

Dear Families,

I'm so excited to be your child's reading and writing teacher next year! To help keep their reading skills strong and build on all the progress they made this past year, I'm assigning a summer reading activity. The goal is to encourage your child to keep practicing how they read, think about, and respond to a book.

**Summer Reading Assignment:**

Each student is required to read *one* book from the list provided in the assignment. You don't need to purchase the book—each title is available to borrow from the Manchester Community Library. If you run into any trouble finding a copy, just let me know and I'll be happy to help.

While students at the intermediate level are growing as independent readers, your support continues to be important. Encouraging your child to read aloud occasionally and engaging them in brief discussions can help strengthen comprehension and critical thinking skills. Here are a few conversation starters you might use:

- **What just happened in that part?** (Summarize key events.)
- **What do you think will happen next? Why?** (Make predictions with evidence.)
- **What problem is the character facing? What advice would you give them?** (Explore conflict and character.)
- **What did you think about the ending?** (Reflect and evaluate.)

Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns about the assignment at [smurphy@maplestreetsschool.com](mailto:smurphy@maplestreetsschool.com).

Enjoy your summer—and happy reading!

Warmly,  
Siobhan Murphy

## Summer Reading Assignment for Rising 5th Graders

In order to complete the assignment, please follow each of the steps that I have outlined below.

1. Choose a book from the following list of titles:

### ***Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key*** by Jack Gantos

Joey Pigza can't sit still. He can't pay attention, he can't follow the rules, and he can't help it -- especially when his meds aren't working. Joey's had problems ever since he was born, problems just like his dad and grandma have. And whether he's wreaking havoc on a class trip or swallowing his house key, Joey's problems are getting worse. In fact, his behavior is so off the wall that his teachers are threatening to send him to the special-ed center downtown. Joey knows he's really a good kid, but no matter how hard he tries to do the right thing, something always seems to go wrong. Will he ever get anything right?

### ***The War That Saved My Life*** by Kimberely Brubaker Bradley

Ten-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada's twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn't waste a minute—she sneaks out to join him.

So begins a new adventure of Ada, and for Susan Smith, the woman who is forced to take the two kids in. As Ada teaches herself to ride a pony, learns to read, and watches for German spies, she begins to trust Susan—and Susan begins to love Ada and Jamie. But in the end, will their bond be enough to hold them together through wartime? Or will Ada and her brother fall back into the cruel hands of their mother?

### ***Maniac Magee*** by Jerry Spinelli

A Newbery Medal winning modern classic about a racially divided small town and a boy who runs.

Jeffrey Lionel "Maniac" Magee might have lived a normal life if a freak accident hadn't made him an orphan. After living with his unhappy and uptight aunt and uncle for eight years, he decides to run---and not just run

away, but run. This is where the myth of Maniac Magee begins, as he changes the lives of a racially divided small town with his amazing and legendary feats.

**Walk Two Moons** by Sharon Creech

"Walk Two Moons," by Sharon Creech, tells the story of 13-year-old Sal, who embarks on a cross-country road trip with her eccentric grandparents to visit her mother's final resting place in Lewiston, Idaho. Along the way, Sal shares the story of her friend Phoebe Winterbottom, whose mother also disappeared, with her grandparents. Sal's journey and storytelling are interwoven with flashbacks of her mother's life and death, creating a narrative about grief, loss, identity, and self-discovery.

2. **Read the book:** Take your time to enjoy the story and get to know the main character! As you read, consider the following questions:
  - What problem is the character facing in the story and how does he or she solve it?
  - Does the character change throughout the story? If so, how? What events cause the character to change?
  - What lesson does the character learn?
  
3. **Respond to the book:** In a complete paragraph, describe the main character. Your paragraph (**5–7 sentences**) should include:
  - A topic sentence: State the book's title, the author, and the character's name. Describe what he or she is like (personality, traits).
  - Sentences that provide evidence to support your description: What does the character do in the story (actions or important choices) or what does the character feel (motivation)?
  - Explanation sentences that describe *how* the evidence supports your thinking.
  - A concluding sentence: Wrap up your paragraph.
  - Check for spelling and punctuation.

**Bring your paragraph with you on the first day of school!** We will share our books and characters during the first week of 5th grade.

## LIST OF CHARACTER TRAITS

active	funny	outgoing
adventurous	gentle	peaceful
affectionate	generous	pleasant
alert	good	polite
ambitious	graceful	popular
bold	grateful	powerful
bright	groovy	quick
brave	happy	quiet
calm	helpful	quirky
cheerful	honest	rational
clever	honorable	reliable
confident	hopeful	responsible
cool	humorous	sensational
cooperative	intelligent	sensible
courageous	interesting	serious
courteous	jolly	skillful
curious	joyful	smart
daring	joyous	thankful
dependable	kind	thoughtful
determined	lively	trustworthy
eager	loving	understanding
easygoing	loyal	useful
energetic	mature	victorious
excited	mysterious	virtuous
expert	nice	warm
faithful	noble	wordy
fair	nurturing	youthful
friendly	obedient	
fun	original	



# Character Analysis Graphic Organizer

Character's Name and Trait: Use the list of character traits to help you identify one that describes your character.



Because....



Reason #1:

Is this what the character **does,**  
**says or feels/thinks?**  
(Circle one)

Reason #2:

Is this what the character **does,**  
**says or feels/thinks?**  
(Circle one)

Reason #3:

Is this what the character **does,**  
**says or feels/thinks?**  
(Circle one)