



Word Nerd
Collaborative

OCTOBER POWER PLAYBOOK

2025

WELCOME TO OCTOBER...

Where the leaves are falling, the candles are lit, and the middle schoolers are maybe just a little bit spooky. 🦇



You know what I mean. They're casting spells like "let's just use lowercase for everything" and summoning the latest TikTok trend mid-lesson like it's a group ritual. But underneath the goofiness (and spiking hormones), there's a whole lot of good stuff brewing.

Because October is when things start to click. Your routines are settling in. You're starting to see which students need a little more nudging and which ones are already growing faster than you expected. The classroom is beginning to feel like a community.

Sure, teaching still has its mystery moments. Sometimes it feels like navigating a corn maze in the fog. But here's the thing:

You're not lost.
You've got a map.
You've got your instincts.

And you've got this Word Nerd Collaborative Power Playbook (formerly called the Pre-Planned Calendar) to use as your monthly guide to tried-and-true strategies, ready-to-go lessons, and brain breaks when you just need a breather.

This month, let's lean into the fun, the weird, and the wonderful that middle schoolers bring to our lives. Let's celebrate every lightbulb moment, every book recommendation that hits, every student who shows up a little more fully than the day before. Because October isn't just spooky season—it's sweet spot season.

The kids are opening up. The classroom is taking shape. And you—you're doing amazing. So light the metaphorical lantern, grab your favorite pen, and let's keep the magic going.

— AMANDA



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OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT

November Monthly Planning Session Zoom Link (Oct. 19)

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

October Lunch Bunch Zoom Link (Oct. 24th)

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

Word Nerd Collaborative Private Facebook Group

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



October 2025

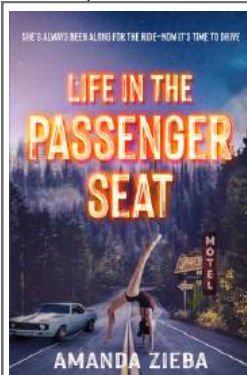
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wednes.	Thurs.	Friday	Satur.
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 November Planning Zoom 2 pm CST	20	21	22	23	24 Lunch Bunch	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Notes:



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAYS

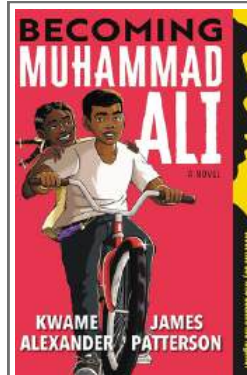
Friday, October 3rd



Life in the
Passenger Seat
by Amanda
Zieba

Realistic
Fiction/Prose

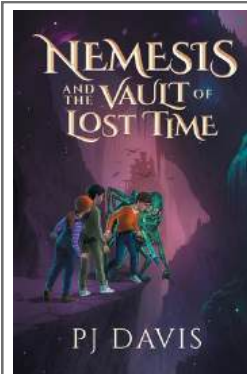
Friday, October 10th



Becoming
Muhammad Ali
by Kwame
Alexander and
James Patterson

Historical
Fiction/Prose/ Novel
in Verse

Friday, October 17th



Nemesis and the
Vault of Lost
Time
by PJ Davis

Fantasy/Prose

Friday, October 24th



Deadlands:
Hunted
by Skye Melki-
Wegner

Fantasy/Prose

Friday, October 31st



The Enemy
by Charlie
Higson

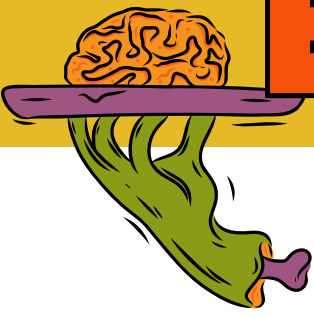
Realistic Fiction/
Prose

Lunch Bunch
Attendees

Amanda Zieba

And

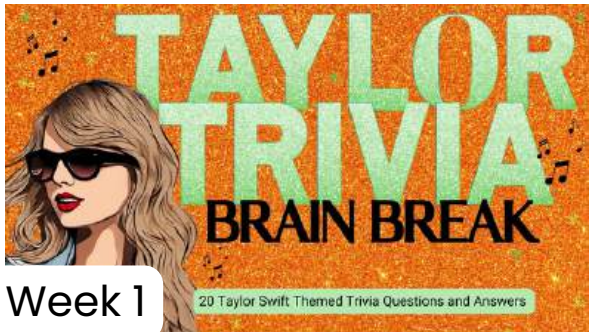
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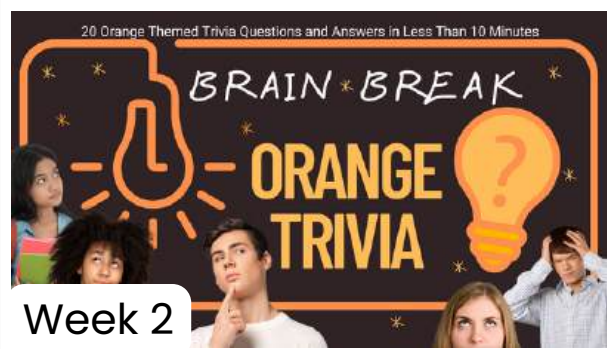
BRAIN BREAKS

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

Taylor Trivia



Orange Trivia



Would You Rather...?



Halloween Idiom Brain Break



Halloween Trivia



Did you know?

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

-- [Reading Rockets Website](#)



Week 1

Monday
September

Tuesday
September

Wednesday
Before and After

Thursday
Scared?

Friday
Free Write Friday

Week 2

Monday
Invent a Monster!

Tuesday
Tidal Wave

Wednesday
Fashionista

Thursday
The Yellow Door

Friday
Free Write Friday

Week 3

Monday
A Magical Night

Tuesday
Famous Parents

Wednesday
Advice for a Friend

Thursday
A Whale of a Tale

Friday
Free Write Friday

Week 4

Monday
Cold Killer

Tuesday
3 Wishes

Wednesday
Trick or Treat

Thursday
OWL: Caption This!

Friday
Free Write Friday

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

Week 5

Monday
The Discovery

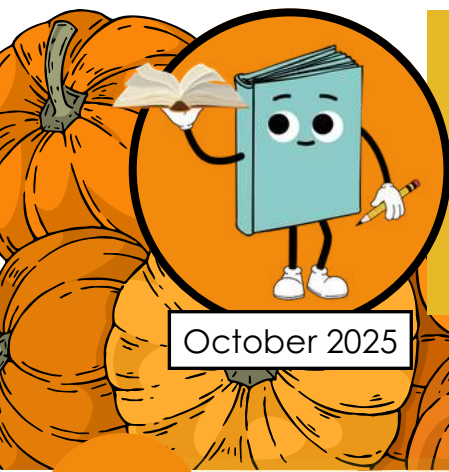
Tuesday
Name the Dragon

Wednesday
Campfire Stories

Thursday
The Pumpkin Carving Contest

Friday
Free Write Friday





LESSONS

October 2025

1 LIBRARY SCAVENGER HUNT

What if we could find a way to lure our students into the wonderful world of the library... get them to paw all over the books and dig into the treasure the shelves have to offer? What if we could get them to purposely search for new-to-them books, authors, formats, and genres? What if we could gamify our library time and make it a place of discovery and fun, rather than silence and boredom? YES! The answer is yes. We can do all of that. And we can do it with this activity.

STANDARDS: CCSS: RI.6.7, SL.6.1, W.6.4, W.6.8, RL.6.10, L.6.6

2 THE WINDUP & THE STEAL (STORY STORY + LESSON)

I invite you and your students to join me for a mystery at the ballpark! This story includes a famous major league pitcher, a world renown thief, a fancy party for celebrities and a battle of wits... and a whole bunch of opportunities to brush up on some of the most foundational literacy skills. With this short story and its accompanying resources, you'll be able to: practice annotation skills, extend vocabulary, do some creative writing, analyze a story on a deeper level with a 9 min podcast, compare prose and lyrical versions of the story, and more!

STANDARDS: RL.6.1, RL.6.4, RL.6.5, RL.6.7, RL.6.9, W.6.3, W.6.4, W.6.5, L.6.4, L.6.5, L.6.6



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

October 2025

1 WHAT SHOULD I READ NEXT? (INTERACTIVE QUIZZES)

Transform book recommendations into an effortless experience with these interactive book recommendation quizzes designed specifically for busy teachers! Say goodbye to the chaos of students wandering aimlessly in the library. Instead, guide your students in discovering “What should I read next?” by tapping into their personal interests and preferences. Even if you haven’t read every book on the shelf, these quizzes will do the heavy lifting, identifying and recommending engaging titles that are sure to captivate your students.

2 TIMER VIDEOS

I don’t know about you, but sometimes, I get distracted. Even in the middle of a lesson! A student will ask an individual question or an email will come through that I think I can respond to “real quick” and then, shoot! 10 minutes have slipped by when I only wanted students to try it on their own for 3 minutes. I can’t be the only one, right?!?! These timer videos will help keep both you and your students on track!

3 SYNONYM PRACTICE PAGES

Use these ten passages to help students practice replacing underlined words with synonyms. This resource includes passages, word banks, answer recording blanks and an answer key. A great way to practice understanding the concept of synonyms and an opportunity to teach the use of context clues as well as a thesaurus!

4 RECOMMENDED READING LISTS

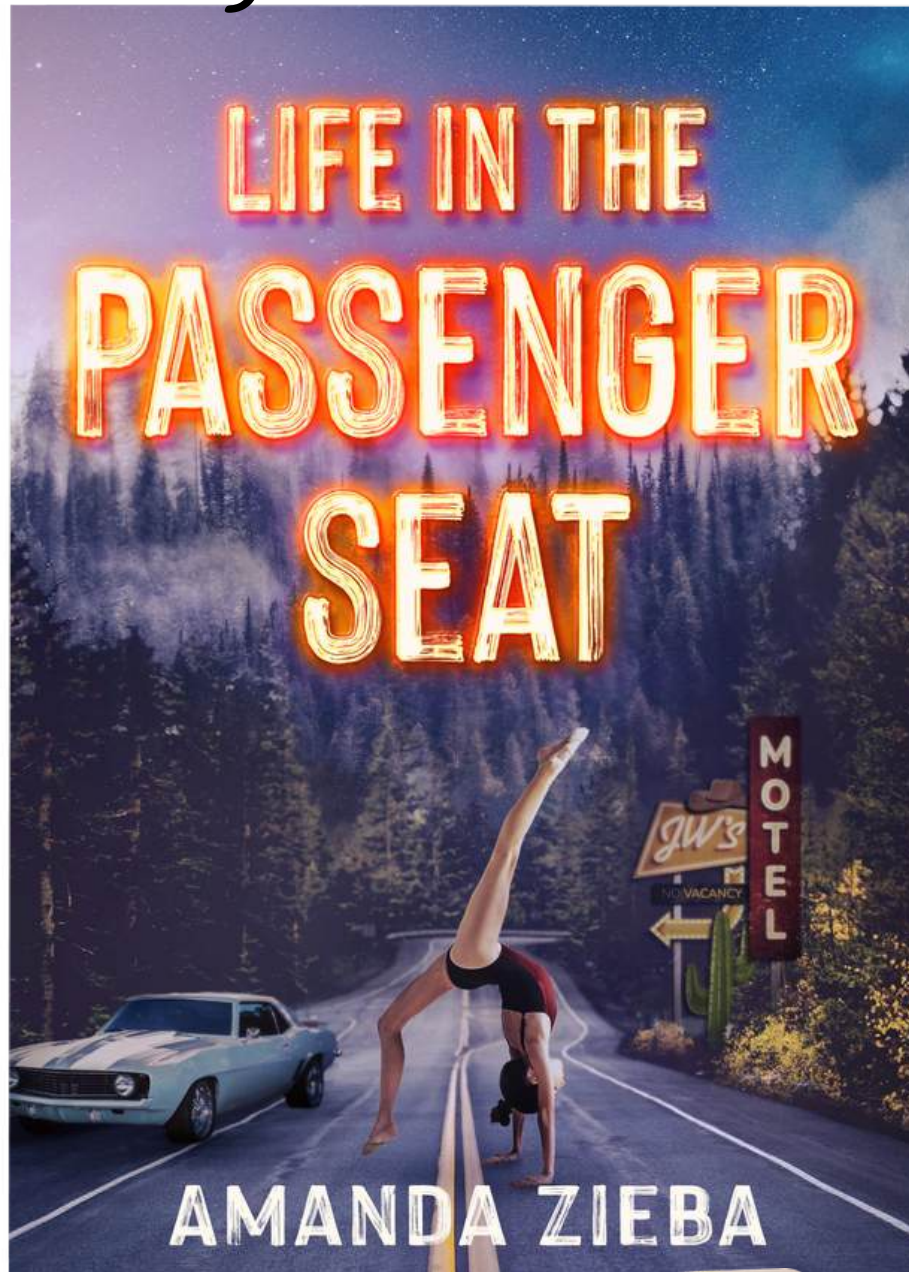
This month I’m highlighting books that feature the topics of: Foster Care and Sports. These lists will help the readers who enjoyed this month’s FCF titles find even more to enjoy! I hope that these reading recommendations are a hit in your classroom!



TSIRF **CHAPTER FRIDAY SELECTIONS**

LIFE IN THE PASSENGER SEAT

by Amanda Zieba



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name _____

Date _____



Life in the Passenger Seat by Amanda Zieba



Read Aloud Video and
Author Interview

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?

For readers who love emotional coming-of-age stories, underdog sports drama, and fierce teen girls fighting for their future.

Shelby has spent her life moving from place to place in her mom's classic Mustang, always one eviction away from starting over. But when they run out of gas in Michigan, Shelby finally gets a taste of something she's never had: stability. She joins a gymnastics team, starts making friends, and falls in love with a routine of regularity. Then her mom disappears—again—and Shelby is placed in foster care with her coach and his wife. These days, her biggest trouble is fighting for her spot in the line-up. But when her mom suddenly reappears, Shelby must confront the fact that she's just a passenger in her own life, and that perhaps it's time to take the wheel.

Perfect for fans of realistic YA fiction, foster care stories, sports novels for teens, and books for teen girls 14-18. Includes expert back matter from NFL player Alec Ingold and a collegiate sports psychologist.

Who Wrote It?

Amanda has likely always been a word nerd. Ever since she was born in Wisconsin, she's loved reading and writing. But just like anyone else, there's more than one side of her. Amanda was also a gymnast, a camp counselor, coach, teacher, and will forever be a sweet tooth. Amanda is also a mom, wife, daughter, sister, YouTuber, caffeine lover, and avid sports spectator. She loves her laptop, but prefers to brainstorm and draft with paper and pen. Amanda does not love bacon, nor animals (but hopes you will still like her anyway.) When she isn't creating content or writing, she might be getting a gel manicure,



watching HGTV or hanging out with her awesome family. To learn more, check out Amanda's other books, or just say hi, visit her word-nerdy website: www.amandazieba.com. She is so happy you have found her First Chapter Fridays!

AR Reading Level: Unavailable

Lexile Level: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

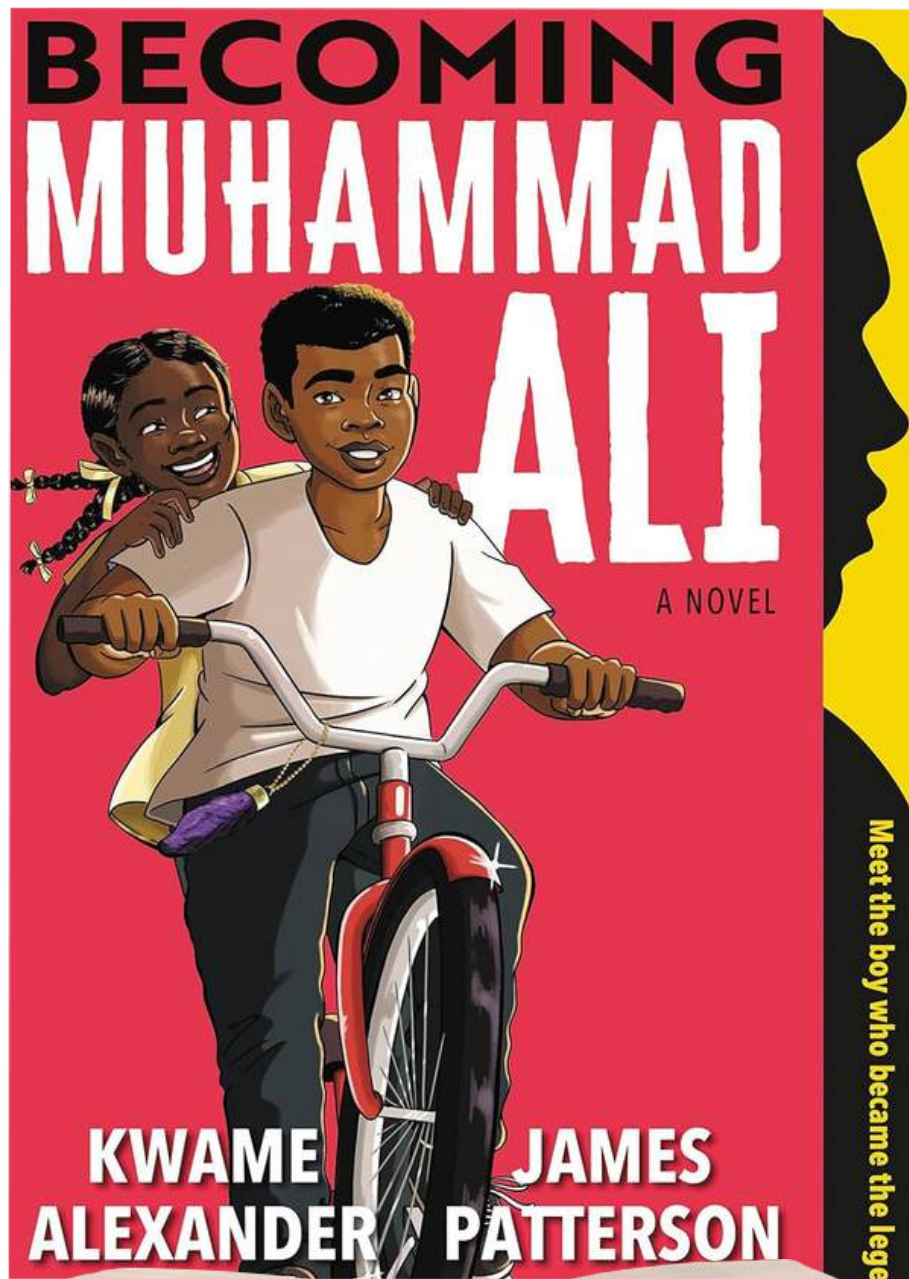
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



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

BECOMING MUHAMMAD ALI

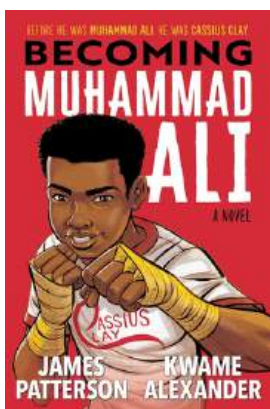
by Kwame Alexander
and James Patterson



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

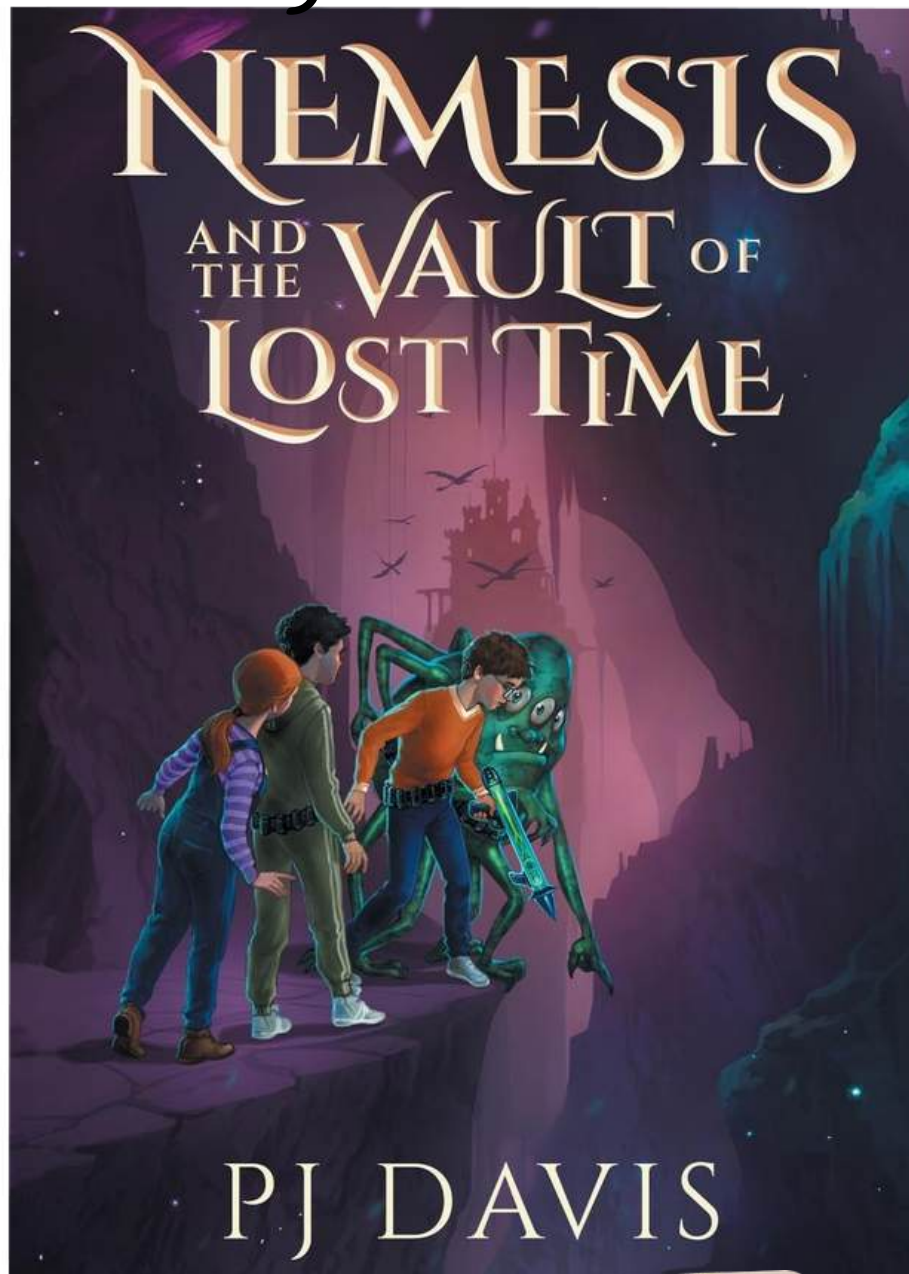
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



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

NEMESIS AND THE VAULT OF LOST TIME

by PJ Davis



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name _____

Date _____



Includes
Author
Interview!

