country. Sail far away with these stories while staying firmly planted at home.

- [A First Time for Everything](#) by Dan Santat (Several European Countries)
- [The Bletchley Riddle](#) by Ruta Sepetys & Steve Sheinkin (Several European Countries)
- [Boys Without Names](#) by Kashmiri Sheth (India)
- [City Spies](#) by James Ponti (Scotland)
- [Endangered](#) by Eliot Schrefer (Congo)
- [The Enemy](#) by Charlie Higson (England)
- [The Explorer](#) by Katherine Rundell (Germany)
- [House Swap](#) by Yvette Clark (England)
- [I am Malala](#) by Malala Yousafzai (Afghanistan)
- [The Invention](#) of Hugo Cabret (France)
- [A Lady's Guide to Fortune Hunting](#) by Sophie Irwin (England)
- [Letters from Rifka](#) by Karen Hesse (Russia)
- [A Long Walk to Water](#) by Linda Sue Park (Sudan)
- [The Lost Year](#) by Katharine Marsh (Ukraine)
- [Mexikid](#) by Pedro Martin (Mexico)
- [Muhammad Najem: War Reporter](#) by Muhammad Najem, Nora Neus, & Julie Robine (Syria)
- [The Night Diary](#) by Veera Hirinandani (India)
- [A Night Divided](#) by Jennifer Neilsen (Germany)
- [Nowhere Boy](#) by Katharine Marsh (Belgium)
- [A Place to Hang the Moon](#) by Kate Albus (England)
- [Shadow on the Mountain](#) by Margi Preus (Norway)
- [The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants](#) by Ann Brashares (Greece)
- [Thirst](#) by Varsha Bajaj (India)
- [The War That Saved My Life](#) by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley (England)
- [War Games](#) by Alan Gratz (Germany)



# ANOTHER COUNTRY





# 5 for 5

A Deep Dive with the Word Nerd



# 5 for 5

A Deep Dive with the Word Nerd

## About 5 for 5:

5 for 5 is a short-form interview series featuring authors and creators answering five thoughtful questions designed to spark curiosity, reflection, and conversation. Lead and designed by Amanda Zieba, the Word Nerd, these interview videos also include interactive elements and companion worksheets to help viewers lean in, listen and learn.

I am excited about this new video series and thrilled to be able to connect students with people who have pursued creative careers. Thanks for being here and along for the journey!

~ Amanda



# 5 for 5

A Deep Dive with the Word Nerd

**5 for 5**  
with **KAZU** →  
**KIBUISHI**

FROM THE WORD NERD

The graphic features a woman on the left holding a book and an orange, and a man on the right. The background is a textured brown paper with decorative elements like stars, a lightbulb, and the word 'teach' repeated in a pattern.

A person is shown from behind, sitting in a meditative pose on a large, open book that appears to be floating in a dark, ethereal space. The woman from the previous graphic is overlaid in the bottom left corner, holding a book and an orange. A YouTube icon is visible in the bottom center.

# 5 FOR 5

WITH KAZU KIBUISHI AND THE WORD NERD

# BINGO

DIRECTIONS: TAKE A MINUTE TO PREVIEW THE BINGO BOARD AND THE ITEMS LISTED IN EACH SQUARE. THEN, AS YOU WATCH THE VIDEO, LISTEN CLOSELY! WHEN YOU HEAR AN ITEM OR ARE ABLE TO ANSWER A QUESTION ON THE BOARD, MARK IT OFF! WHEN YOU'VE COMPLETED 5 SQUARES IN A ROW, YELL, BINGO! 😊

<p>A FACT THAT SURPRISED ME WAS:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>TRUE OR FALSE: KAZU WRITES HIS STORIES BEFORE THINKING ABOUT THE ARTWORK.</p>	<p>THE GRAPHIC NOVEL AMULET HAS BEEN TRANSLATED INTO 23 LANGUAGES!</p>	<p>KAZU AND HIS BOOKS ARE BRAND NEW TO ME!</p>	<p>AN ANTHOLOGY IS:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>I'M MORE INTERESTED IN:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> READING</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> WRITING</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DRAWING</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ALL THREE</p>	<p>WHERE IS ONE PLACE KAZU FINDS STORY IDEAS?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>ONE OF KAZU'S BOOKS I WANT TO READ IS:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>TRUE OR FALSE: KAZU ONLY DOES THE ART FOR THE GRAPHIC NOVELS, NOT THE WORDS.</p>	<p>A CONNECTION IAN MAKE TO KAZU IS:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>TRUE OR FALSE: KAZU WENT TO COLLEGE SPECIFICALLY TO STUDY ART.</p>	<p>A MOMENT FROM THE VIDEO THAT INSPIRED ME WAS:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><b>FREE SPACE</b></p>	<p>KAZU HAS WRITTEN BOOKS THAT ARE A PART OF A SERIES.</p>	<p>ONE LESSON I LEARNED FROM KAZU IS:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>ONE WORD I'D USE TO DESCRIBE KAZU IS:</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>KAZU HAS LIVED IN MANY PLACES INCLUDING 2 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES!</p>	<p>TRUE OR FALSE: KAZU ENJOYS WORKING WITH FRIEND ON HIS BOOKS.</p>	<p>SOMETHING I'M TAKING AWAY FROM THIS VIDEO IS:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>KAZU SAYS ONE HARD PART ABOUT BEING A GRAPHIC NOVELIST IS</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>KAZU DID THE ART FOR THE ANNIVERSARY EDITION OF THE HARRY POTTER BOOK COVERS!</p>	<p>AMULET IS BEING MADE INTO A LIVE ACTION MOVIE FOR NETFLIX!</p>	<p>A QUESTION I STILL HAVE FOR KAZU IS:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>KAZU CREATES BOTH PRINT WORK AND ONLINE ART!</p>	<p>I AM A FAN OF KAZU'S ART AND BOOKS! I'VE READ __ OF THEM BEFORE!</p>



