



## Middle School English; Grades 6-8

### 2021-2022 School Year

**Part One:** Choose one (1) book from the attached Recommended Reading list.

**\*\*It is recommended that you purchase the text so that you could practice annotating. If you do not or cannot purchase the physical text, please keep notes on the text as you read\*\***

**Part Two:** Review the Tic-Tac-Toe board. Choose (at least) **four (4)** of the assignments to complete based on your book. The four (4) assignments you choose must include at least one (1) of each symbol (book/pencil/brain for literary text; screen/pencil/brain for informational text).

**\*\*Note:** If you are reading a NON-FICTION text, you must use the INFO TEXT board. If you are reading a FICTION text, you should use the LITERARY board.\*\*

**Due Date:** Your work is due on the first day of your English class. All late assignments will be subjected to a grade reduction or penalty, as outlined in the course syllabus, and copied below:

#### **English Department Late Work Policy:**

“All essays/projects are expected to be submitted on or before the due date. Essays not submitted on time will be subjected to a 10% deduction of max points per day. No essays will be accepted after five (5) days.”

“All assignments gone over in class or needed for an in-class assignment are expected to be submitted on or before the due date. No late work will be accepted.”

## Tips for Annotating a Text

### INTERACT with the reading.

- Mark it up! (Make your own key. Annotations are designed to help you understand and be able to review and/or discuss the reading)
    - o Use SYMBOLS to mark important details.
      - “?” – I’m not sure what is going on. I’m not sure what is meant by this sentence, paragraph, etc.
      - “!” – This is exciting; I agree
      - || – connections between different parts of the text
    - o Color Code! Use colors to mark important details.
      - Words I don’t know and need to look up.
      - Literary devices
      - Important character details
      - Interesting or important details that pertain to understanding the story
  - Write in your book (you can also use post-it notes if you prefer not to write in the book) to COMMENT on what is happening
    - Do you agree or disagree?
    - Is this a change in characterization? How so?
    - Is this a change in plot/storyline? How did it change?
    - Is this a big event? Small event?
    - Is it a foreshadow of something to come? A flashback of something that happened?
  - o QUESTION the text
    - Why is this happening?
    - Why did the author include this? Why is it included here? What purpose does it serve to the text? Would it be different if it was included at a different time in the story? How?
    - Why is the character behaving this way? How is it different from before? What does it reveal about the character?
    - What might this piece reveal about the rest of the story? How does it make something clearer from earlier in the story?
  - o CONNECT to the text.
    - How can you relate to a character?
    - How can you relate to the author?
    - What about the author’s life is showing in the text?
    - What are some allusions?
    - What are some similar real-life examples of what is happening in the text?
- ASSOCIATE the text with another reading
  - Textual allusions
  - Similar details
  - Connections between the authors?

### LEARN from the text.

- Historical Context
  - o What is the time period of the story? What is the time period the story was written? How do they connect or differ?
- Author Study
  - o What was the author’s childhood like? What sparked the author to write this text? What was the purpose of publishing this text?
- Response to the Text

- o How did readers initially respond to the text when it was published? Has the opinion changed since then? How?

**REFLECT** on the text.

- What was the author's writing style?
- What were some patterns in the writing? Did it remind you of another author?
- What were some key themes or topics discussed in the text?
- Who was the text written for? Did it reach that audience? Why/Why not?
- What was the author's purpose? Did he/she accomplish that purpose?

## Recommended Reading List

- *Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes
- *Piecing Me Together* by Renee Watson
- *Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper
- *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park
- *Clean Getaway* by Nic Stone
- *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen
- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
- *Bud, not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *We Should Hang Out Sometime* by Josh Sundquist
- *Feed* by MT Anderson
- *Hope Was Here* by Joan Bauer
- *My Family and Other Animals* by Gerald Durrell
- *The Boys who Challenged Hitler* by Phillip Hoose
- *New Kid* by Jerry Craft
- *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls
- *The Pigman* by Paul Zindel
- *Nothing but the Truth* by Avi
- *I'm Not Dying With You Tonight* by Gilly Segal and Kimberly Jones

\*\*If there is a different text of literary merit you would like to read, please email a request to Mrs. Pergola, Dean of Academics, at [dpergola@knoxschool.org](mailto:dpergola@knoxschool.org)



## TIC-TAC-TOE

**DIRECTIONS:** Use this grid to select three activities for your book. The three activities you choose must be in a row: across, down, or diagonal. Include the title of the activity, your name, and card number on all of your assignments.



## PICK A POINT

Explain the point of view (POV) through which the story is told, and answer the following questions: Who tells the story? Is the story written in first, second, or third person? How does the POV affect the overall perspective and tone, or feeling, of the story? Whose POV would you choose if you were writing the story? Use examples from the book to support each of your answers.