Nemesis and the Vault of Lost Time by PJ Davis



Read Aloud Video and
Author Interview

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?

Thirteen-year-old Max is a daydreamer. It gets him into trouble at school, but his restless curiosity really turns problematic when he runs into a mysterious professor at his uncle's bookstore. The old man informs Max that time is being sucked out of the planet by invisible bandits, stolen from unsuspecting people one breath and one sneeze at a time, and is being stored in a central vault. Once full, the vault will fuel a hungry horde of invaders looking to cross into earth, and cross out all its people. What's more, the professor claims he knew Max's missing scientist father. With the help of his best friends, Derek and Samantha, Max must harness his compulsive curiosity and find passage to this place called Nemesis to stop the sticky-fingered time thieves and halt their planned invasion. But when the professor goes missing and the clock starts ticking, Max discovers far more than he imagined. Just how much Max is willing to sacrifice hinges on the realization of just who or what he is beyond the bounds of time.

Who Wrote It?

PJ Davis lives in the tiny mountain town of Brevard, North Carolina overlooking the Blue Ridge Mountains. He lives there with his wife, youngest son, three sleepy cats and three noisy ducks. For his day job, he names things, such as companies, products and services. he even named the town's annual white squirrel festival. PJ is a nickname, short for Phillip John, which is the type of long, formal-sounding name that parents only use when they are really mad about something you did and for which you are about to get into serious trouble. As a child PJ was a bit like his book character Max, and also suffered from ACHOO syndrome, along with bouts of intense curiosity and



daydreaming. You can connect with PJ and learn more about his and his work at: <https://pjdavisauthor.com/>

AR Reading Level: Unavailable

Lexile Level: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

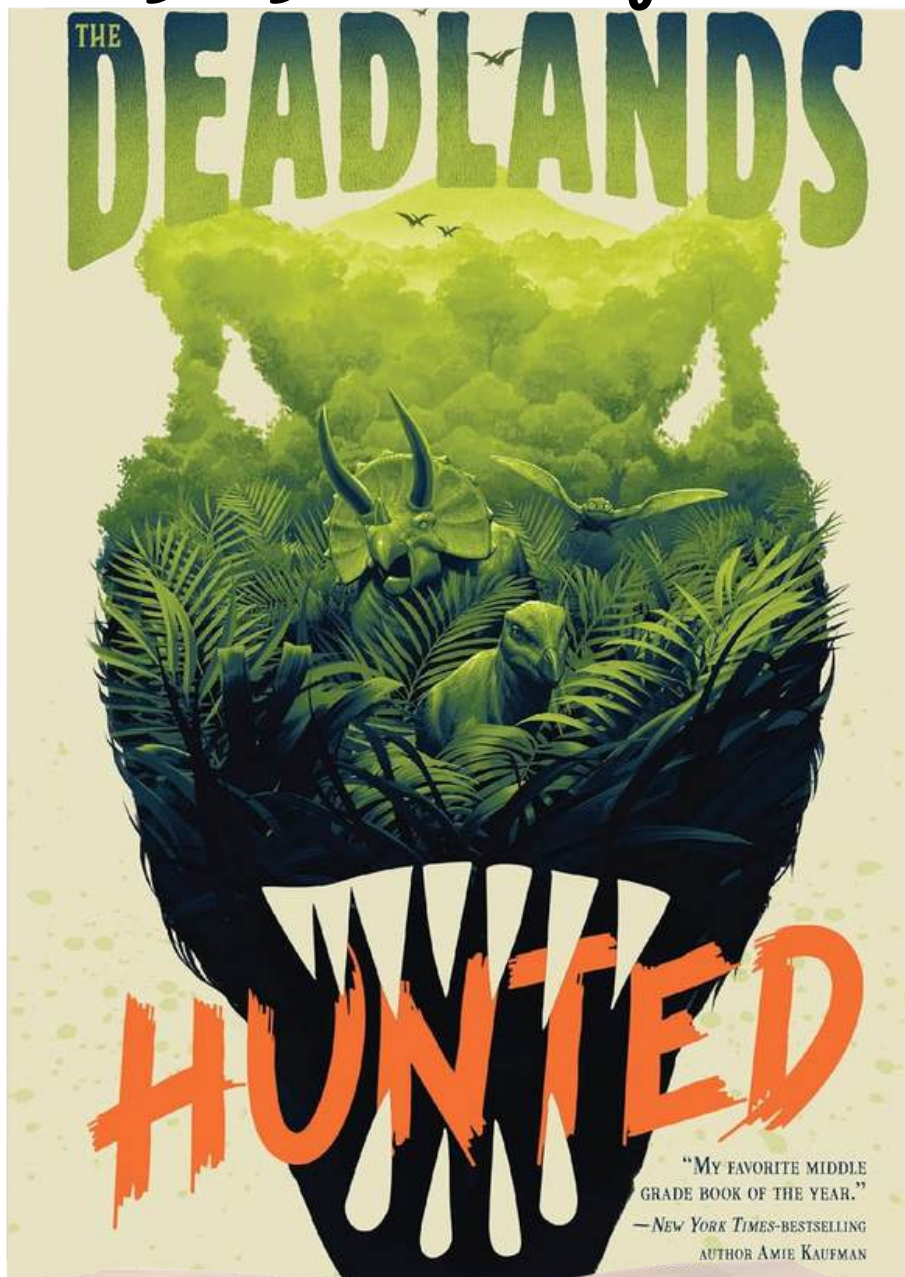
☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



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

THE DEADLANDS: HUNTED

by Skye Melki-Wegner



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name _____

Date _____



The Deadlands

by Skye Melki-Wegner



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?

Wings of Fire meets Jurassic Park in this action-adventure middle grade debut series by Skye Melki-Wegner about five outcasts—and former enemies—who are the only hope to save their warring kingdoms from impending doom.

Battle rages between the dinosaur kingdoms of Cretacea. When the Fallen Star struck, it brought death and despair, ash and toxic rain. But some dinosaurs survived . . . and were changed. Their minds grew alert. They learned to speak. To dream. To wage war. As the two remaining dinosaur kingdoms fight for territory, Eleri, the disgraced son of a prince, is exiled from his home for saving an enemy soldier. Banished to the merciless Deadlands, a terrifying desert full of tar pits, poisonous gas, and ruthless carnivores, he must join forces with a group of questionable allies—including the enemy soldier he saved—to avoid becoming prey. When Eleri and his fellow exiles discover the horrific truth behind the war, the unlikely heroes must do all they can to save their kingdoms from a lurking predator. . . and a secret plot that might destroy them all.

AR Reading Level: N/A

Who Wrote It?

Skye Melki-Wegner started writing as soon as she could hold a pen. She was immediately drawn to fantasy — and soon her notebooks overflowed with dragons, pixies, wizards and various magical shenanigans. After graduating with an honors degree in law, she decided to pursue her passion and prioritized writing fantasy



books over pursuing a legal career. Sky lives in Melbourne, Australia. Visit Skye's website [here](#).

Lexile Level: N/A

I want to read this book: YES / NO

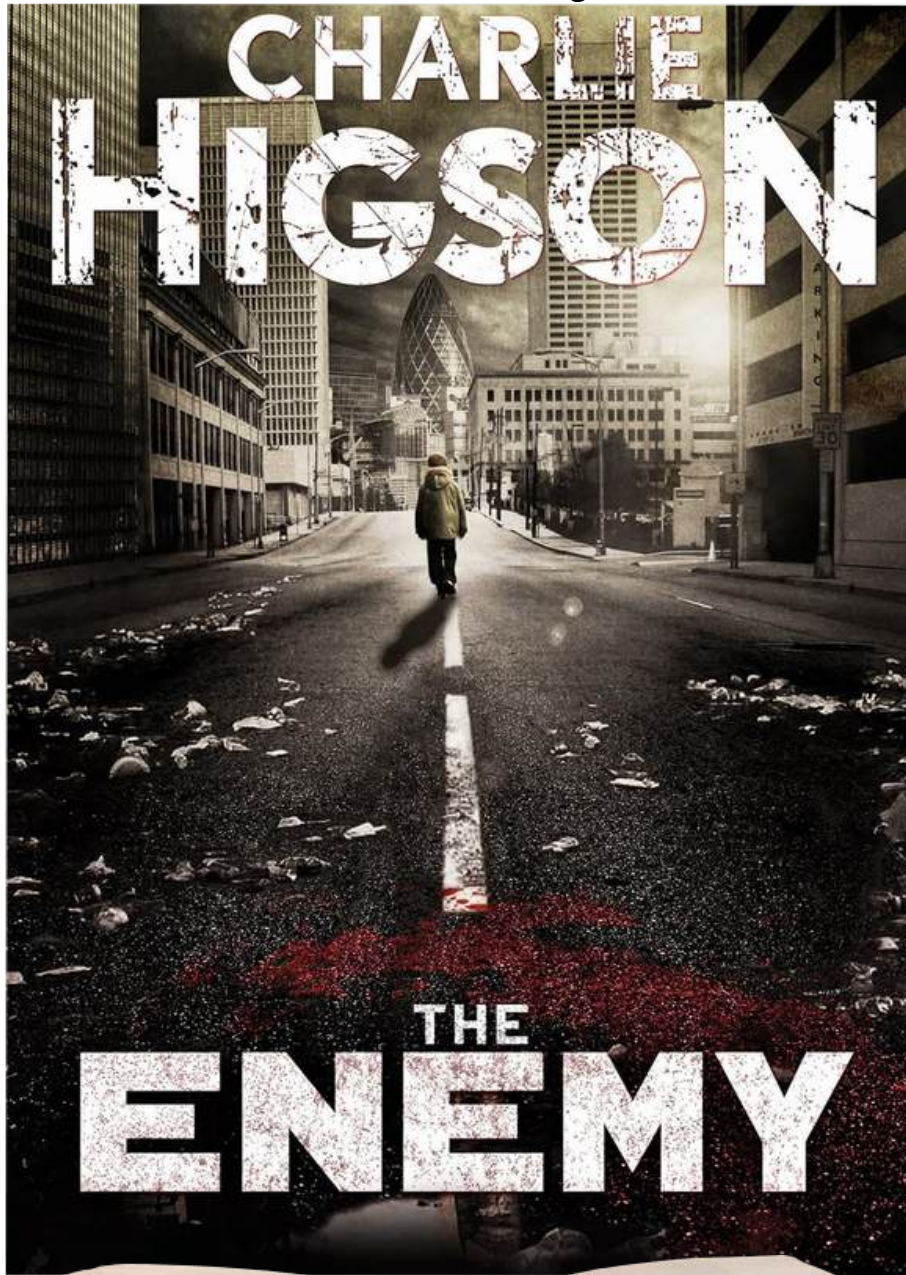
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



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

THE ENEMY

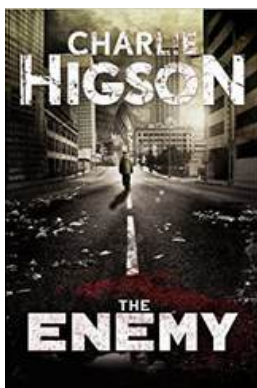
by Charlie Higson



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name _____

Date _____



The Enemy

by Charlie Higson



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?

In the wake of a devastating disease, everyone sixteen and older is either dead or a decomposing, brainless creature with a ravenous appetite for flesh. Teens have barricaded themselves in buildings throughout London and venture outside only when they need to scavenge for food. The group of kids living a Waitrose supermarket is beginning to run out of options. When a mysterious traveler arrives and offers them safe haven at Buckingham Palace, they begin a harrowing journey across London. But their fight is far from over—the threat from within the palace is as real as the one outside it. Full of unexpected twists and quick-thinking heroes, *The Enemy* is a fast-paced, white-knuckle tale of survival in the face of unimaginable horror.

**** Not for the faint of heart... gave me a nightmare or two! Grades 8 and up!****

Who Wrote It?

Charlie Higson is a successful author, actor, comedian and writer for television and radio. He wrote the phenomenally successful *Young Bond* series which has now sold over a million copies in the UK and has been translated into over 24 different languages. With three sons of his own, Charlie knows exactly how to terrify and captivate teenagers in equal measure. After leaving university, Charlie formed a band, *The Higsons*. He then became a decorator before



turning to the world of television. His television successes have included *Saturday Live*! You can learn more about Charlie and his books at <https://www.charliehigson.co.uk/>

AR Reading Level: 4.1

Lexile Level: 590L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



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

A cartoon illustration of a smiling orange book character with large eyes, black arms and legs, and white gloves and shoes. The book character is holding a carved jack-o'-lantern with a classic spooky face. They are set against a yellow circular background. The entire scene is on a white background with a repeating pattern of orange lightbulb outlines.

October 2025

21

BRAIN BREAKS

LINKS + ANSWER SHEETS/KEYS

October 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

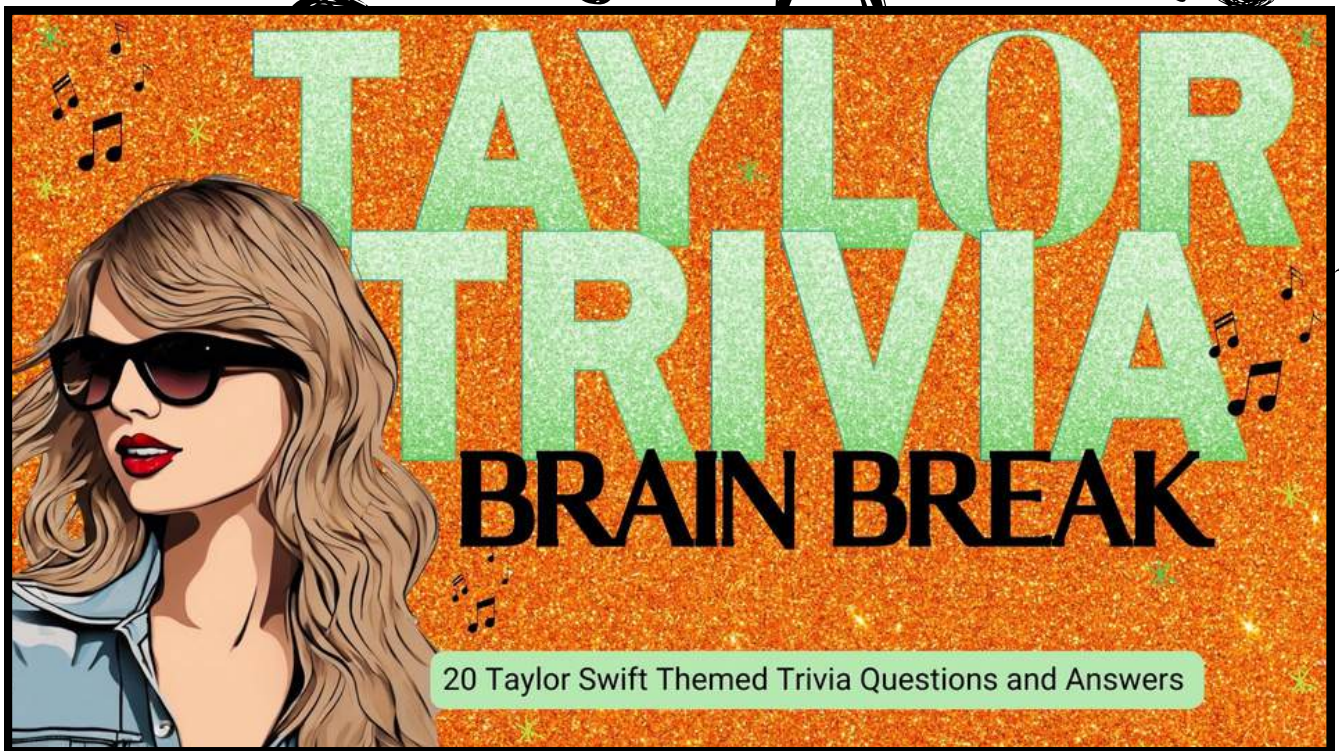
TEAM #5

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total

TEAM #6

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total

TAYLOR SWIFT TRIVIA



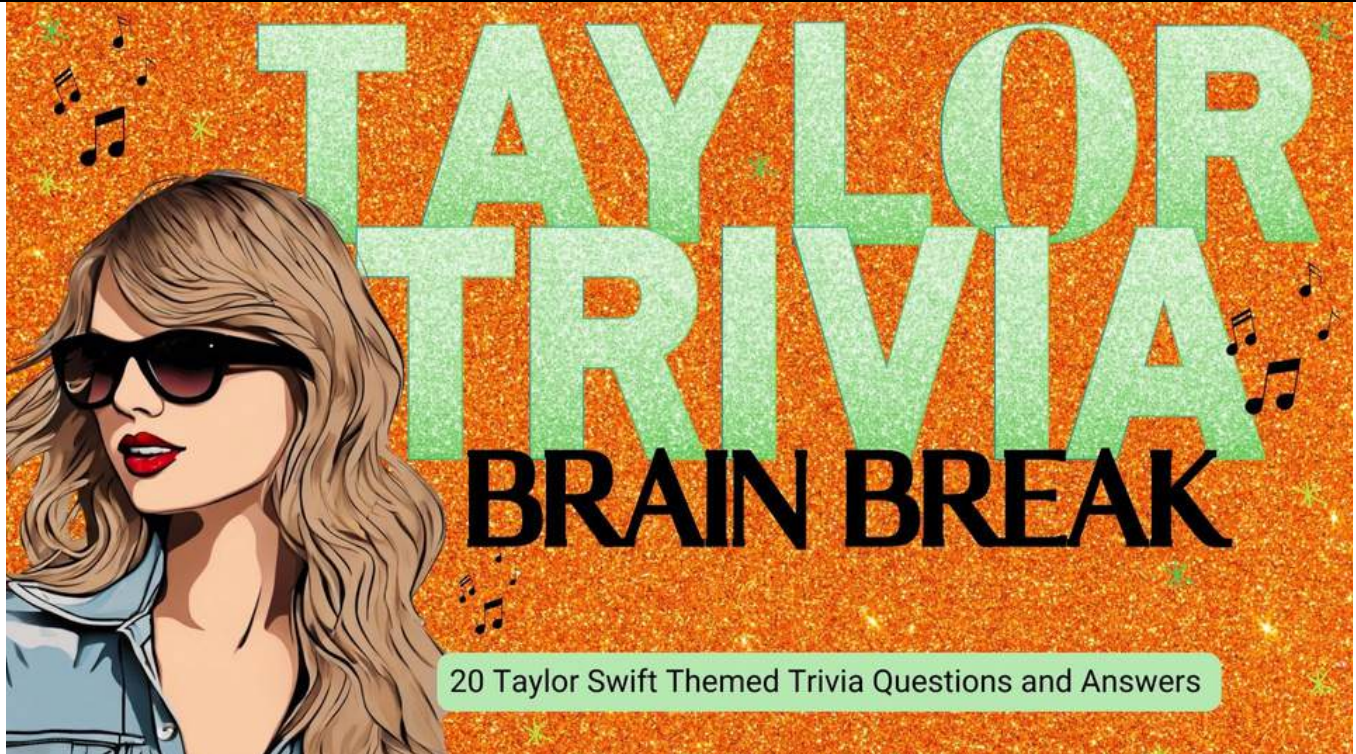
Question and Answer Sheets



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!