# 5 FOR 5

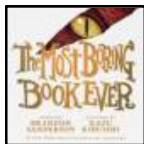
WITH KAZU KIBUISHI AND THE WORD NERD

# HIGH 5

DIRECTIONS: WATCH THE VIDEO AND THEN ANSWER THESE 5 QUESTIONS

1

RANK KAZU'S FIVE BOOKS. 1 = I WANT TO READ THIS FIRST / 5 = NO THANKS, I'LL PASS



WHAT INFLUENCED YOUR RANKING?

---

---

2

IF YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY, WHICH OF KAZU'S PROJECTS WOULD YOU BE MOST EXCITED TO WORK ON WITH HIM?

---

---

3

WHAT IS ONE MORE QUESTION YOU WOULD ASK KAZU?

---

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5 FOR 5 WITH THE WORD NERD & KAZU KIBUISHI VIDEO



# 5 FOR 5

WITH KAZU KIBUISHI AND THE WORD NERD

# HIGH 5

## 4

FACT CHECK!  
CIRCLE THE FACT THAT SURPRISED YOU THE MOST!

KAZU WAS BORN IN JAPAN, GREW UP IN CALIFORNIA, AND NOW LIVES IN TEXAS

KAZU IS WORKING WITH NETFLIX TO TURN AMULET INTO A LIVE ACTION MOVIE!

AMULET HAS MORE THAN 10 MILLION COPIES IN PRINT AND HAS BEEN TRANSLATED INTO 23 LANGUAGES WORLDWIDE.

KAZU IS BOTH AN ARTIST AND A WRITER. HE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY GO TO COLLEGE FOR EITHER OF THESE SKILLS HOWEVER. HE WENT TO FILM SCHOOL INSTEAD.

KAZU HAS WON MANY AWARDS FOR HIS WORK, INCLUDING AN EISNER AWARD NOMINATION AS WELL AS SEVERAL YALSA AWARDS. (YOUNG ADULT LIBRARY SERVICES ASSOCIATION)

## 5

PICK ONE QUOTE AND TRANSLATE IT INTO YOUR OWN WORDS.