## BOOK WALK

Take a "walk" through your book. Preview the beginning of the book or the chapter you're going to read next. Look at the cover, any illustrations or diagrams, chapter titles, headings, or subtitles, and read the first two or three pages. Come up with three questions you have about the book based on your preview.



## DEAR DIARY

Write out a diary entry for one of the characters in the book. The entry should be one paragraph in length and must focus on either a secret the character is keeping or a problem the character has. Think about what the character would be keeping private: their fears, hopes, insecurities, worries, crushes, etc.



## THINK IT THROUGH

What words or phrases does the author repeat or use often? What kind of connotation (emotion or feeling attached to words) does the author's writing show? How does the author use words to get their point of view across? What do you think the author is trying to say by telling this story?



## PRETTY PLEASE

Write a persuasive letter from one of the characters in the story. The letter may be written to another character, to an abstract idea (e.g., "Dear Fear, I wish you would just leave me alone."), or to an important object (e.g., "Dear Stolen Money, Let's make a deal. You come out of hiding, and I vow to put you in the bank.") Choose at least three strong arguments based on your reading of the text and use examples from the book to support them.



## SNAP A PIC

Step into the shoes of a photojournalist and tell part of the story through pictures. Recreate a series of at least five events from the book through images. Your pictures should clearly show a progression of events. Each picture must have a caption that explains what is happening in the image. The caption should be no longer than three sentences.



## MIRROR IMAGE

Draw a large mirror, and in it write words, phrases, or quotes from the text that describe how a character sees themselves. Look for examples in the story that describe the character by using the five senses.



## CRYSTAL BALL

Look into your crystal ball. Make three predictions based on what you've read so far. One prediction must be about a character. Another prediction must be about an event, and the last prediction can be about whatever you want. Use examples from the text to support your predictions.



## WORD LIST

Find 15 vocabulary words in the book. For each of the words, write out a definition, a synonym and antonym, and a sentence of your own.

# INFO TEXT

No.  
01

## TIC-TAC-TOE

**DIRECTIONS:** Use this grid to select three activities for your book. The three activities you choose must be in a row: across, down, or diagonal. Include the title of the activity, your name, and card number on all of your assignments.

### GET GRAPHIC



Identify the central idea of your text. Choose five different pieces of evidence from the text that support the central idea. Then create a graphic organizer that illustrates how the information is related as well as how it is presented within the text. Is it tracking events? Is it focusing on parts of a whole? Are you explaining steps in a process?

### AUTHOR-ITATIVE



After reading the text, think about the following questions:

- 1) What is the author trying to accomplish through this text?
  - 2) How is the author's point of view presented?
  - 3) What information enhances the author's point of view? What information takes away from it?
  - 4) Is the author successful at getting the point across? Why or why not?
- Write out your observations in paragraph form, being sure to address each of the questions.

### EVALUATE AND ANALYZE



It is important to assess the authenticity and credibility of a text. Think about these questions and write your response in paragraph form:

- 1) Do you think the information presented is valid? Why or why not?
- 2) What kind of evidence does the author use to support the text's claims? Is that evidence relevant and sufficient? Why or why not?
- 3) How does the author organize or structure the information? Does the structure/organization increase or decrease the text's reliability? Explain.

### COMPARING CRED



Find another source of information for the topic you just read about. It could be an article, a video, a news report, etc. Analyze the two sources of information by comparing and contrasting them. Which resource is more reliable? Why? Was there any difference in information between the two? If so, what does that difference tell you? State which resource you would prefer to use and explain why.

### BLOG POST



Create a blog post about the information you read in the text. Include a brief summary of the information, an explanation of why the information is valid/useful/important, and your opinion on the information presented. Use evidence, quotes, and other support from the text in your blog. Create a catchy title as well. Your blog post should be two or three paragraphs.

### STAND YOUR GROUND



Take a stance on an issue addressed in your reading. How would you defend that point of view in a debate? Choose three pieces of evidence from the text that support your stance. Craft those pieces of textual support into a complete paragraph that defines your position and details your reasons for it.

### CHITTY-CHAT



For this activity, you will create a mini-presentation for your class based on your reading. Design a three-minute talk demonstrating knowledge that you've gained from the text. Be sure to develop a clear message around the central idea of the text and back it up with at least three pieces of textual support. Your presentation should be short but entertaining; you must incorporate writing (like a script) and some type of visual (prop, chart, object, etc.).

### CUTTING THROUGH THE RHETORIC



Rhetorical language is used to persuade or impress people. It is language that is highly emotional or influential. Evaluate your text for rhetorical language. What is the author's purpose for writing this text? What kinds of emotionally charged words does the author use? Why do you think the author chose such words? How would the text read differently if some of the language were changed? Write your answers in paragraph form.

### TWEET! TWEET!



Create both sides of a Twitter conversation between two points of view from your text. The points of view can be represented by people, ideas, objects, or even you and the author. You must have five tweets from each side for a total of 10 tweets in the conversation. The tweets should reflect information from the text and use evidence from the reading.