TAYLOR TRIVIA VIDEO



This link will take you to the YouTube Video of Taylor Trivia questions: <https://youtu.be/CHX0fpnVGf4>

FUN CHALLENGE: EVEN THE PLAYING FIELD A BIT! ASK YOUR NON-SWIFTIES TO READ THE NONFICTION PASSAGE (NEXT PAGE) AND THEN COMPETE AGAINST YOUR SWIFTIES (WITHOUT THEM READING THE SHEET). SEE WHO CAN SCORE HIGHER?!?!



All content creation done by Amanda Zieba using Canva and Clip Art purchased from Etsy (TheCraftyElfStore & Purfectlycozypngs).

Song Credit: Suno Pro + Amanda Zieba

AI Transparency: ChatGPT was used to help research questions/answers, clarify question phrasing, and write summary bio.

Taylor Swift - A Brief Bio

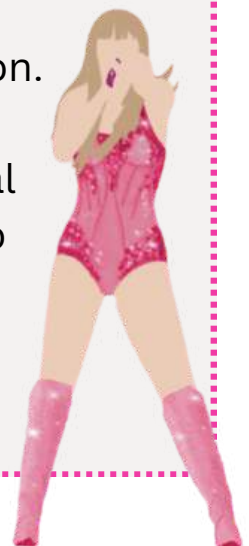
Taylor Swift is one of the most famous singers and songwriters in the world. She was born on December 13, 1989, in Pennsylvania, where she grew up on a Christmas tree farm. From the time she was young, Taylor loved writing and music. Her grandmother was an opera singer, and Taylor herself was named after the musician James Taylor. She even has a family connection to the famous poet Emily Dickinson—they are distant cousins!

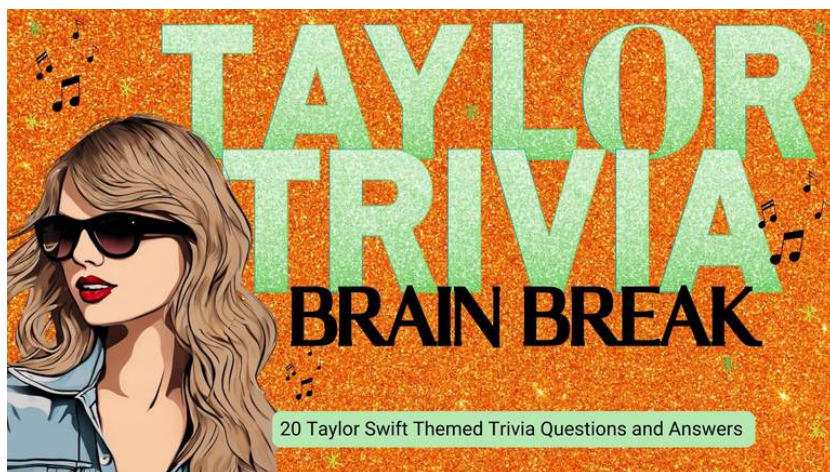
Taylor's big break came in country music, but she quickly grew into a pop superstar. She has released many albums, including *Fearless*, 1989, *Reputation*, *Lover*, and *Midnights*. As of 2024, her music has won her 14 Grammy Awards, including four Album of the Year wins—more than any other artist. She also holds over 100 Guinness World Records and has sold more than 600 million albums worldwide. Some of her songs even include her own heartbeat as part of the music, like *Wildest Dreams* and *You're Losing Me*.

Fans know Taylor for her catchy songs, emotional lyrics, and amazing concerts. She is also famous for hosting Secret Sessions—special parties where a small group of fans got to hear her albums before they were released.

Outside of music, Taylor has acted in a few movies, including *Valentine's Day* and *Cats*. In *Cats*, she played the character Bombalurina and even co-wrote a song called *Beautiful Ghosts*. She is also known for her three cats: Meredith Grey, Olivia Benson, and Benjamin Button.

Taylor Swift has become more than just a singer—she is a cultural icon. She inspires fans with her creativity, kindness, and ability to reinvent herself again and again. From writing hit songs to breaking records, Taylor Swift continues to be one of the most important artists of her generation.





Taylor Swift Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Write your answers on
the lines below.

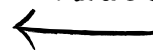
Name/Team Name: _____

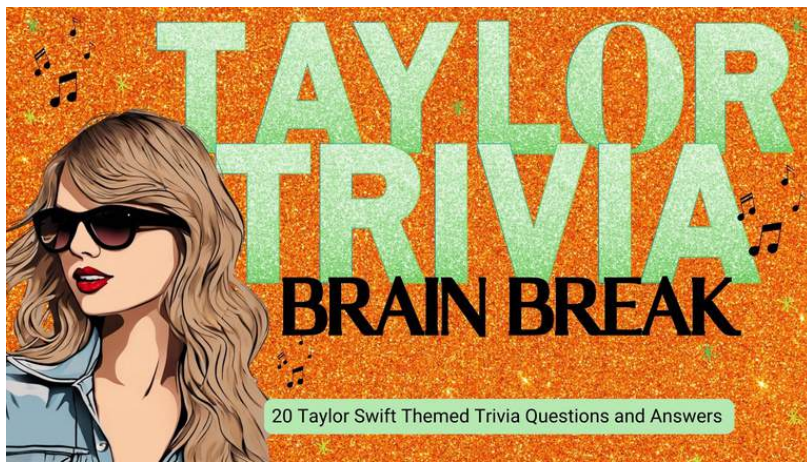
- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |

Are you a Taylor Trivia Rockstar?



Trivia
Video





Taylor Swift Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Circle your answer for
each question below.

Trivia
Video



Name/Team Name: _____

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

Score:

____/ 20



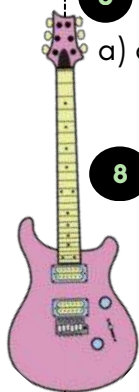
Trivia
Video

Taylor Trivia



Are you a Taylor Trivia Rockstar?
Take this Trivia quiz and find out!

- 1 **What year was Taylor born? (Hint, it's the name of one of her albums!)**
a) 1982 b) 1989 c) 1991 d) 1998
- 2 **Who did Taylor's parents name her after? (Hint, it is another singer/songwriter!)**
a) James Taylor
b) Roger Meddows Taylor (Queen)
c) Chip Taylor
d) Andy Taylor (Duran Duran)
- 3 **On what kind of farm did Taylor grow up?**
a) Dairy Farm
b) Livestock Ranch
c) Christmas Tree Farm
d) Wild Flower Farm
- 4 **How many feature-length movies include Taylor Swift in an acting role (not as herself)?**
a) 2
b) 3
c) 4
d) 5
- 5 **As a child, what was Taylor's first CD purchase?**
a) Ace of Base - The Sign b) LeAnn Rimes - Blue
c) Mariah Carey - Daydream d) Whitney Houston - The Bodyguard
- 6 **What was Taylor's debut (first) ERA?**
a) country b) folk c) pop d) theatrical
- 7 **Taylor is a "pet-mom" to what kind of animal?**
a) dog b) duck c) cat d) pig
- 8 **For which accomplishment does Taylor Swift hold a Guinness World Record?**
a) Most listens on Spotify
b) First act to occupy the entire Top 10 on the Billboard Hot 100
c) Highest grossing music tour
d) All of the Above
- 9 **What is Taylor Swift's middle name?**
a) Lynn b) Jo c) Marie d) Alison
- 10 **In 2008, what milestone event did Taylor skip in order to attend the Grammy's for her first time?**
a) Her 18th birthday party b) Her senior prom
c) Her high school graduation d) None of the above



11 What is the name of Taylor Swift's Netflix documentary? (Released in 2020)

- a) Miss Americana b) Radio Princess
c) Country Roots d) Tear Drops On My Guitar

12 True or False: Taylor Swift launched a perfume called Wonderstruck.

- a) True b) False

13 What day of the month is Taylor's birthday on? (Hint, it's also her favorite number!)

- a) 03 b) 13 c) 23 d) 30

14 Taylor Swift hosted top-secret listening parties for 1989, Reputation, and Lover where fans got to hear the songs before anyone else. What were these exclusive events called?

- a) Pre-Release Parties b) Secret Sessions c) Swiftie Sessions d) Taylor's Vault Time

15 Taylor has double jointed -

- a) Thumbs b) Shoulders c) Elbows d) Knees

16 What 2 Taylor Swift album covers use black and white photography? (Choose 2)

- a) Reputation
b) Evermore
c) Fearless
d) Folklore

17 Taylor Swift is known to be able to play what 4 instruments?

G_____ P_____ B_____ U_____

18 What unique sound did Taylor Swift record and layer into the tracks Wildest Dreams and You're Losing Me?

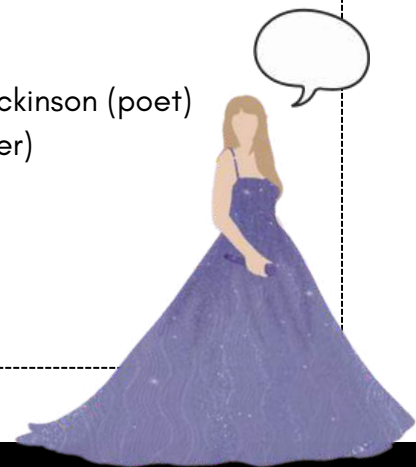
- a) Meows from her cats b) Footsteps c) Whispered secret messages d) Her own heartbeats

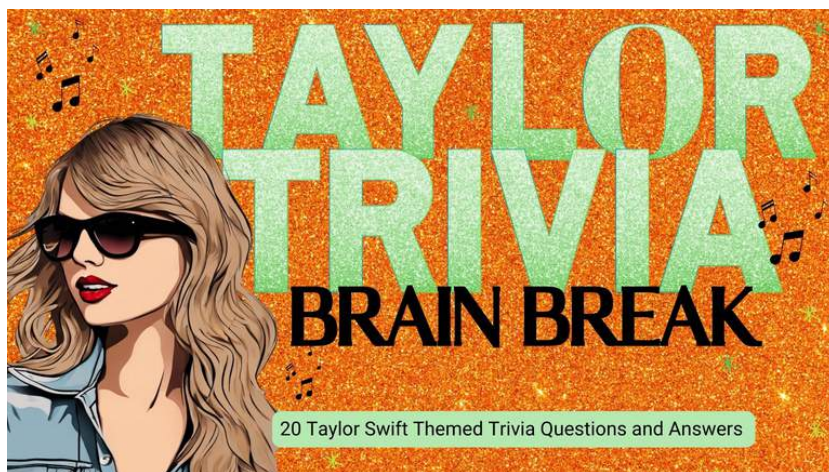
19 Taylor Swift has two famous relatives in her family tree—one from literature and one from music. Who are they? (choose 2)

- a) Louisa May Alcott (writer) b) Aretha Franklin (singer) c) Emily Dickinson (poet)
d) Dolly Parton (singer/philanthropist) e) Judy Garland (actress/singer)
f) Marjorie Finlay (an opera singer)

20 What year was Taylor Swift Time Magazine's Person of the Year?

- a) 2009 b) 2016 c) 2021 d) 2023





Taylor Swift Trivia Answer Key

Directions:

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

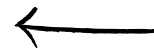
ANSWER KEY

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. B) 1989 | 11. A) Miss Americana |
| 2. A) James Taylor | 12. True |
| 3. C) Christmas Tree Farm | 13. B) 13 |
| 4. D) 5 | 14. B) Secret Sessions |
| 5. B) LeAnn Rimes - Blue | 15. C) Elbows |
| 6. A) Country | 16. A) Reputation D) Folklore |
| 7. C) Cat | 17. Guitar, Piano, Banjo, Ukulele |
| 8. D) All of the Above | 18. D) Her own heartbeats |
| 9. D) Alison | 19. C) Emily Dickinson
F) Marjorie Finlay |
| 10. B) Her Senior Prom | 20. D) 2023 |

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



Trivia
Video

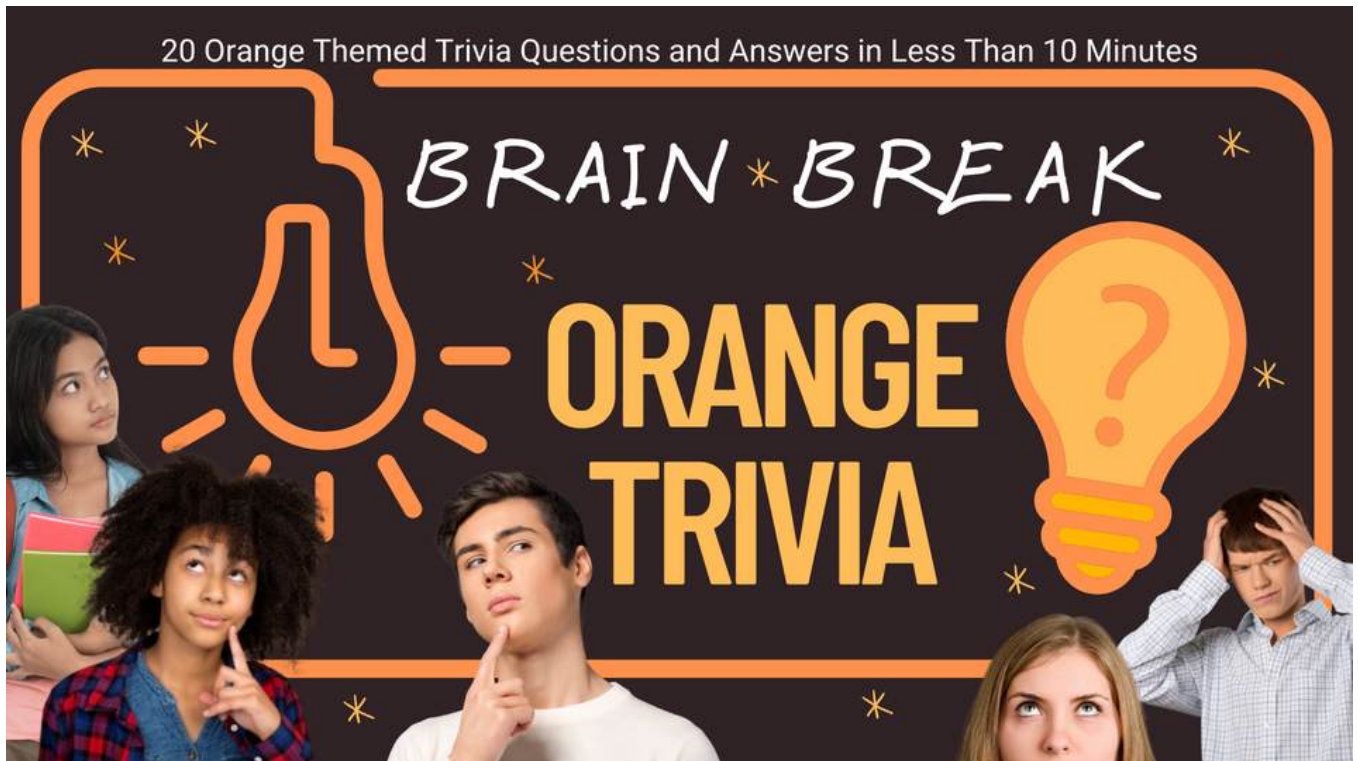




Trivia Game Video Link

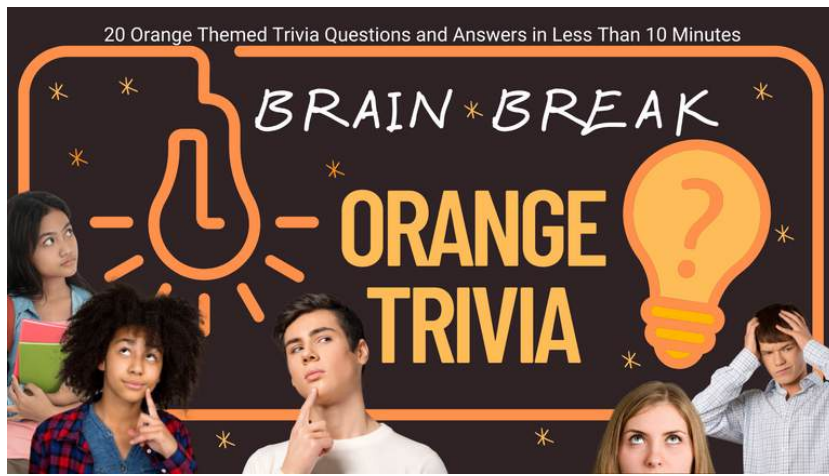
Use the below links to access the video for this activity.
Click the title, image or link to get to the video!

ORANGE TRIVIA BRAIN BREAK GAME



This link will take you to the YouTube Video of Orange Trivia questions: <https://youtu.be/14icZuv6Q!g>.





Orange Color-Themed Trivia Answer Sheet

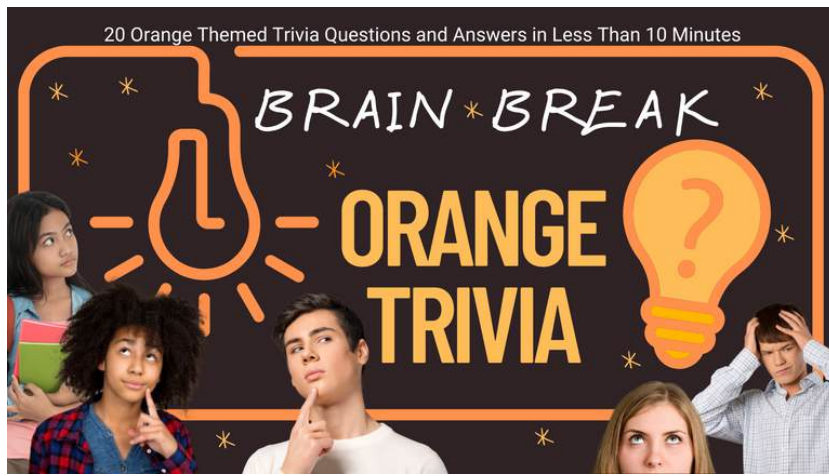


Directions:
Write your
answers on the
lines below.

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 ORANGE TRIVIA EXPERT?!?!



Orange Color-Themed Trivia Answer Sheet



Directions:
Write your
answers on the
lines below.

Name/Team Name: _____

1: Red and Yellow OR Red and Blue

2: A B C D

3: A B C D

4: San Francisco Bridge OR Golden Gate Bridge

5: Bright Orange OR Blaze Orange

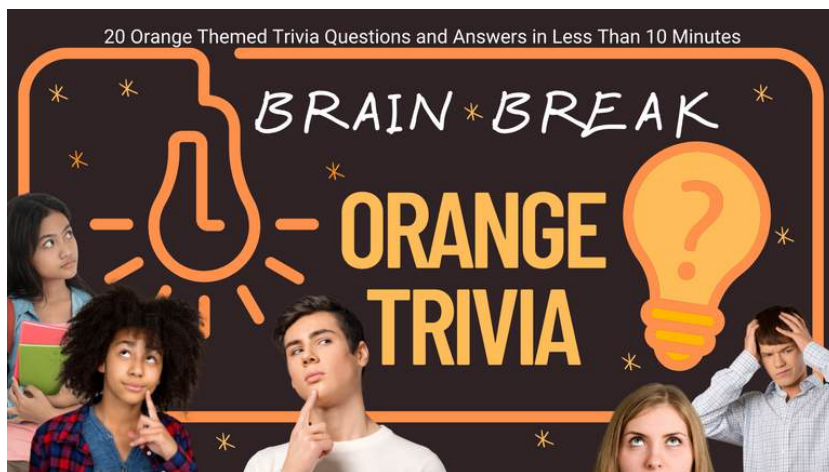
6: Nemo OR Goldy

7: 5 OR 7

8: Bears and Dolphins OR Colts and Jets

9: 21 or 15

10: Mister C OR Chester



Orange Color-Themed Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Circle your answer for
each question below.