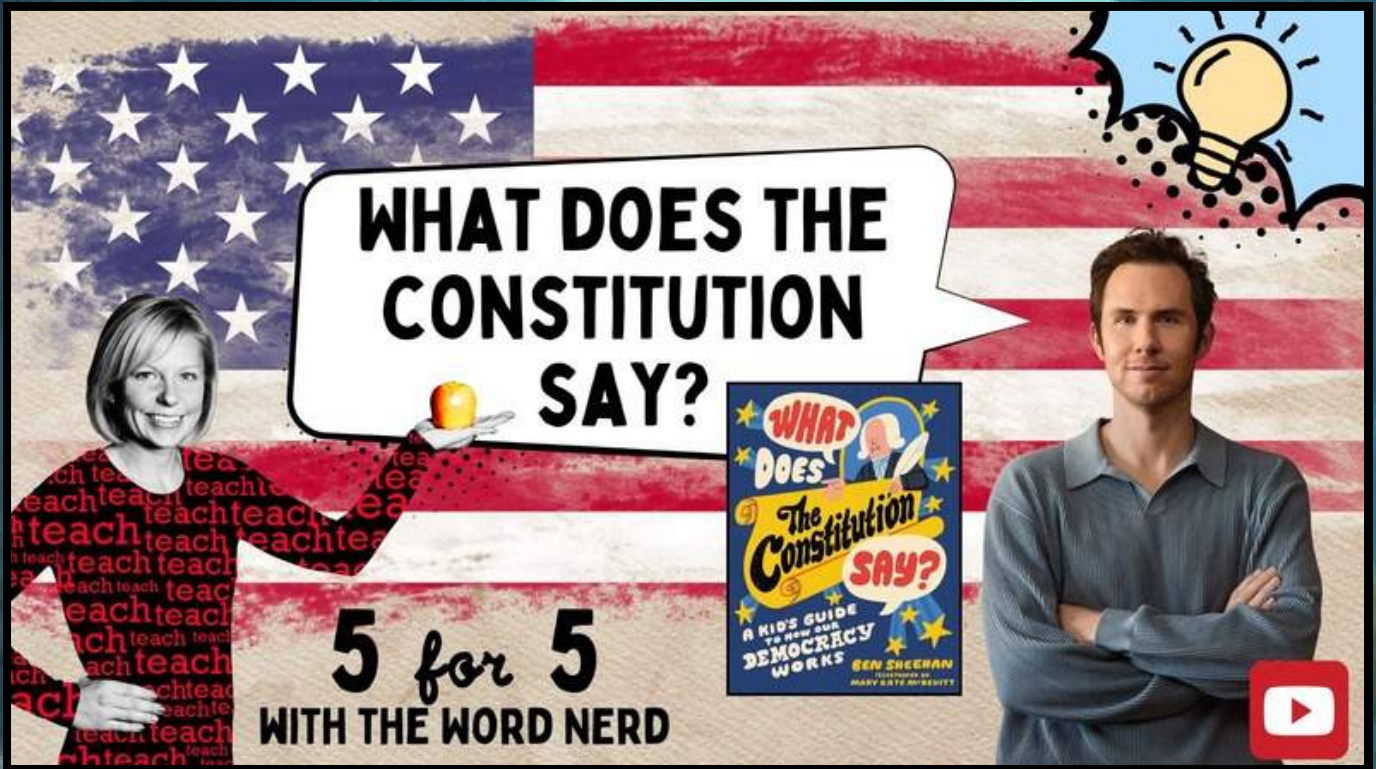

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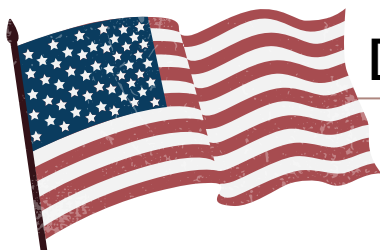
# 5 for 5

A Deep Dive with the Word Nerd



5 for 5  
WITH THE WORD NERD



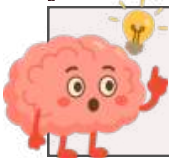


# DEMOCRACY IS A VERB

After watching the 5 for 5 with Ben Sheehan video, think about how the Constitution affects real people—including you. Complete each section below with thoughtful, detailed responses. Use at least one idea or example from the video in your answers.

## DEMOCRACY IS A VERB. IT REQUIRES ACTION. WHAT ROLE WILL YOU PLAY?

ONE THING I LEARNED...




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ONE QUESTION I STILL HAVE...



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---

---

ONE WAY I CAN PARTICIPATE NOW...




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---

ONE WORD OR IDEA I WANT TO UNDERSTAND BETTER...




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ONE TRUSTED ADULT OR PEER I COULD DISCUSS DEMOCRACY WITH ...  
AND WHY I CHOSE THEM....



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# MYTH OR CONSTITUTION?

As you watch the Myth or Constitution? lightning round in the 5 for 5 with Ben Sheehan video, listen carefully to each statement Amanda reads and to how Ben responds.

## For each statement:

- Record Ben's answer (Myth, True, or It's Complicated).
- Write down important details Ben shares to explain his reasoning.
- After the video, choose at least one statement and conduct a short research check using a reliable source (such as the Constitution itself or a trusted educational website).
- Add one additional fact that supports or clarifies why the statement is a myth or how it connects to the Constitution.

**YOUR GOAL IS NOT JUST TO LABEL THE STATEMENT CORRECTLY, BUT TO UNDERSTAND WHY IT IS TRUE, FALSE, OR MORE COMPLEX THAN IT FIRST APPEARS.**

1

MYTH  
OR  
CONSTITUTION

THE CONSTITUTION HAS NEVER BEEN CHANGED.

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2

MYTH  
OR  
CONSTITUTION

DISAGREEING WITH LEADERS OR LAWS IS UN-AMERICAN.

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---

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3

MYTH  
OR  
CONSTITUTION

THE PRESIDENT CAN DO WHATEVER THEY WANT IN AN EMERGENCY.

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---

---

4

MYTH  
OR  
CONSTITUTION

KIDS HAVE NO ROLE IN DEMOCRACY UNTIL THEY'RE 18.

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5

MYTH  
OR  
CONSTITUTION

UNDERSTANDING THE CONSTITUTION MAKES YOU HARDER TO FOOL.