13: A B C D

14: True OR False

15: Cheerios OR Lucky Charms

16: True OF False

17: Level 2 or Level 6

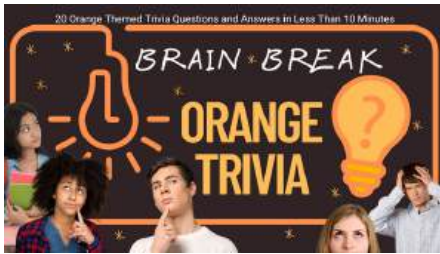
18: A B C D

19: Orange Julius OR McDonalds

20: A B C D

How did you do?
Are you a ORANGE TRIVIA EXPERT?!?!?

Score: ____ / 20



Orange Trivia Brain Break Game

Name: _____

Trivia
Video



1 Which two colors do you need to mix to create the color orange?

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

2 What is the most popular orange soda in the United States?

- a) Sunkist
- b) Fanta
- c) Orange Crush
- d) Orange Jarritos

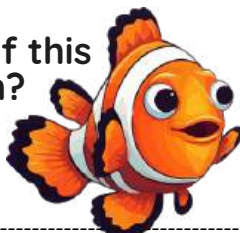
3 Which orange food was originally purple?!?!?

- a) pumpkin
- b) carrots
- c) apricots
- d) oranges

4 What is the name of this famous orange painted bridge?

5 What shade of orange is often worn by hunters?

6 What is the name of this famous orange fish?



7 What number is on an solid orange billiard ball?

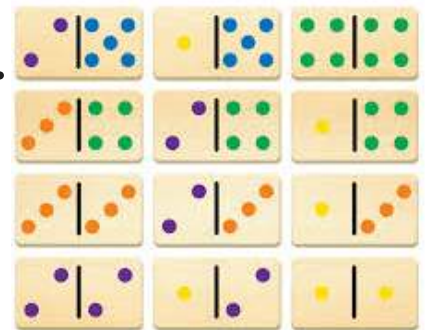


8 Name 2 NFL (National Football League) Teams that have orange as one of their team colors.

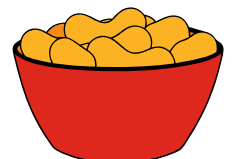
1) _____

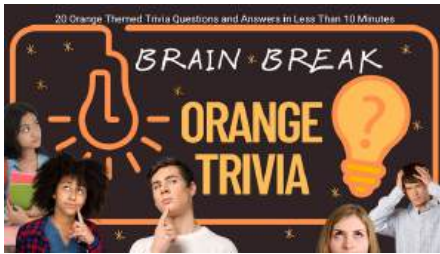
2) _____

9 How many orange dots are shown on these dominos?



10 What is the name of the orange, Cheeto loving cat?

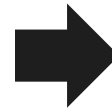




Orange Trivia Brain Break Game

Name: _____

Trivia
Video



11 British engineer David Morgan currently holds the Guinness World Record for largest collection of what orange rubber item? (Hint: This triangle shaped item is usually seen outside, while driving.)

12 True or False: There are over 600 varieties of oranges in the world.

- a) True
- b) False

13 This flag, 1/3 of which is orange, belongs to which country?

- a) Nepal
- b) Brazil
- c) Ireland
- d) Zambia



14 True or False: Basketballs have always been orange.

- a) True
- b) False

15 Circus Peanuts were the inspiration behind which magically delicious breakfast cereal?

16 True or False: 50% of all oranges are produced for juice.

- a) True
- b) False



17 What level of karate is designated by an orange belt? (#1-6)



18 How many pounds did the world's largest pumpkin (grown in 2020) weigh?

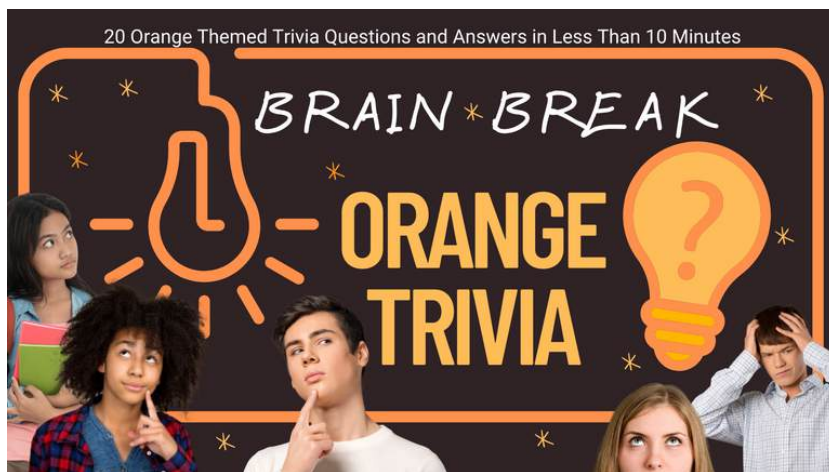
- a) 1,200 pounds
- b) 2,350 pounds
- c) 999 pounds
- d) 3,100 pounds

19 This cup wears the logo for which smoothie company?



20 On October 20, many staff and students in American schools are encourage to wear orange for what day designated to stand up against bullying?

- a) Speak Up Day
- b) Stand Out Day
- c) Unity Day
- d) Universal Kindness Day



Orange Color-Themed Answer Key



Directions:
Write your
answers on the
lines below.

ANSWER KEY

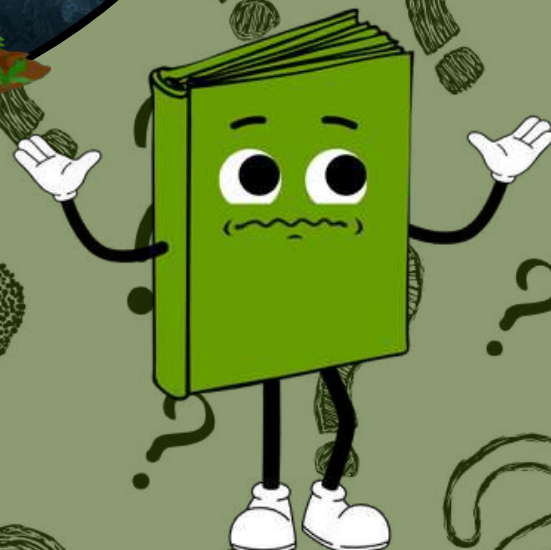
- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Red and Yellow | 11. Traffic Cones |
| 2. A) Sunkist | 12. True |
| 3. B) Carrots | 13. C) Ireland |
| 4. Golden Gate Bridge | 14. False |
| 5. Blaze Orange | 15. Lucky Charms |
| 6. Nemo | 16. False |
| 7. 5 | 17. Level 2 |
| 8. Bears, Broncos, Dolphins,
Browns, and Bengals | 18. B) 2,350 pounds |
| 9. 15 | 19. Orange Julius |
| 10. Chester | 20. C) Unity Day |

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

Would You Rather...

PERSUASIVE WRITING WORKSHEETS

SCARY EDITION



CREATED BY THE WORD NERD

WOULD YOU RATHER?

Name: _____



VIDEO



Video Link

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

1. Would you rather be lost in a cave or a forest?
2. Would you rather face a vampire or a werewolf?
3. Would you rather give a speech in front of your whole school or a room full of strangers?
4. Would you rather be locked in a room full of mice or snakes?
5. Would you rather be at the top of a cliff or the bottom of the ocean?
6. Would you rather experience a hurricane or a tornado?
7. Would you rather face a grizzly bear or a shark?
8. Would you rather face mom or dad when you are in trouble?
9. Would you rather sleep overnight in a haunted house or a graveyard?
10. Would you rather watch a horror movie or go on a scary roller coaster?

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



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!

HALLOWEEN IDIOM TRIVIA VIDEO



This link will take you to
the YouTube Video of
Halloween Idiom Trivia
questions:

<https://youtu.be/A3d5eC0hZEs>





Halloween Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Write your answers on
the lines below.

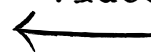
Name/Team Name: _____

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 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
Halloween Idiom ROCKSTAR?!?!



Trivia
Video





Halloween Idiom Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Circle your answer for
each question below.

Trivia Video -->



Name/Team Name: _____

1. A B C

11. A B C

2. A B C

12. A B C

3. A B C

13. A B C

4. A B C

14. A B C

5. A B C

15. A B C

6. A B C

16. A B C

7. A B C

17. A B C

8. A B C

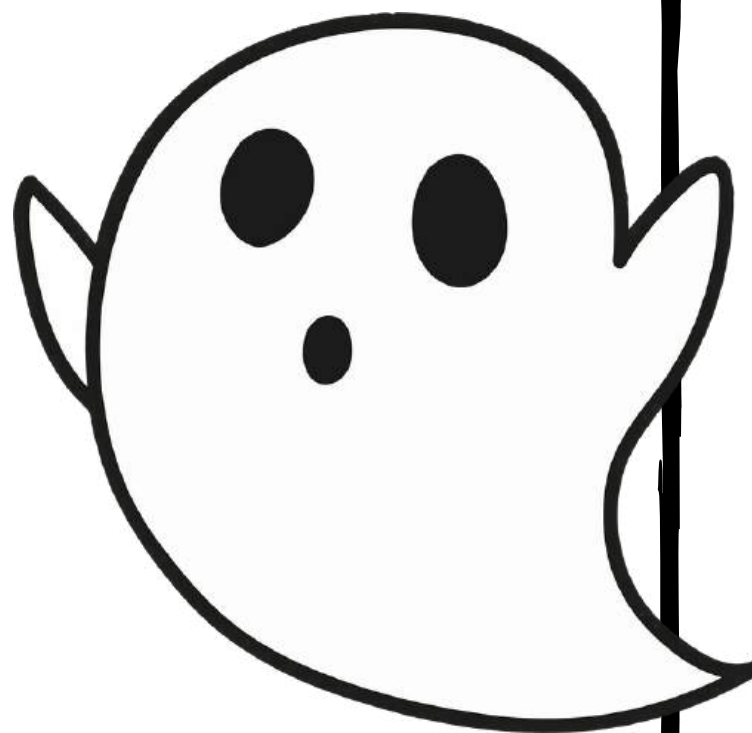
18. A B C

9. A B C

19. A B C

10. A B C

20. A B C



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

Score: ____ / 20



Trivia
Video



Halloween Idiom Trivia Quiz

Name: _____

#1

OVER MY DEAD BODY

- a) used to express how tired you are
- b) used to emphasize that you dislike a suggestion
- c) used to show how frustrated you feel



#2

A SCAREDY-CAT

- a) someone who's easily frightened
- b) a frightening animal
- c) someone who likes to scare people



#3

THE WITCHING HOUR

- a) a time when witches and other supernatural beings are said to appear
- b) Halloween's Eve
- c) the time when Halloween parties usually finish



#4

A NIGHT OWNL

- a) a person who suffers from insomnia
- b) a person who guards a place at night
- c) a person who is more active at night



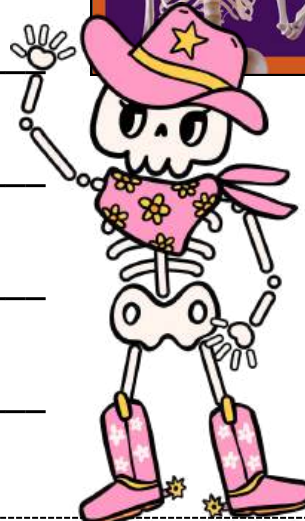
Record Your Answers Here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

#5

A SKELETON IN THE CLOSET/CUPBOARD

- a) an old-fashioned piece of clothing
- b) a scary anecdote
- c) an embarrassing secret





Trivia
Video



Halloween Idiom Trivia Quiz

Name: _____

#6

A GHOST TOWN

a) a haunted town
b) a town where a tragedy occurred
c) a town where few or no people live

#7

TO DIG ONE'S GRAVE

a) to do something that causes you harm
b) to keep a secret hidden
c) to bury something dangerous

#8

COME BACK TO HAUNT YOU

a) to cause problems for the future
b) to make friends with the undead
c) to scare someone badly

#9

A WITCH HUNT

a) the searching out and harassment of people with unpopular views
b) the activity of chasing and killing wild animals at night
c) the research done to disprove widespread myths

Record Your Answers Here:

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

#10

TO BE SCARED STIFF

a) to be afraid because you can't move
b) to be very afraid
c) to be afraid because you can't breathe





Trivia
Video



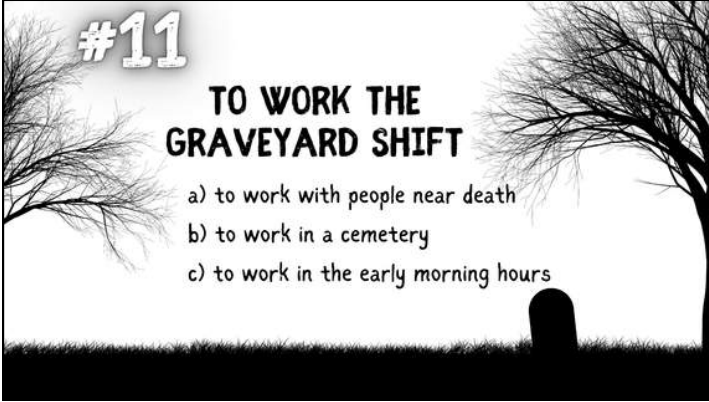
Halloween Idiom Trivia Quiz

Name: _____

#11

TO WORK THE GRAVEYARD SHIFT

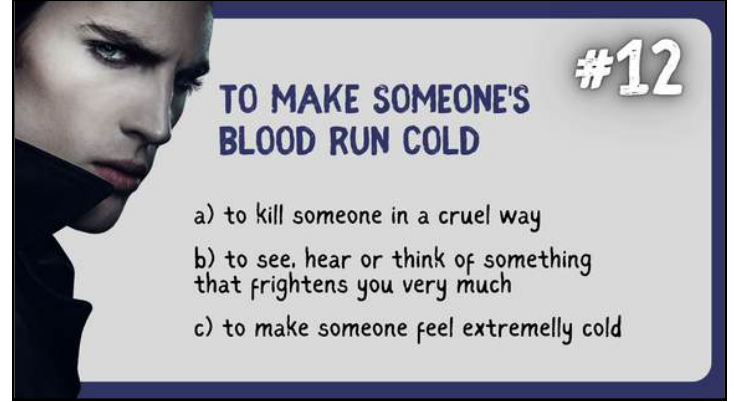
- a) to work with people near death
- b) to work in a cemetery
- c) to work in the early morning hours



#12

TO MAKE SOMEONE'S BLOOD RUN COLD

- a) to kill someone in a cruel way
- b) to see, hear or think of something that frightens you very much
- c) to make someone feel extremely cold



#13

SPILL YOUR GUTS

- a) be violently ill/sick
- b) tell all the details, even the secret ones
- c) make a mess



#14

NOT THE GHOST OF A CHANCE

- a) not scary at all
- b) unlikely to happen
- c) impractical to be done



**Record Your
Answers Here:**

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

#15

TO MAKE SOMEONE'S BLOOD BOIL

- a) to make someone really angry
- b) to make someone really happy
- c) to make someone really scared





Trivia
Video



Halloween Idiom Trivia Quiz

Name: _____

#16 **TO SHAKE LIKE A LEAF**



- a) to be unable to control your body
- b) to shake a tree
- c) to shake uncontrollably because you are frightened or nervous

#17 **THE GREEN-EYED MONSTER**



- a) to feel jealous or envious
- b) to feel angry
- c) to feel embarrassed

#18 **TO PLAY THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE**



- a) to play tricks on people
- b) to pretend to be against an idea or plan to get people discussing it in detail
- c) to try to persuade people out of doing something harmful

#19 **SOMEBODY WOULDN'T SAY BOO TO A GOOSE**



- a) used to refer to a timid person
- b) used to refer to a scary person
- c) used to refer to a boring person

Record Your Answers Here:

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

#20 **UNDER A SPELL**



- a) hiding beneath a blanket
- b) you are an exceptional writer
- c) a state of enchantment



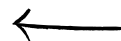


Halloween Idiom Trivia Answer Key

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



Trivia
Video



ANSWER KEY

1. b) used to emphasize that you dislike a suggestion
2. a) someone who's easily frightened
3. a) a time when witches and other supernatural beings are said to appear
4. c) a person who is more active at night
5. c) an embarrassing secret
6. c) a town where few or no people live
7. a) to do something that causes you harm
8. a) to cause problems for the future
9. a) the searching out and harassment of people with unpopular views
10. b) to be very afraid
11. c) to work in the early morning hours
12. b) to see, hear or think of something that frightens you very much
13. b) tell all the details, even the secret ones
14. b) unlikely to happen
15. a) to make someone really angry
16. c) to shake uncontrollably because you are frightened or nervous
17. a) to feel jealous or envious
18. b) to pretend to be against an idea or plan to get people discussing it in detail
19. a) used to refer to a timid person
20. c) a state of enchantment

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!

HALLOWEEN TRIVIA VIDEO



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





Halloween Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Write your answers on
the lines below.

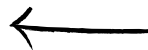
Name/Team Name: _____

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 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
Halloween Trivia ROCKSTAR?!?!



Trivia
Video





Trivia
Video

Halloween Trivia

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

1 How many pounds of candy corn are produced each year?

a) 1 million lbs. b) 14 million lbs. c) 27 million lbs. d) 35 million lbs.

2 Ichabod Crane, the headless horseman, was from which town?

S_____ H_____

3 True or False: Turnips were originally used to carve Jack-o'-lanterns.

a) True b) False

4 What Roman goddess is said to be honored on Halloween?

a) Persephone b) Pandora c) Luna d) Pomona

5 Which magician and entertainer died on Halloween in 1926?

a) Harry Kellar b) David Devant c) Harry Houdini d) Howard Thurston

6 What candy was given to soldiers at Halloween during the Korean War?

T_____ R_____

7 In 2004, What item was banned throughout the entire state of California ... but only on Halloween?

S_____ S_____

8 How many calories are in the average Trick or Treater's stash?

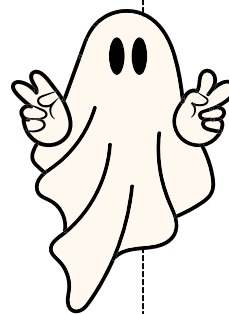
a) 675 b) 1,100 c) 950 d) 1,425

9 What was the original name of the movie Hocus Pocus?

a) Halloween House b) All Hallows Eve c) Get Hallow-even d) I Smell Children

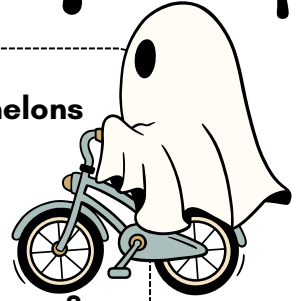
10 In what US state is it illegal to dress as a priest or nun for Halloween?

a) Alabama b) Alaska c) Arizona d) Arkansas



11 True or False: Jack-o'-lanterns were originally carved out of watermelons and not pumpkins.

a) True b) False



12 Who was the first, First Lady to decorate the White House for Halloween?

- a) Rosalyn Carter (1981)
- b) Mamie Eisenhower (1958)
- c) Ida McKinley (1901)
- d) Dolly Madison (1812)

13 What were the first ever Fun-Sized Candy Bars? (List 2!)

1 - _____
2 - _____

14 Every Halloween, Charlie Brown's friend, Linus, waits for what character to appear?

The G_____ P_____

15 Transylvania is a region in which country?

- a) Romania b) Iceland c) Russia d) Syria

16 What do you call the irrational fear of clowns?

- a) Coimetrophobia b) Coulrophobia c) Clinophobia d) Cleithrophobia

17 What was candy corn was originally called?

C_____ F_____

18 True or False: The band, The Beach Boys, loved to cover the famous Halloween Song, The Monster Mash.

- a) True b) False

19 What is the most financially successful horror movie of all time?

- a) IT b) The Shinning

20 Pumpkins can be orange, green, white and what other color?





Halloween Trivia Answer Sheet

Directions:
Circle your answer for
each question below.

Trivia
Video



Name/Team Name: _____

1. A B C D
2. Snooze City or Sleepy Hollow
3. True or False
4. A B C D
5. A B C D
6. Tootsie Pops or Tootsie Rolls
7. Silly String or Face Masks
8. A B C D
9. A B C D
10. A B C D
11. True or False
12. A B C D
13. _____
14. The G_____ P_____
15. A B C D
16. A B C D
17. C_____ F_____
18. True or False
19. IT or The Shining
20. Purple or Blue

Score:
____/20



Halloween Trivia Answer Key

Directions:

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

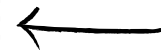
ANSWER KEY

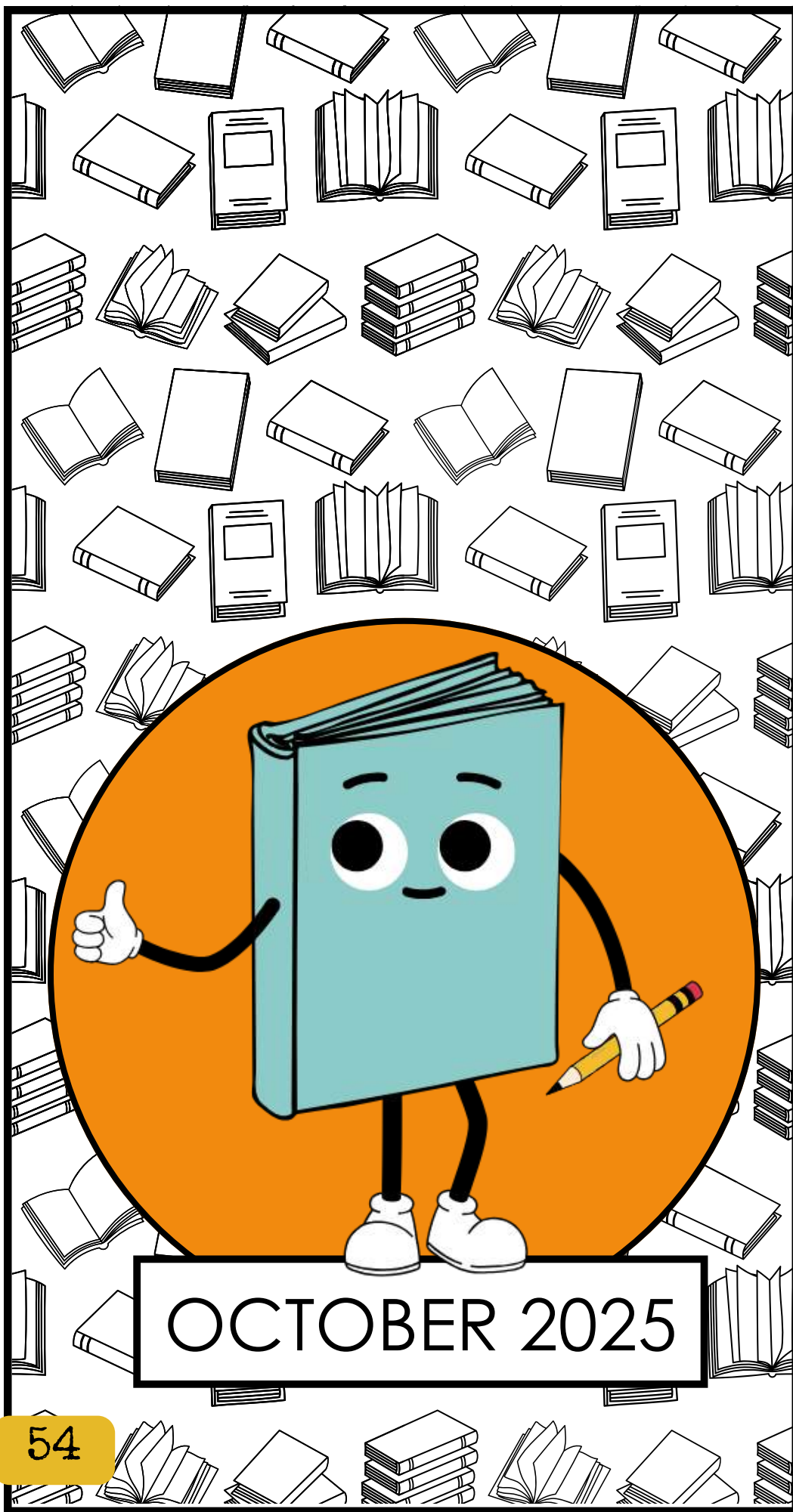
- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. D) 35 million pounds | 11. False |
| 2. Sleepy Hollow | 12. B) Mamie Eisenhower 1958 |
| 3. True | 13. Snickers and Milky Ways |
| 4. D) Pomona | 14. The Great Pumpkin |
| 5. C) Harry Houdini | 15. A) Romania |
| 6. Tootsie Rolls | 16. B) Coulrophobia |
| 7. Silly String | 17. Chicken Feed |
| 8. B) 1,100 | 18. True |
| 9. A) Halloween House | 19. IT |
| 10. D) Arkansas | 20. Blue |

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



Trivia
Video





OCTOBER 2025

G
N
I
T
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R
W



HOW TO USE THE WRITING PROMPTS

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

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

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

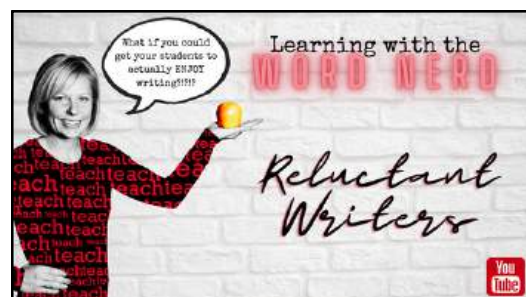
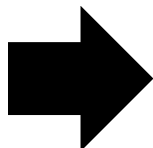
If you want, keep these “curriculum and standard” pieces of information to yourself, go for it! There is no need to let the kids know we have a secret plan to trick them into being better writers and hating it a little bit less each day!

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

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

Happy Writing!

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



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




MULTI-USE FORMS

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

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



Free Write Friday

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

Choice B:
Write about a topic of your choice.



GEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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

Title of Piece/Date Written: _____



GEMS

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITER DOES WELL



OPPORTUNITIES

LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WRITER TO IMPROVE

FINAL COMMENTS
WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:

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

Total Points = ____/10

NAME: _____

WRITING PROMPTS

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.



▼ 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:



GEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES



My Name:

Name of classmate I am reviewing:

Date:

Title of Piece/Date Written



GEMS

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE
WRITERS DOES WELL

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

OPPORTUNITIES



LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE
WRITER TO IMPROVE

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

FINAL COMMENTS

WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:



GEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

My Name:

Name of classmate I am reviewing:

Date:



GEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

My Name:

Name of classmate I am reviewing:

Date:

Title of Piece/Date Written



GEMS

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITERS DOES WELL

.....

OPPORTUNITIES

LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WRITER TO IMPROVE

.....

FINAL COMMENTS

WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:

Title of Piece/Date Written



GEMS

LIST SEVERAL THINGS THE WRITERS DOES WELL

.....

OPPORTUNITIES

LIST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WRITER TO IMPROVE

.....

FINAL COMMENTS

WRITE ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK HERE:





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:

5

CREATIVE WRITING TIPS

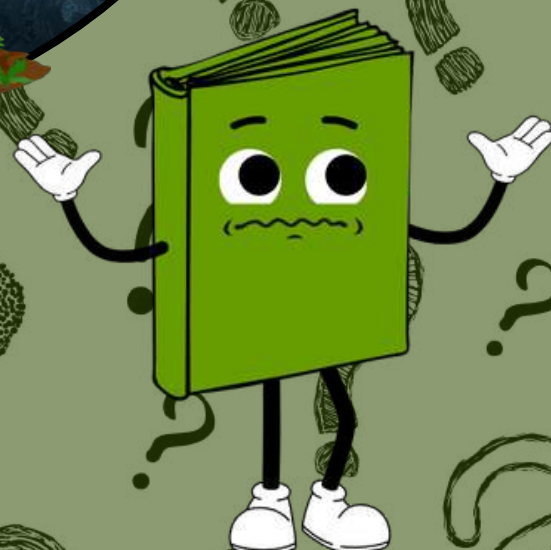
- 1 Take a minute to think before you start writing. Jot down ideas, make a mind map, or just day dream!
- 2 Put your phone/chromebook/tablet away. Distractions can easily pull you out of the writing flow.
- 3 If you feel like you are stuck or have nothing else to say, but we still have writing time left, re-read what you have written. This might inspire more ideas. Or, you can go back and add in details to your response that you did not include the first time around.
- 4 Ask yourself, if I were the reader... "what kind of story would I like to experience?"
- 5 Before submitting your work, whisper read your work aloud to yourself. This will help you catch small, easy to fix errors.
- 6 Listen to an instrumental playlist to create a blanket of white noise that will help you focus on your task, rather than the distractions surrounding you. Try [this video](#)!



Would You Rather...

PERSUASIVE WRITING WORKSHEETS

SCARY EDITION



CREATED BY THE WORD NERD

TAKEAWAYS

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

WE WANT STUDENTS TO BE ABLE TO:

- 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.



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



Video Link



STANDARDS IN ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

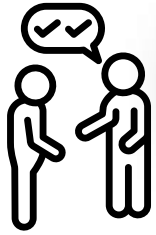
- Skill Focus: Use transition words like for example, in addition, because, however, and therefore to guide readers.

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

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

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

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



BUILD YOUR CASE

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

FOLLOW THESE STEPS!

✓ **Step 1: Make Your Claim**

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

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

✓ **Step 2: Give Your Reasons**

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

✓ **Step 3: Use Transitions**

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

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

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

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

✓ **Step 5: Wrap It Up**

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

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

WOULD YOU RATHER?

Name: _____



VIDEO



Video Link

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

1. Would you rather be lost in a cave or a forest?
2. Would you rather face a vampire or a werewolf?
3. Would you rather give a speech in front of your whole school or a room full of strangers?
4. Would you rather be locked in a room full of mice or snakes?
5. Would you rather be at the top of a cliff or the bottom of the ocean?
6. Would you rather experience a hurricane or a tornado?
7. Would you rather face a grizzly bear or a shark?
8. Would you rather face mom or dad when you are in trouble?
9. Would you rather sleep overnight in a haunted house or a graveyard?
10. Would you rather watch a horror movie or go on a scary roller coaster?

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

Name: _____

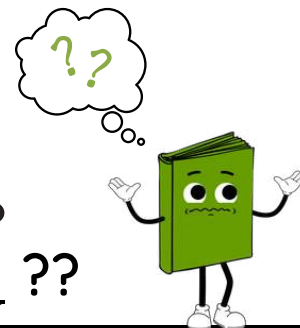
Date: _____

SCARY EDITION

Would You Rather...

or

??



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

▼ Rubric

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

Comments:

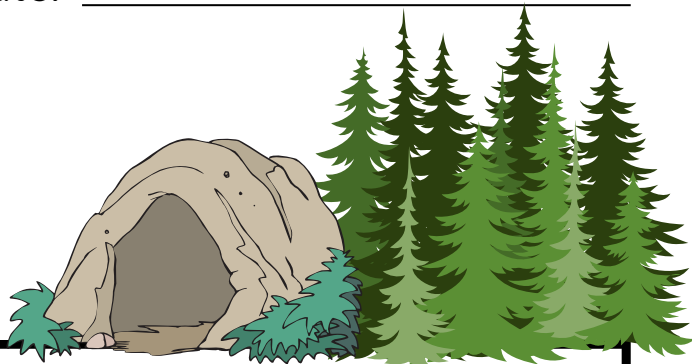
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Date: _____

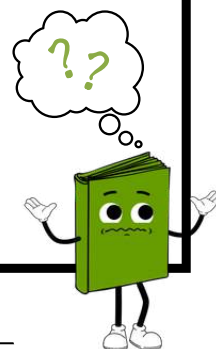
SCARY EDITION

Would You Rather...

be lost in a cave or in a forest?



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



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
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Total Points = ___/10			

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Date: _____

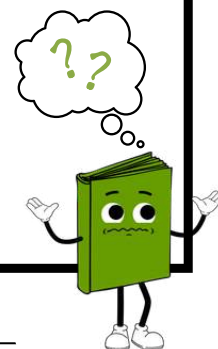
SCARY EDITION

Would You Rather...

face a vampire or a werewolf?



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



▼ Rubric

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
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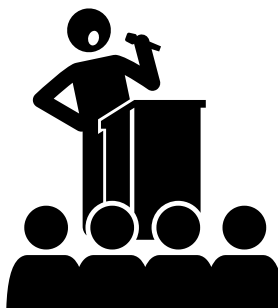
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Date: _____

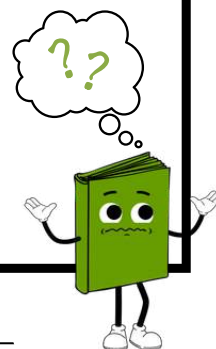
SCARY EDITION

Would You Rather...

give a speech in front of your whole school
or a room full of strangers?



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



▼ Rubric

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

Date: _____

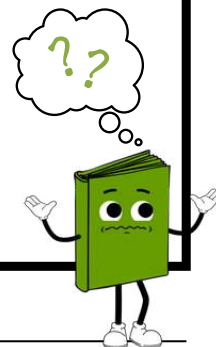
SCARY EDITION

Would You Rather...

be locked in a room full of mice or snakes?



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



▼ Rubric

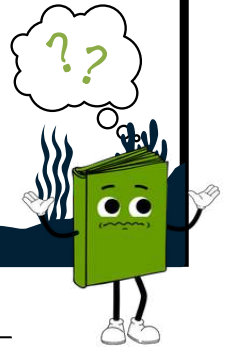
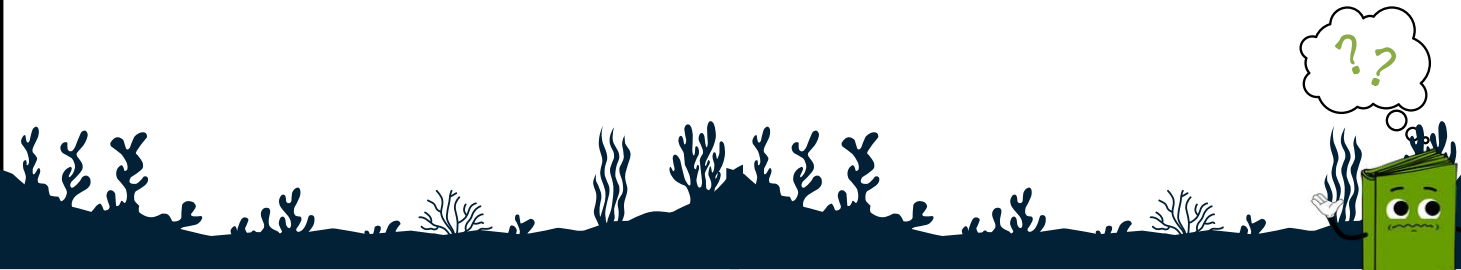
Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			
Total Points = ___/10			

Comments:

Date: _____

be at the top of a cliff or the bottom of the ocean?

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



▼ Rubric

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

Comments:

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

Comments:

Name: _____

Date: _____

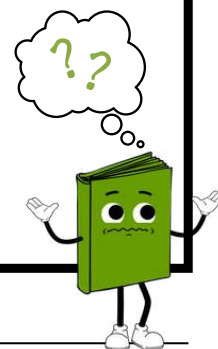
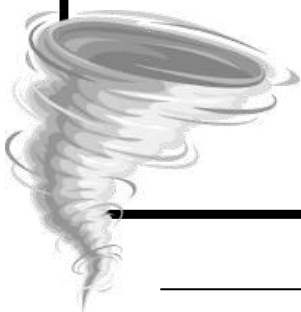
SCARY EDITION

Would You Rather...

experience a hurricane or a tornado?



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



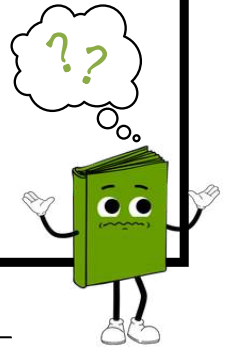
▼ Rubric

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

Comments:

Date: _____

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



▼ Rubric

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

Comments:

▼ 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.)			

Comments:

Date: _____

face mom or dad when you are in trouble?

▼ Rubric

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

Comments:

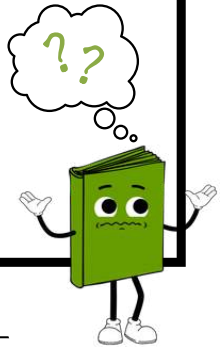
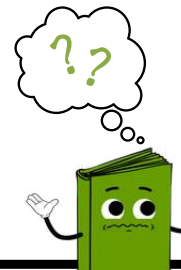
▼ Rubric			
Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Comments:

Date: _____

Would You Rather...

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

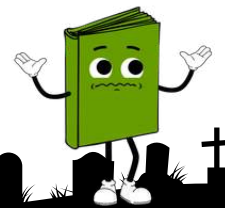
[illegible]

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

Comments:

Date: _____

Would You Rather...



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.)			

Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS

Sept. 29-Oct. 3



Monday

September



Tuesday

September



Wednesday

Before and After

Style/Skills:

- Connection to Literature
- Mentor Sentences
- Word Choice
- Theme

Thursday

Scared?

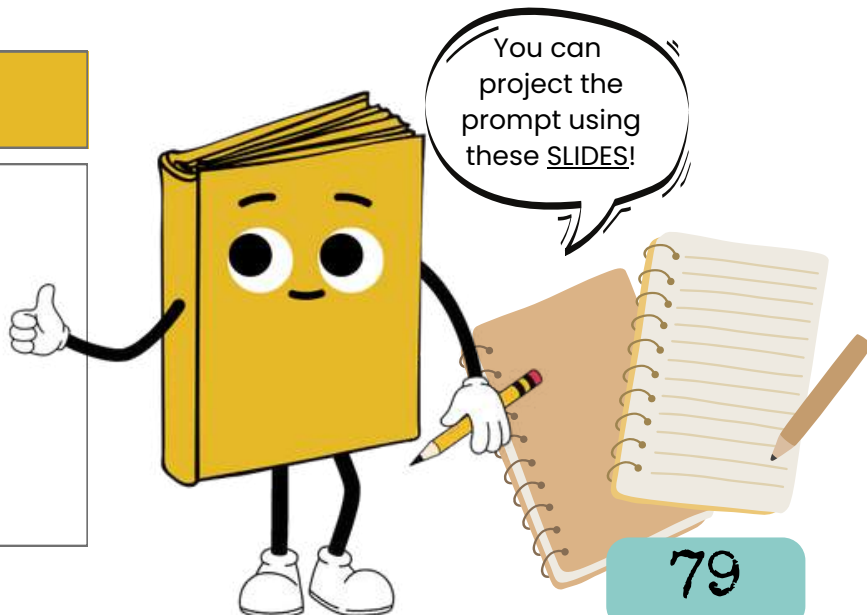
Style/Skills:

- Personal Reflection

Friday

Free Write Friday

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



NAME: _____

WRITING PROMPTS

FROM THE WORD NERD

Use this line from the Newbery Honor Award winning book One Came Home by Amy Timberlake to start your own scene/story.

“I hadn’t appreciated before when I’d been there. But now, before was where I wanted to be, before was where I wanted to live.”



Rubric

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

Total Points = ___/10

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

Personal Reflection



What do you do to cope with this intense feeling/emotion?

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

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

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS

October 6-10



Monday

Invent a Monster!

Style/Skills:

- Description
- Word Choice
- Adjectives

Tuesday

Tidal Wave

Style/Skills:

- Prediction
- Plotting (Plot points)
- Setting (Time)
- Genre: Survival Story

Wednesday

Fashionista

Style/Skills:

- Characterization
- Setting

Thursday

The Yellow Door

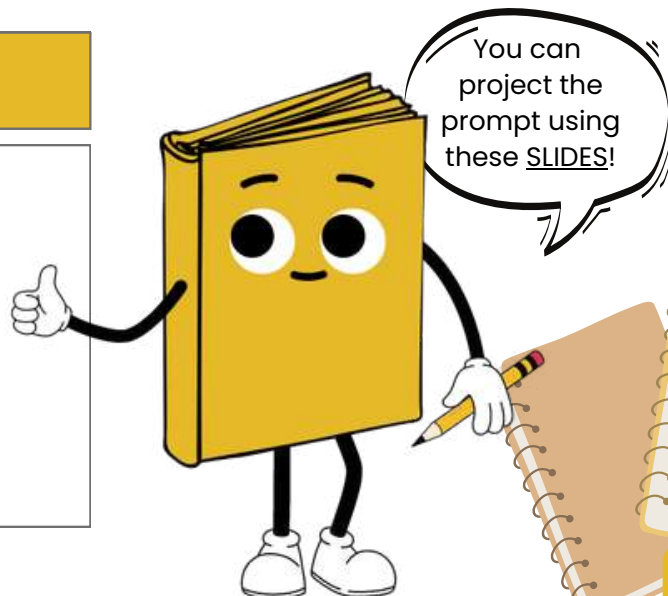
Style/Skills:

- Creative Writing
- Prediction

Friday

Free Write Friday

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



WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

A collage featuring a large, colorful, rainbow-like eye in the center, a yellow cartoon character with a wide grin in the top right, and a white, hooded figure with glowing eyes in the bottom left.