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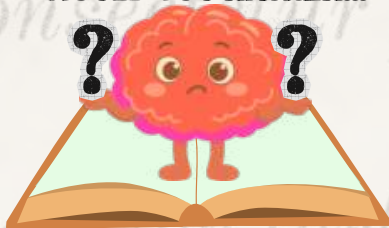


# 5 for 5

A Deep Dive with the Word Nerd



# FAIRY TALE WOULD YOU RATHER...



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Directions:

After watching the 5 for 5 with Mac Barnett and Carson Ellis think about how you would answer each of these fairy tale themed questions. Answer each would you rather scenario below with thoughtful, detailed responses including a reason for your choice.

WOULD YOU RATHER BE THE TRICKSTER OR UNDER ESTIMATED HERO?



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WOULD YOU RATHER LIVE IN A MEDIEVAL CASTLE OR A MODERN  
ART/WRITING STUDIO?



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---

WOULD YOU RATHER SOLVE A PROBLEM WITH MAGIC OR CLEVERNESS?



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WOULD YOU RATHER LIVE IN A FAIRY TALE THAT'S FUNNY... OR ONE  
THAT'S A LITTLE BIT SCARY?



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WOULD YOU RATHER ILLUSTRATE/DESCRIBE A DRAGON... OR A  
MYSTICAL FOREST?



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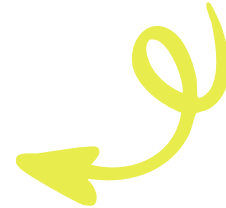


# 5 THINGS

What are 5 new things you learned about screen writing, being a novelist, or making movies?



AS YOU WATCH THE VIDEO, MAKE YOUR LIST!



1

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2

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3

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4

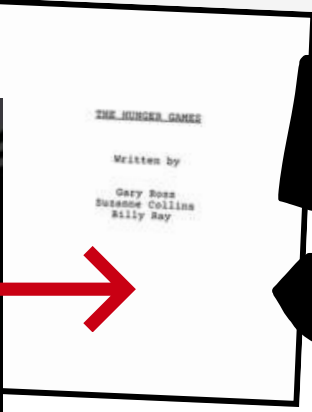
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5

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5 FOR 5 WITH THE WORD NERD AND BILLY RAY





# 5

# PARTS OF A SCREEN PLAY

LABEL THE PARTS: CHARACTER, ACTION, DIALOGUE, SLUG LINE AND SHOT

2.

1  
2

● THEN - POP! - BLACKNESS, like a video feed shorting. We are: \*

EXT. DISTRICT 12 - TOWN SQUARE - DAY

A bleak Town Square in what used to be Coal Country, known now as "The Seam" - a colorless world of sagging buildings and cinder streets; even the trees seem gray here.

Despair, poverty, hunger... And TV. A huge screen in the heart of this Town Square, where 2,000 townspeople just watched that horrific death, live and in color.

Their eyes are blank, lifeless. Years of struggle and death etched into every face - as we hear the VOICE of famed broadcaster CLAUDIUS TEMPLESMITH:

3

TEMPLESMITH (THRU TV)

Oh, that's too bad. Sage Blanken goes down, knocked out by that Prospero boy from District Three - who certainly is handy with a mace! Once again, both Tributes from District 12 are out. But at least they got one into Day Two this year!

4

● 2,000 townsfolk, watching the bloodbath on that huge screen:

A GIRL darts across another overgrown street in that abandoned resort town. The long tongue of a WHIP lashes out, trying to trip her. She bounds over it...

...as we start drifting through this Town Square...

TEMPLESMITH (THRU TV, O.S.)

Don't forget, friends, to VOTE for your favorite Tribute! The cost is six Florins - or eight Florins once The Games are down to the Final Four.

We come upon a cluster of TOWNSFOLK, surrounding a stunned WOMAN. This is CORRINA - her face white with grief.

...because it was her son that just died on that big screen. A WAIL rises out of her - pure agony. A keening shriek... \*

5

...as KATNISS EVERDEEN walks past without turning. She's 15, lean and hungry, with steel-gray eyes and a long dark braid - a fighter, robbed of her little-girl years long ago. \*

On her right is that huge screen, broadcasting more of the spectacle. On her left, NEIGHBORS lead a shell-shocked Corrina away. Katniss continues through the Square. \*

WATCH THE VIDEO FOR A LITTLE HELP!



5 FOR 5 WITH THE WORD NERD AND BILLY RAY



# 5 for 5

A Deep Dive with the Word Nerd

Stay tuned for more episodes coming soon!

- **Teacher-Author: Megan Forbes** (Too Cool for Middle School) and her book - Female Heroes of Greek Mythology: 51 Legends Who Ruled the Ancient World
- Who knows who will be added next!?!?!?