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

Teacher Comments:

Created by the Word Nerd

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

Either begin **one hour** before this picture was taken, or **immediately** after the picture was taken.



Artist Credit: BP Kelsey

[illegible]

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

Total Points = ____ /10

Created by the Word Nerd

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD



Teacher Comments:

Created by the Word Nerd

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

WRITE A STORY TO EXPLAIN...

what is
behind
the
yellow
door?

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

Rubric

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

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS

October 13-17



Monday

A Magical Night

Style/Skills:

- Connection to Literature
- Description
- Setting (Time)

Tuesday

Famous Parents

Style/Skills:

- Personal Reflection

Wednesday

Advice for a Friend

Style/Skills:

- Putting yourself in someone else's shoes
- Theme

Thursday

A Whale of a Tale

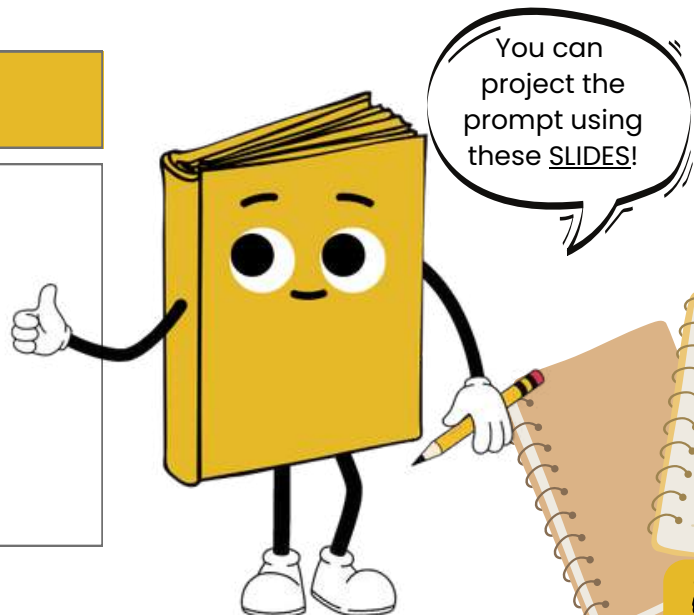
Style/Skills:

- Genre: Myths
- Creating Writing
- Theme

Friday

Free Write Friday

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



WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

COOL

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

Total Points = /10

Created by the Word Nerd

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

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

Total Points = ____ /10

Rubric

NAME: _____

WRITING PROMPTS

FROM THE WORD NERD

What advice
would you give?

Writing Prompt: Continue the story.

Advice. My best friend wanted advice. "Needed advice," she claimed. I sat for a solid minute. Thinking. What advice did I have to give? Then it came to me. I picked up my phone and sent her a text.



▼ Rubric

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

Total Points = ___/10

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

A circular image showing a large whale breaching the ocean surface, surrounded by white, billowing clouds against a blue sky. The whale is dark grey with white markings on its head and back, and its tail is visible above the water. The image is framed by a dark grey border.

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

Total Points = ____ /10

WRITING PROMPTS

October 20-24



Monday

Cold Killer

Style/Skills:

- Setting
- Genre: Post-Apocalyptic

Tuesday

3 Wishes

Style/Skills:

- Personal Reflection
- Genre: Fantasy

Wednesday

Trick or Treat!

Style/Skills:

- Connection to Literature
- Characterization

Thursday

OWL: Caption This!

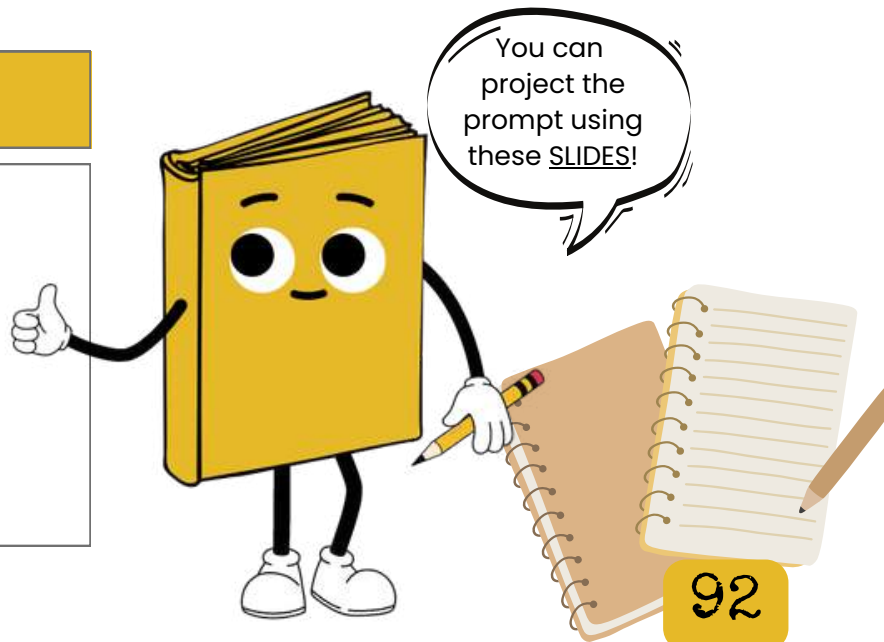
Style/Skills:

- Captions
- Point of View

Friday

Free Write Friday

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



WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

"The virus can't live in that extreme cold," Otis explained. "Antarctica is the only place we will be able to outrun this killer. Antarctica is the only place we will be able to survive."

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

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

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

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

Total Points = ____ /10

Rubric

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

Connect to your Reading...

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

Total Points = ____ /10

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

- the owl
- a photographer
- a bird watcher
- a mouse

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

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

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS

October 27-31



Monday

The Discovery

Style/Skills:

- Creative Writing
- Prediction

Tuesday

Name the Dragon

Style/Skills:

- Characterization
- Description
- Genre: Fantasy

Wednesday

Campfire Stories

Style/Skills:

- Creative Writing
- Genre: Horror

Thursday

The Pumpkin Carving Contest

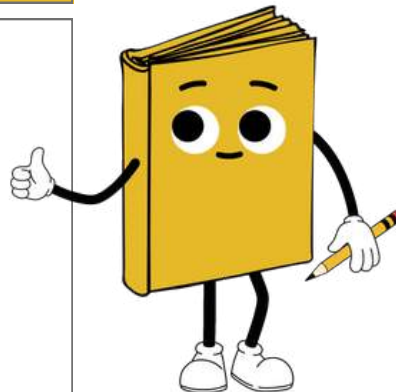
Style/Skills:

- Transition Words
- Tone/Mood

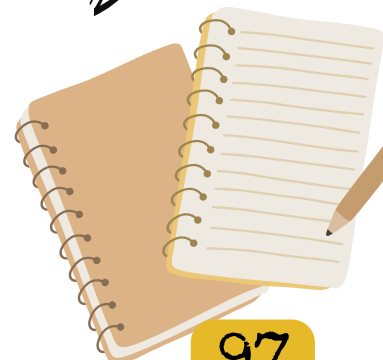
Friday

Free Write Friday

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



You can project the prompt using these SLIDES!



WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

Continue the Story

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

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

Teacher Comments:

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

A large, detailed sculpture of a dinosaur, possibly a Spinosaurus, is shown breathing a massive plume of fire. The dinosaur is positioned next to a building with a prominent green dome. The scene is set against a blue sky with scattered clouds. The image is framed by a circular border, with the word "on" visible in the top left corner.

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

Total Points = ____ /10

Rubric

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD

It was tradition to tell a ghost story on the first night of camp. However is was not tradition to...

[illegible]

Total Points = ____ /10

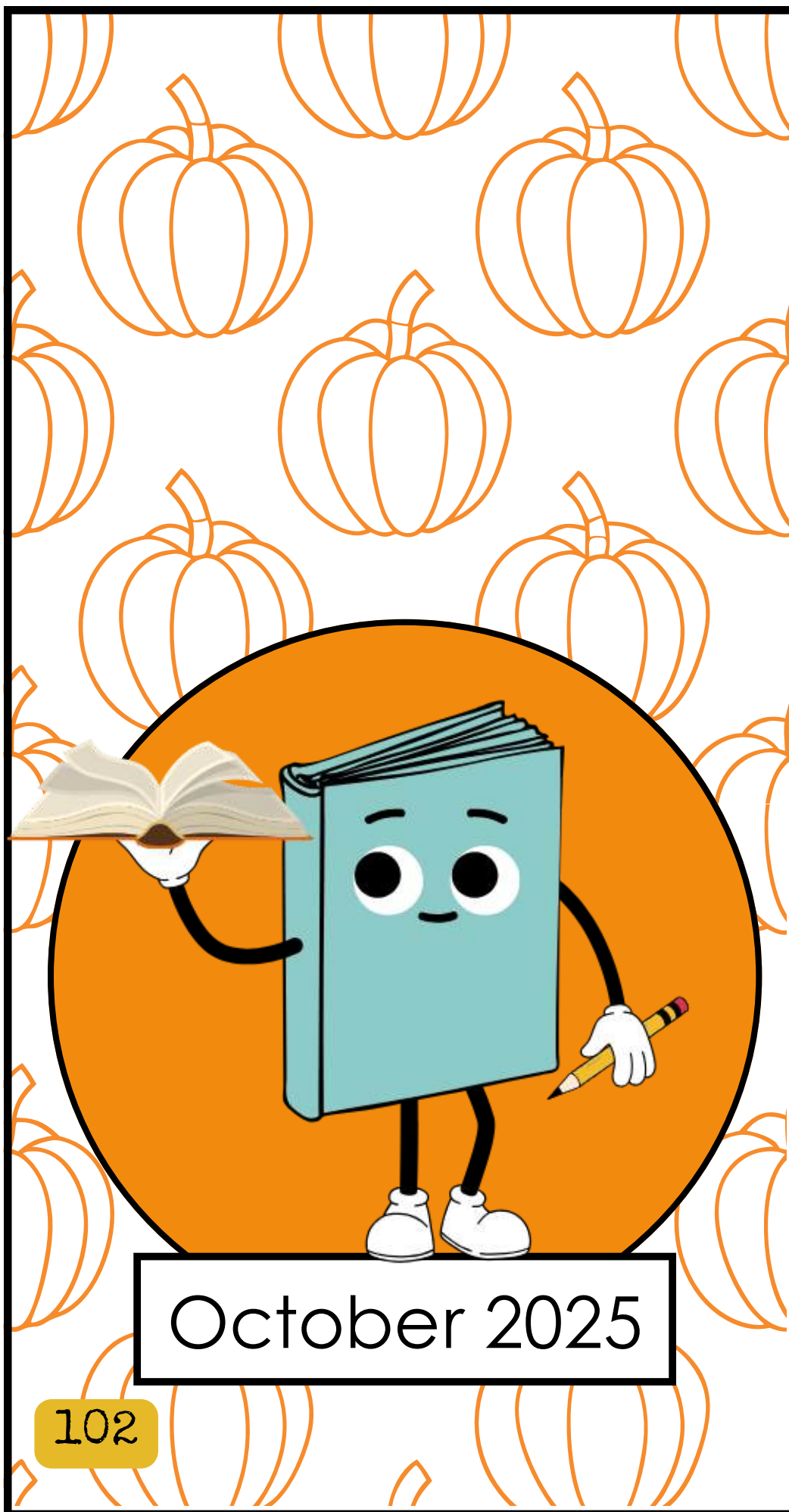
Rubric

WRITING PROMPTS
FROM THE WORD NERD



Teacher Comments:

Created by the Word Nerd



October 2025

102

S
M
O
S
S
E
L

Library

Scavenger Hunt



Link

Created by the Word Nerd



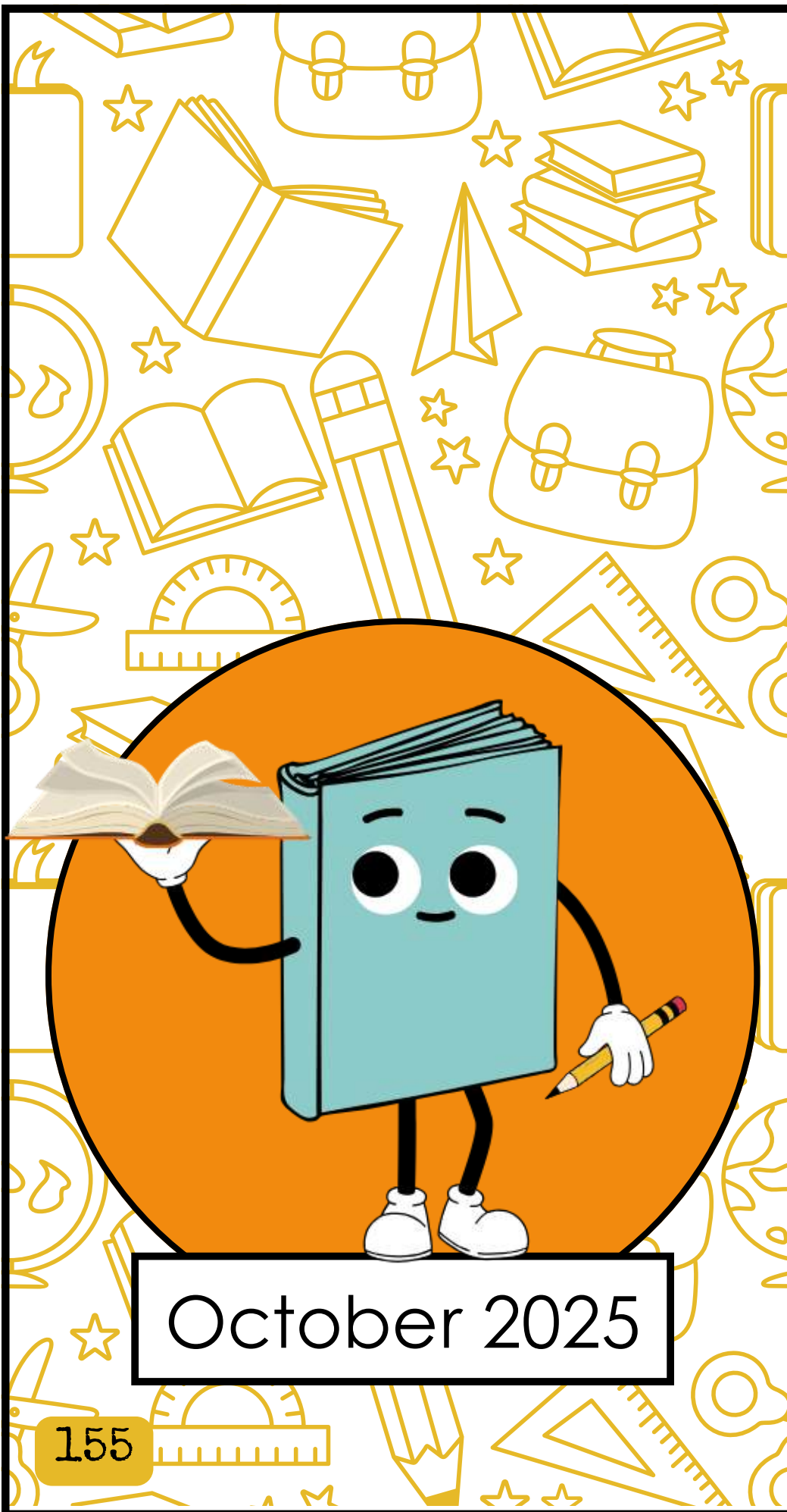
The Windup & the **STEAL**

BY AMANDA ZIEBA



[Link](#)



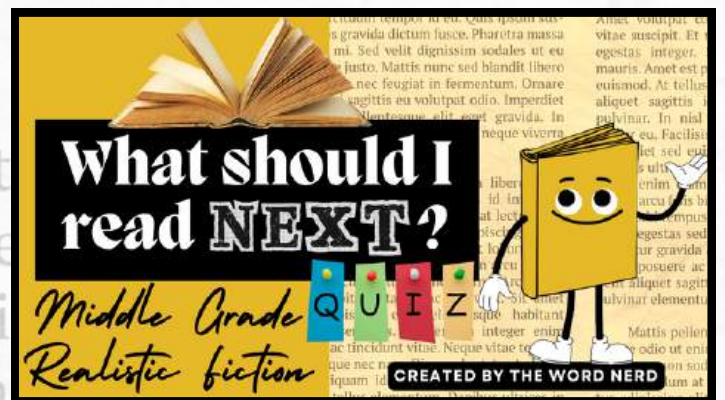
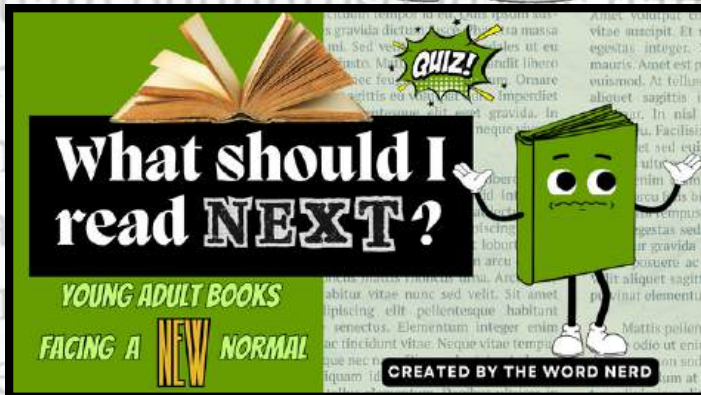
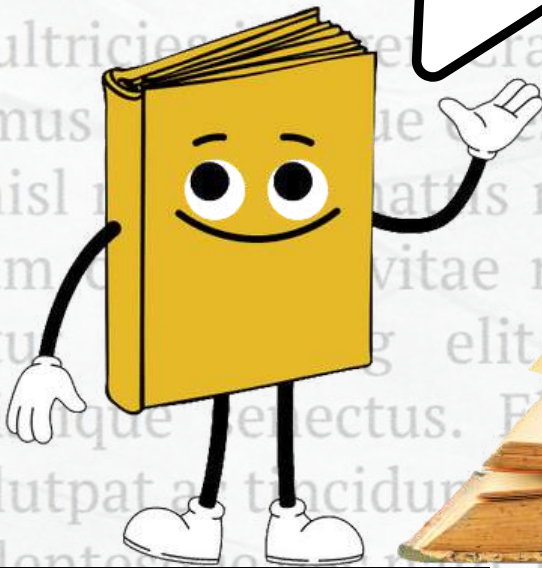


October 2025

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
BECAUSE YOU DESERVE THEM!**

Book Recommendation Quizzes

WHAT
SHOULD I READ
* *Next?* *



From the Word Nerd

WHAT SHOULD I READ NEXT?

BOOK RECOMMENDATION QUIZZES

Have you ever turn your students loose to roam the library and find yourself disappointed with the results? Guess, what? Your students are likely disappointed too.

Rather than sending them to wander aimlessly, use these book recommendation quizzes to help students find a book that matches their their personal interests and preferences.

Here's how it works:

- Share the quiz links with students.
- Students will answer the 8 questions. The software/website will use their answers to identify a specific reading selection.
- Students will read the given book blurb and then have the option to click a link to listen to the First Chapter read aloud video for that book.
- If the student enjoys chapter 1 they can head out into the library to locate the full book and continue reading.

4 Quiz Topics/titles

- Middle Grade Realistic Fiction
- Middle Grade Stories with Intense Conflict
- Young Adult Books: Facing a New Normal
- Young Adult Books with Big Problems to Solve



More coming soon? Send
recommendations and requests to me
at: wordnerd@amandazieba.com

WHAT SHOULD I READ NEXT?

BOOK RECOMMENDATION FLOW CHARTS

THIS RESOURCE CAN BE USED ALL SORTS OF WAYS...
LET ME SHARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITES. :)

A Few Implementation Ideas/Tips

- Print and laminate these below “posters” and have students scan the QR code with a phone or personal computer.
- Post the quiz links in an online platform like Google Classroom.
- You can either share one book recommendation quiz at a time or print and put the sheets in a binder for students to access any time they’d like a reading recommendation.
- Post the quiz posters/links/QR codes on a bulletin board or on the bathroom stall door.
- You can use one quiz in place of a whole group First Chapter Friday... allowing each student to pick a thematic reading selection of their own and then listen independently with a personal device.

P.S. There are 200 (and counting) First Chapter Friday Read Aloud videos on my YouTube channel, this resource is an effort to prevent time wasted scrolling and increase the chances students will quickly find a right-for-them book!



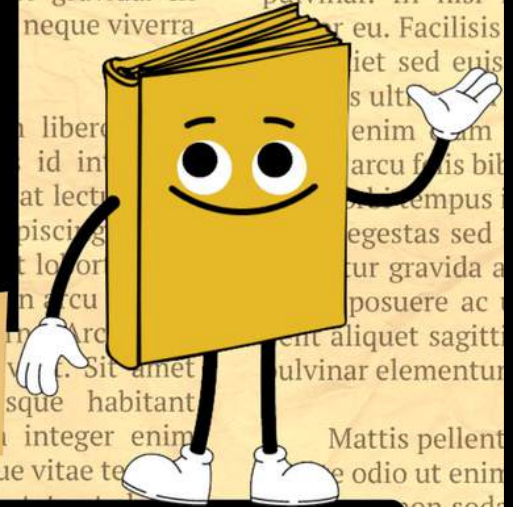
Book Recommendation Quiz



What should I read NEXT?

Middle Grade
Realistic fiction

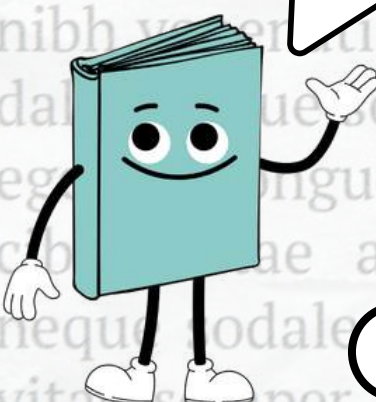
Q U I Z



CREATED BY THE WORD NERD

Link: <https://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/ugc/story.php?title=what-should-i-read-next-young-adult-novels-facing-a-new-normal0c>

WHAT
SHOULD I READ
* Next? *



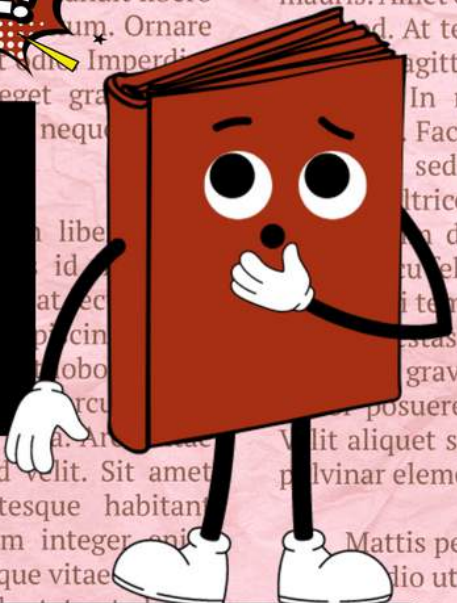
From the Word Nerd

Book Recommendation Quiz



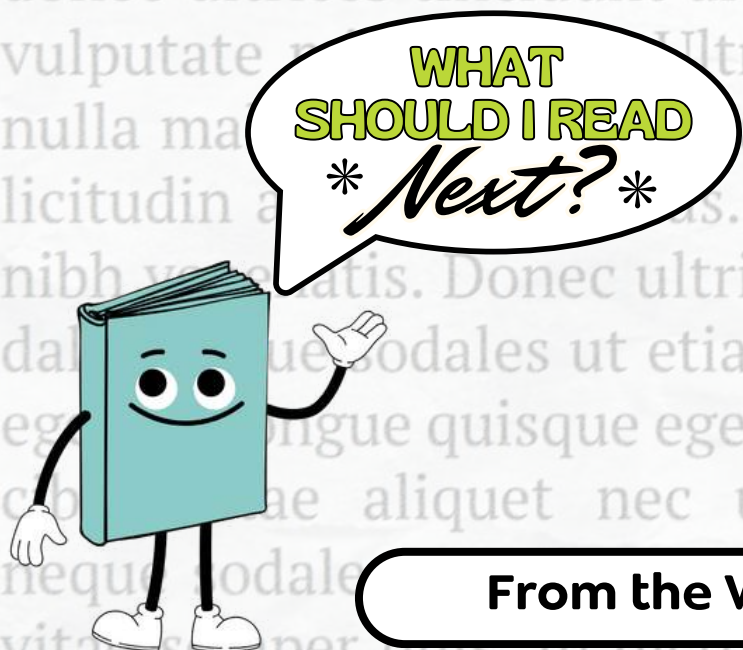
What should I read **NEXT**?

MIDDLE GRADE BOOKS
WITH INTENSE CONFLICT



CREATED BY THE WORD NERD

Link: <https://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/ugc/story.php?title=what-should-i-read-next-middle-grade-books-with-intense-conflict>



From the Word Nerd

Book Recommendation Quiz



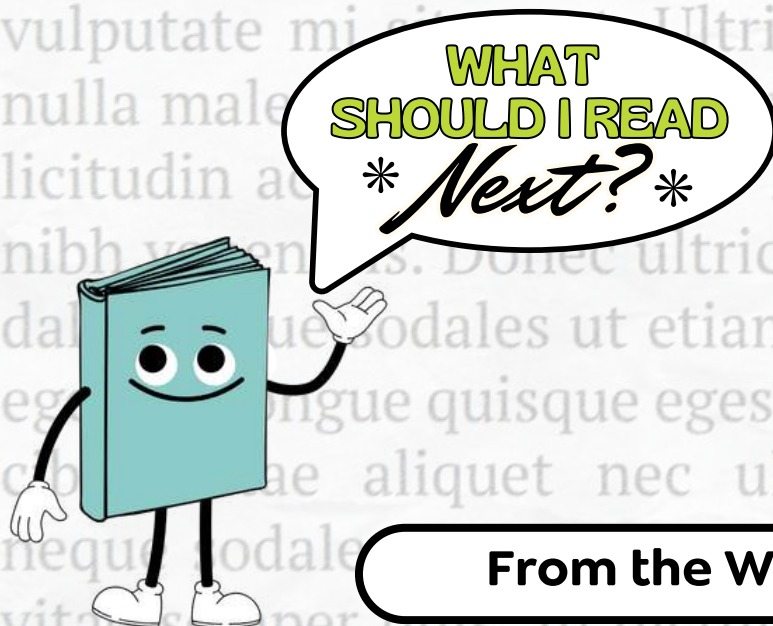
What should I read NEXT?

YOUNG ADULT BOOKS

FACING A NEW NORMAL

CREATED BY THE WORD NERD

Link: <https://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/ugc/story.php?title=what-should-i-read-next-young-adult-novels-facing-a-new-normal0c>



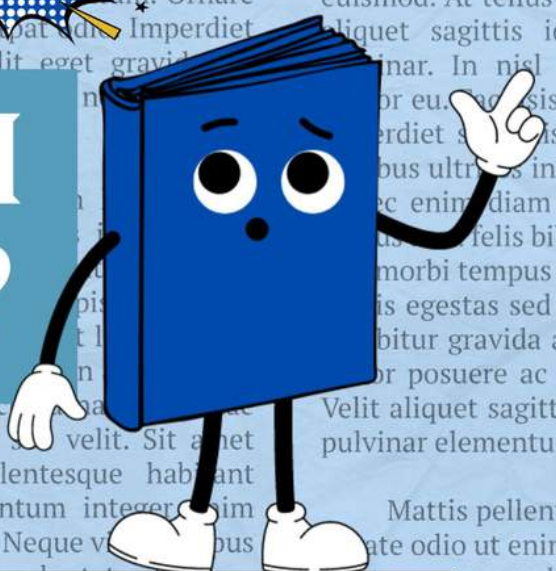
From the Word Nerd

Book Recommendation Quiz



What should I read **NEXT**?

YOUNG ADULT BOOKS WITH BIG PROBLEMS TO SOLVE

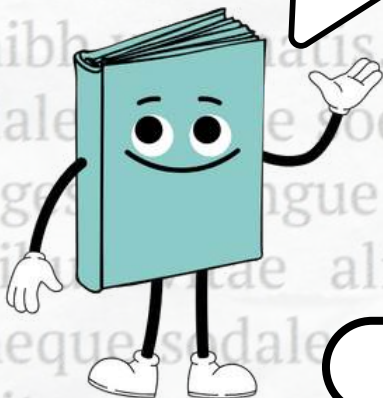


CREATED BY THE WORD NERD

Link: <https://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/ugc/story.php?title=what-should-i-read-next-young-adult-books-with-big-problems-to-solve6r>

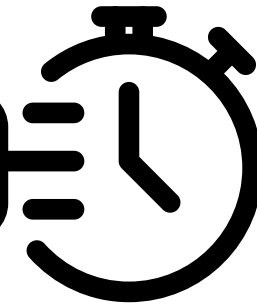


WHAT SHOULD I READ
** Next? **

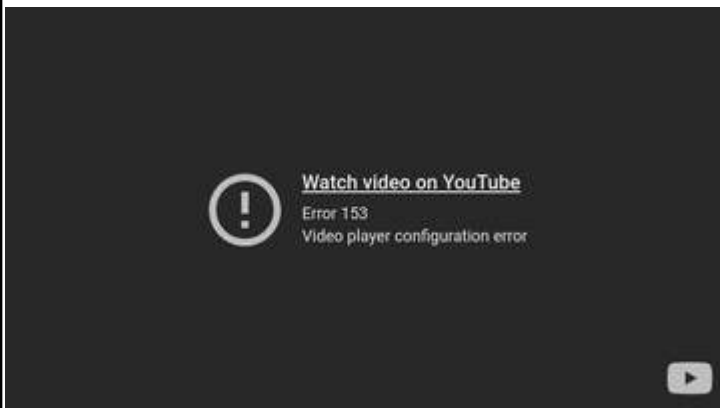


From the Word Nerd

TIMER VIDEOS



Watch this video for a few quick tips on how to effectively incorporate timers into your classroom.



1 minute timer video



30 minute timer video

Links

6 Strategies: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhwxkP3hTzw>

1 Minute Timer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJn942usELA&t=0s>

30 Minute Timer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjzGPxbfQnk>

Synonym Practice



Use these ten passages to help students practice replacing underlined words with synonyms. This product includes passages, word banks, answer recording blanks and an answer key. A great way to practice understanding the concept of synonyms and an opportunity to teach the use of context clues as well as a thesaurus!

Passage #1**Word Bank**

notify	choice	neared	unseen	quickly	danger
secretive	filthy	signaling	trying	answered	important

On a dark and stormy night, a mysterious figure approached the castle. He rode his horse hastily up to the large oak doors. His fist pounded the door attempting to wake someone within. He had an urgent message. He stole a furtive glance behind and hoped someone would answer the door quickly. Suddenly he could hear hoof beats behind him on the bridge crossing the moat.

"Help!" he shouted trying to alert the guards to the incoming threat.

Unexpectedly someone tapped him on his boot. He looked down to see a dirty pair of hands motioning him to crawl beneath the moat bridge.

"What about my horse?" he asked.

"Leave him," the hidden voice replied.

Feeling he had no other option, he followed the voice into the darkness.

Record answers below.

Approached: _____

Hastily: _____

Attempting: _____

urgent: _____

Furtive: _____

alert: _____

Threat: _____

dirty: _____

Motioning: _____

hidden: _____

Replied: _____

option: _____

Passage #2

Word Bank					
expert	make	ready	loved	teacher	organized
aspirations	begin	famous	books	materials	future

Louise was excited about his upcoming cooking lesson. It was his dream to be a world renowned chef. He had always relished food and enjoyed helping his parents prepare their family meals. He was eager to take a major step toward becoming a professional chef. He straightened his white hat, tightened his apron and carefully arranged his utensils. Finally the instructor walked into the kitchen.

“Please turn to page 27 of your cooking manuals and we will commence with our first recipe!” she said

Louise checked over his ingredients list and compared it with the items he had brought with him. He noticed he was missing the most important item! It looked as if his cooking dreams were going up in smoke before he even got started.

Record answers below.

upcoming: _____

renowned: _____

relished: _____

prepare: _____

eager: _____

professional: _____

arranged: _____

instructor: _____

manuals: _____

commence: _____

ingredients: _____

dreams: _____

Passage #3

Word Bank					
Abilities	custody	aids	large	make	abundant
enjoyable	creatures	fret	thoughtful	brutal	fitting

Have you ever wondered how the animals that live in the zoo came to be there? Many of them live at the zoo in captivity because they suffered severe injuries while living in the wild. Living in the zoo has many benefits for them like access to plentiful food and a safe place to sleep.

The zoologists are very attentive and take a considerable amount of time to create an appropriate home for each animal. The animal caretakers also prepare fun and challenging activities for them to keep their animal skills sharp. So next time you go to the zoo, don't worry about the animals! They are well cared for and live in a great home!

Record answers below.

animals: _____

captivity: _____

severe: _____

benefits: _____

plentiful: _____

attentive: _____

considerable: _____

create: _____

appropriate: _____

fun: _____

skills: _____

worry: _____

Passage #4

Word Bank					
Charitably	replica	found	cause	rebuilt	latest
Strong	chance	entrance	construction	hall	spectacular

On his recent field trip to the museum, Ben discovered something amazing. The source of his enjoyment was a giant model dinosaur made up of bones found deep in the jungle far away. The centuries old bones had been generously donated by a famous scientist and then reconstructed in the museum's main chamber. Ben's attention was drawn to the gigantic structure the moment he walked in. He could even see it from the lobby as he waited for his teachers to pay the admission fee. As he looked up at the skeleton he wondered if it would be sturdy enough to climb on. One look at the security guard however and he decided not to risk it.

Record answers below.

recent: _____

discovered: _____

amazing: _____

source: _____

model: _____

generously: _____

reconstructed: _____

chamber: _____

structure: _____

admission: _____

sturdy: _____

risk: _____

Passage #5

Word Bank					
Perform	custom	enjoyable	range	trained	skillful
finished	cheering	end	schedule	marvelous	yearly

Alone in her room, Karen carefully unpacked her violin. She practiced for 30 minutes every day, starting with basic scales and then moving to demonstrate more complicated pieces. Tonight her rehearsal time was especially important because tomorrow was the annual music festival concert. The show included a variety of entertaining performances. It was tradition to have the most accomplished musicians play the final song. Karen and the rest of her orchestra would be playing last. To conclude the concert was a great honor and Karen wanted to be sure she was not only ready, but also sounded her best. As she completed her practice routine she could almost hear the crowd congratulating her group on an outstanding performance.

Record answers below.

practiced: _____

demonstrate: _____

annual: _____

variety: _____

entertaining: _____

tradition: _____

accomplished: _____

conclude: _____

completed: _____

routine: _____

congratulating: _____

outstanding: _____

Passage #6

Word Bank					
Many	angry	try	focus	panicked	looked
sick	determined	asked	regular	raise	producing

Alexander was feeling queasy. He knew his boss would be furious if he had another bad day on the job. Despite Alexander's frequent mistakes, he somehow still had a job. A typical shift had Alexander manufacturing 750 computer circuits. His boss had requested that he increase his production to 1,000 circuits. He glanced up at the clock. He had 30 minutes left before the end of day and he was 27 short! Alexander was frantic! What would he do? Maybe if he could concentrate for the next half hour he could make his deadline after all. Resolved to give it his best effort he bent back down over his work.

Record answers below.

sick: _____

furious: _____

frequent: _____

typical: _____

manufacturing: _____

requested: _____

increase: _____

glanced: _____

frantic: _____

concentrate: _____

resolved: _____

effort: _____

Passage #7**Word Bank**King
finishingsatisfy
narratormany
crueldeadly
traveledstory
fancyprotected
paradise

On Tuesday when Anna went to the library, a storyteller was just beginning a tale. The story was about a monarch named George. George lived in an oasis surrounded by numerous palm trees that sheltered his luxurious home from the harsh desert winds. George has a pet falcon with lethal talons. Together they roamed the desert, looking for water to quench their thirst. Anna wanted to stay to hear more of the story, but suddenly her cell phone rang. It was her father telling her to come home for dinner. Sadly she left the library and began to walk home, her imagination completing the rest of the story.

Record answers below.

storyteller: _____

tale: _____

monarch: _____

oasis: _____

numerous: _____

sheltered: _____

luxurious: _____

harsh: _____

lethal: _____

roamed: _____

quench: _____

completing: _____

Passage #8

Word Bank					
Crazy	appetizing	teachers	obstacle	carefully	scared
aid	friends	achievement	mesa	negative	payment

Sadie stood looking at the challenge before her. The giant rock face looked absurd to even consider climbing, but she knew with the help of her companions surrounding her, it was possible. If only she were not afraid of heights. The compensation for reaching the top was not only the pride of the accomplishment, but also a delicious meal that had been prepared by their climbing instructors. It was all waiting for her at the top of the plateau. She knew that pessimistic thoughts would not help her, so she tried to stay positive. Sadie took a deep breath, cautiously reached for the rock face and began to climb.

Record answers below.

challenge: _____

absurd: _____

companions: _____

afraid: _____

compensation: _____

accomplishment: _____

delicious: _____

instructors: _____

plateau: _____

pessimistic: _____

help: _____

cautiously: _____

Passage #9

Word Bank					
Huge	hallway	disciplined	rushed	persuade	decrease
distressed	mistake	began	empty	climb	reveal

Jared was devastated. He'd never gotten a detention before. Until today. The whole thing was just a big misunderstanding and now he was being punished. It all started when Henry tried to coax him to show his answers for the math assignment. Jared didn't know how to turn him down, so instead he decided to just run away. Jared bolted out of the classroom and dashed down a vacant hallway. As Jared was about to ascend the stairs Mr. Johnson stepped out and caught him. If only Henry had known how to reduce fractions none of this would have happened. Now Jared was stuck inside copying "I will not run in the corridor" a hundred times.

Record answers below.

devastated: _____

big: _____

misunderstanding: _____

punished: _____

started: _____

coax: _____

show: _____

dashed: _____

vacant: _____

ascend: _____

reduce: _____

corridor: _____

Passage #10

Word Bank					
Motivating	gathered	painful	hurried	energetically	last
gathered	drifting	anxiously	training	connecting	undefeated

This was it. Tonight was the championship game. Lana sat in the locker room, nervously tapping her toes while the coach gave an inspiring pep talk. Seated on the bench, the team could hear the roar of the crowd as they assembled for the game. Lana's mind was wandering over the past season and all of the agonizing work the team had put in... all of the conditioning, weight lifting, drill running and team bonding. So far the team was unbeaten and Lana was determined to keep it that way with another win tonight. It was time to get out on the court and play the final game of the season. Lana enthusiastically joined her teammates as they rushed out the door, ready to play.

Record answers below.

nervously: _____

inspiring: _____

assembled: _____

wandering: _____

agonizing: _____

conditioning: _____

bonding: _____

unbeaten: _____

determined: _____

final: _____

enthusiastically: _____

rushed: _____

ANSWER KEY

Passage #1 Answers (Synonyms replaced)

On a dark and stormy night, a mysterious figure **neared** the castle. He rode his horse **quickly** up to the large oak doors. His fist pounded the door **trying** to wake someone within. He had an **important** message. He stole a **secretive** glance behind and hoped someone would answer the door quickly. Suddenly he could hear hoof beats behind him on the bridge crossing the moat.

"Help!" he shouted trying to **notify** the guards to the incoming **danger**.

Unexpectedly someone tapped him on his boot. He looked down to see a **filthy** pair of hands **signaling** him to crawl beneath the moat bridge.

"What about my horse?" he asked.

"Leave him," the **unseen** voice **answered**.

Feeling he had no other **choice**, he followed the voice into the darkness.

Passage #2 Answers (synonyms replaced)

Louise was excited about his **future** cooking lesson. It was his dream to be a world **famous** chef. He had always **loved** food and enjoyed helping his parents **make** their family meals. He was **ready** to take a major step toward becoming an **expert** chef. He straightened his white hat, tightened his apron and carefully **organized** his utensils. Finally the **teacher** walked into the kitchen.

"Please turn to page 27 of your cooking **books** and we will **begin** with our first recipe!" she said

Louise checked over his **materials** list and compared it with the items he had brought with him. He noticed he was missing the most important item! It looked as if his cooking **aspirations** were going up in smoke before he even got started.

Passage #3 Answers (synonyms replaced)

Have you ever wondered how the **creatures** that live in the zoo came to be there? Many of them live at the zoo in **custody** because they suffered **brutal** injuries while living in the wild. Living in the zoo has many **aids** for them like access to **abundant** food and a safe place to sleep.

The zoologists are very **thoughtful** and take a **large** amount of time to **make** a **fitting** home for each animal. The animal caretakers also prepare **enjoyable** and challenging activities for them to keep their animal **abilities** sharp. So next time you go to the zoo, don't **fret** about the animals! They are well cared for and live in a great home!

Passage #4 Answers (synonyms replaced)

On his **latest** field trip to the museum, Ben **found** something **spectacular**. The **cause** of his enjoyment was a giant **replica** dinosaur made up of bones found deep in the jungle far away. The centuries old bones had been **charitably** donated by a famous scientist and then **rebuilt** in the museum's main **hall**. Ben's attention was drawn to the gigantic **construction** the moment he walked in. He could even see it from the lobby as he waited for his teachers to pay the **entrance** fee. As he looked up at the skeleton he wondered if it would be **strong** enough to climb on. One look at the security guard however and he decided not to **chance** it.

Passage #5 Answers (synonyms replaced)

Alone in her room, Karen carefully unpacked her violin. She **trained** for 30 minutes every day, starting with basic scales and then moving to **perform** more complicated pieces. Tonight her rehearsal time was especially important because tomorrow was the **yearly** music festival concert. The show included a **range of enjoyable** performances. It was **custom** to have the most **skillful** musicians play the final song. Karen and the rest of her orchestra would be playing last. To **end** the concert was a great honor and Karen wanted to be sure she was not only ready, but also sounded her best. As she **finished** her practice **schedule** she could almost hear the crowd **cheering** her group on a **marvelous** performance.

Passage #6 Answers (synonyms replaced)

Alexander was feeling **sick**. He knew his boss would be **angry** if he had another bad day on the job. Despite Alexander's **many** mistakes, he somehow still had a job. A **regular** shift had Alexander **producing** 750 computer circuits. His boss had **asked** that he **raise** his production to 1,000 circuits. He **looked** up at the clock. He had 30 minutes left before the end of day and he was 27 short! Alexander was **panicked**! What would he do? Maybe if he could **focus** for the next half hour he could make his deadline after all. **Determined** to give it his best **try** he bent back down over his work.

Passage #7 Answers (synonyms replaced)

On Tuesday when Anna went to the library, a **narrator** was just beginning a **story**. The story was about a **king** named George. George lived in a **paradise** surrounded by **many** palm trees that **protected** his **fancy** home from the **cruel** desert winds. George has a pet falcon with **deadly** talons. Together they **traveled** the desert, looking for water to **satisfy** their thirst. Anna wanted to stay to hear more of the story, but suddenly her cell phone rang. It was her father telling her to come home for dinner. Sadly she left the library and began to walk home, her imagination **finishing** the rest of the story.

Passage #8 Answers (synonyms replaced)

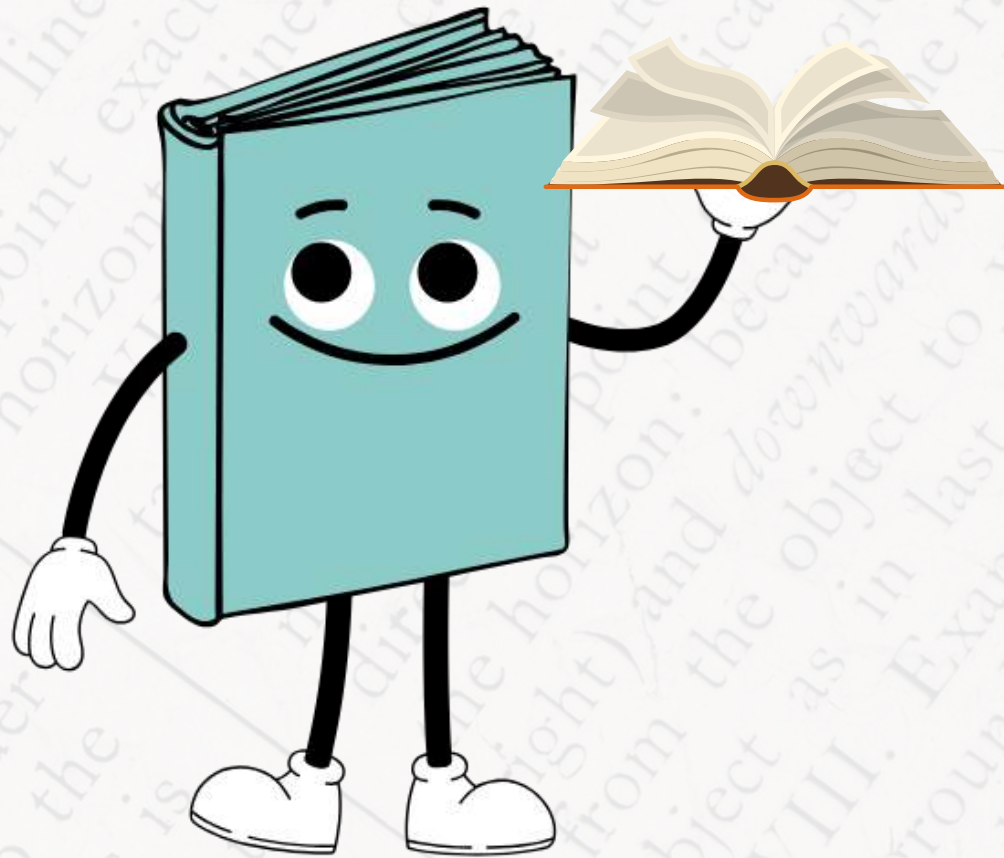
Sadie stood looking at the **obstacle** before her. The giant rock face looked **crazy** to even consider climbing, but she knew with the help of her **friends** surrounding her, it was possible. If only she were not **scared** of heights. The **payment** for reaching the top was not only the pride of the **achievement**, but also an **appetizing** meal that had been prepared by their climbing **teachers**. It was all waiting for her at the top of the **mesa**. She knew that **negative** thoughts would not **aid** her, so she tried to stay positive. Sadie took a deep breath, **carefully** reached for the rock face and began to climb.

Passage #9 Answers (synonyms replaced)

Jared was **distressed**. He'd never gotten a detention before. Until today. The whole thing was just a **huge mistake** and now he was being **disciplined**. It all **began** when Henry tried to **persuade** him to **reveal** his answers for the math assignment. Jared didn't know how to turn him down, so instead he decided to just run away. Jared bolted out of the classroom and **rushed** down an **empty** hallway. As Jared was about to **climb** the stairs Mr. Johnson stepped out and caught him. If only Henry had known how to **decrease** fractions none of this would have happened. Now Jared was stuck inside copying "I will not run in the **hallway**" a hundred times.

Passage #10 Answers (synonyms replaced)

This was it. Tonight was the championship game. Lana sat in the locker room, **anxiously** tapping her toes while the coach gave a **motivating** pep talk. Seated on the bench, the team could hear the roar of the crowd as they **gathered** for the game. Lana's mind was **drifting** over the past season and all of the **painful** work the team had put in... all of the **training**, weight lifting, drill running and team **connecting**. So far the team was **undefeated** and Lana was **resolved** to keep it that way with another win tonight. It was time to get out on the court and play the **last** game of the season. Lana **energetically** joined her teammates as they **hurried** out the door, ready to play.



WNC BOOK LISTS

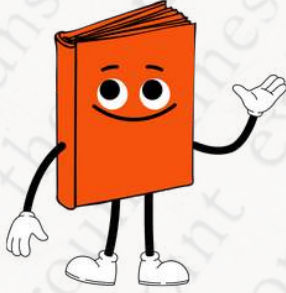
TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS



FOSTER CARE



The books on this list showcase characters who go through foster care experiences.



The Barren Grounds
by David Robertson

Closer to Nowhere
by Ellen Hopkins

Fighting Words
by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Free Verse
by Sarah Dooley

Gather
by Kenneth M. Cadow

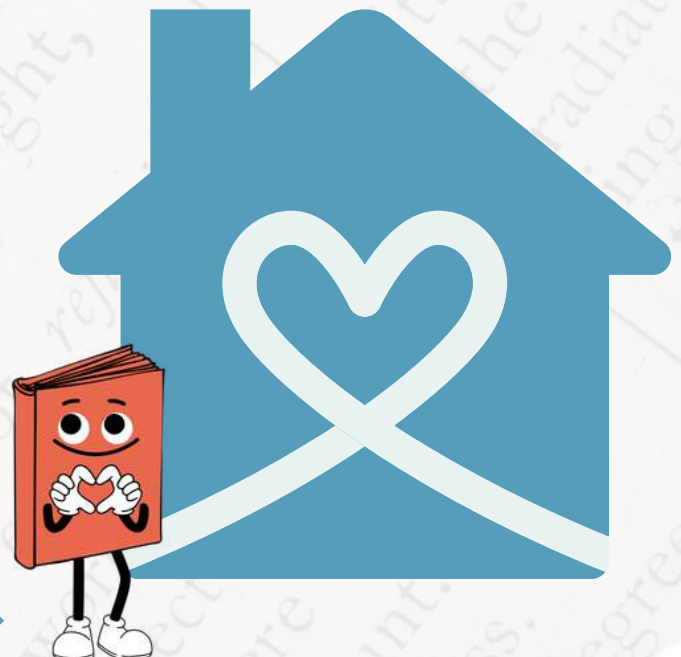
Greetings from Witness Protection
by Jake Burt

Life in the Passenger Seat
by Amanda Zieba

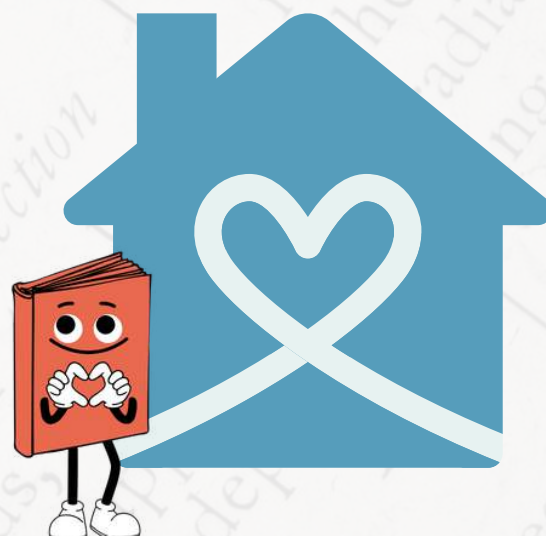
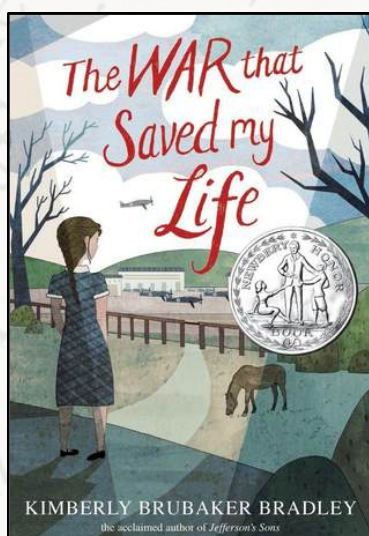
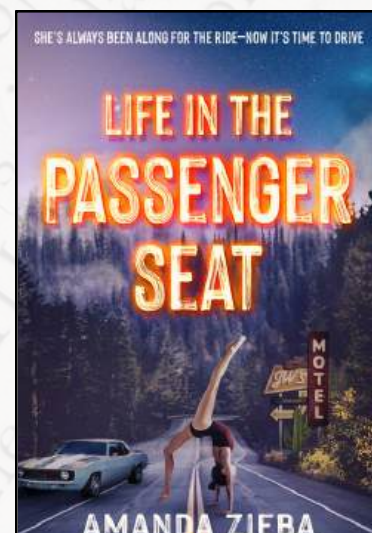
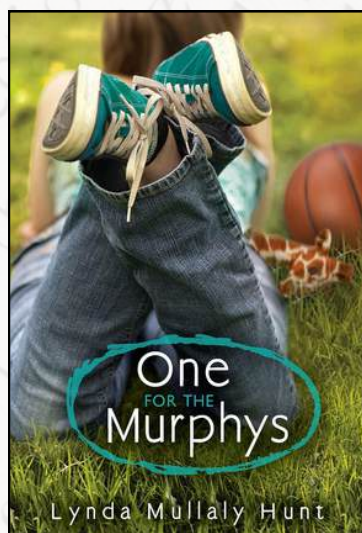
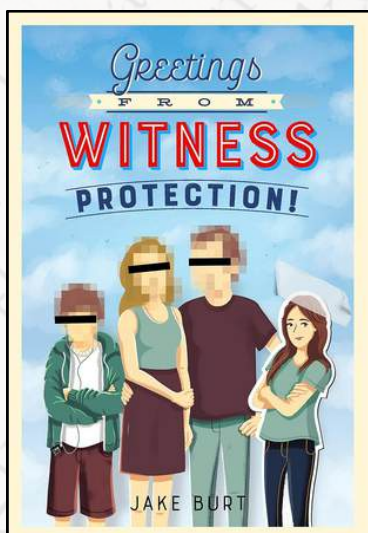
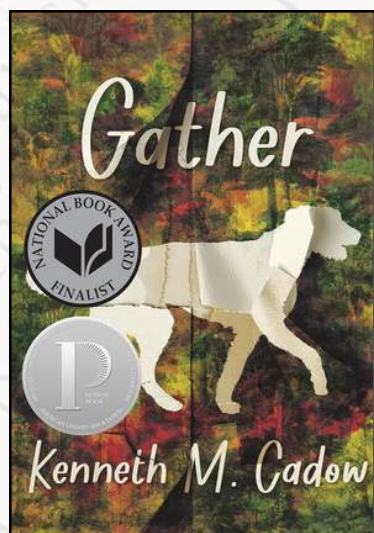
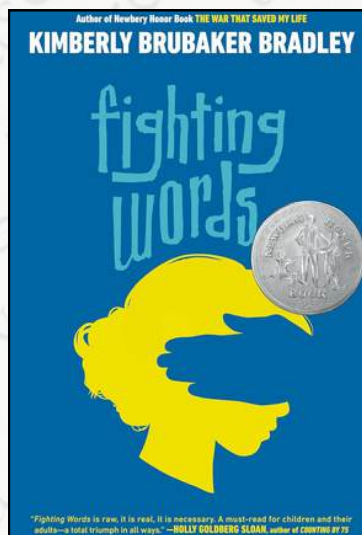
One for the Murphys
by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

The War That Saved My Life
by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

What I Carry
by Jennifer Longo



BOOKS ABOUT: FOSTER CARE



WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS



SPORTS

• • • • • WNC BOOK LIST • • • • •

SPORTS

While each of these books is about sports, they aren't all fun and games! You'll find some serious topics and mysteries, some facts and histories mixed in with the athletic competition.



Becoming Muhammad Ali

by James Patterson and Kwame Alexander (Boxing)

Change the Game by Colin Kaepernick (Football)

Chirp by Kate Messner (Gymnastics)

Chunky by Yehudi Mercado (Many sports)

The Crossover by Kwame Alexander (Basketball)

Dragon Hoops by Gene Luen Yang (Basketball)

Duel by Jessixa Bagley (Fencing)

Free Throws, Friendship and Other Things We Fouled Up

by Jenn Bishop (Basketball)

The Last Shot by John Feinstein (Basketball)

Legacy and the Queen by Kobe Bryant and Annie Matthew (Tennis)

Nikki on the Line by Barabara Carol Roberts (Basketball)

The Running Dream by Wendelin Van Draanen (Track and Field)

Stealing Home by J. Torres (Baseball)

Swim Team by Jonnie Christmas (Swimming)

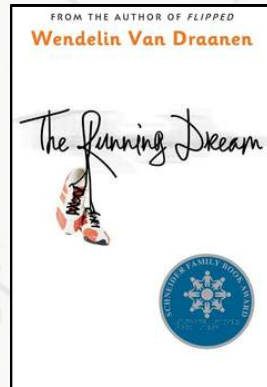
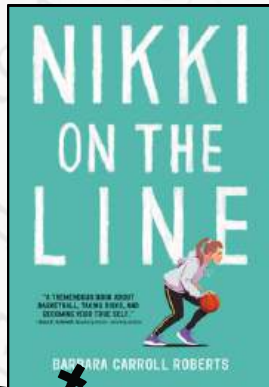
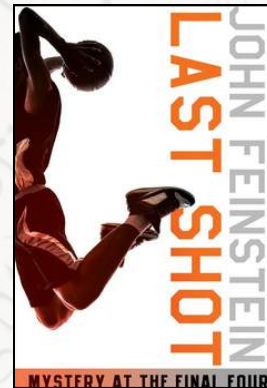
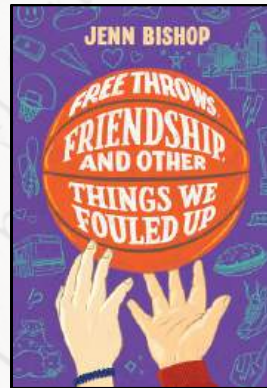
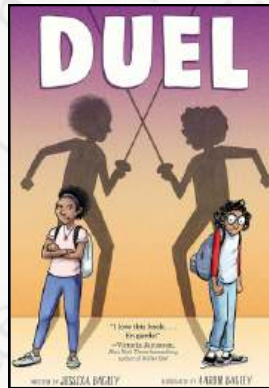
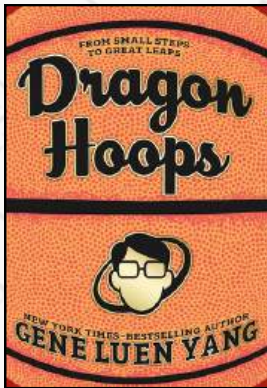
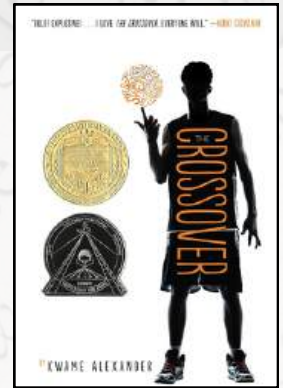
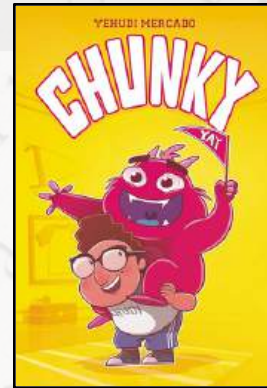
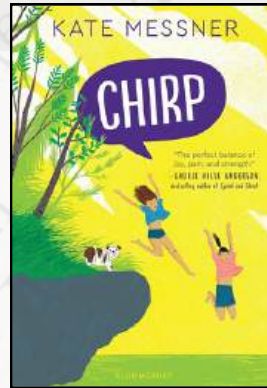
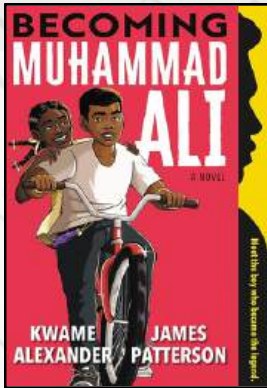
The Tryout by Christina Soontornvat (Cheerleading)

Vanishing Act by John Feinstein (Tennis)



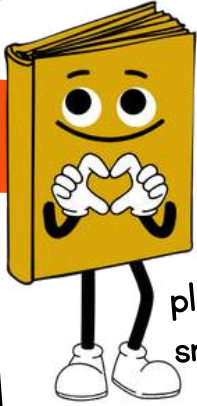
WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

S P O R T S



WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

YOU ARE MAGICAL.



Somewhere between the pumpkins and the parent-teacher conferences, you did it.

You made it through October-messy middle and all.

By now, you've got your "I swear this worked last year" backup plan ready to go. You've seen that quiet student finally crack a smile during a brain break. Maybe you've even caught a kid recommending a book you shared, unprompted, like a tiny little literary miracle. And somewhere along the way, you started calling them "my kids" without even thinking. That's magic.

Not wand-waving, spell-casting magic (though honestly, wouldn't that be nice?), but the real kind. The kind that turns chaos into connection. The kind that helps a hesitant student raise their hand. The kind that transforms that great IDEA for a lesson plans into something that actually sticks.

You don't need potions. You don't need glitter (I promise - it never works out well for you... or the custodian! Just don't, lol!).

This month's Power Playbook was never about doing it all—it was about giving you a few solid, ready-to-use moves that let you spend more time teaching and less time scrambling.

November's coming—with new challenges, but also with new lessons, writing prompts, and yes... definitely a turkey-themed brain break. But for now, take a moment to recognize what you've built so far this school year. Because teacher friend, you're not just doing the work—you're doing it with heart. And that's the real magic.

~ AMANDA