Dear Parents and Students,

As the school year comes to an end, we are preparing for the Summer Reading Program. This program is designed to encourage reading throughout the Summer. Please take the time to read the passage "Why Summer Reading Matters: Key Benefits for Students."

We encourage you to support your child's summer reading journey. By providing a supportive environment, we can help them develop a lifelong love of reading and set them up for academic success.

To support your summer reading, I've provided a list of approved books, but you may also choose a book within your reading level for approval. After finishing your book, you'll complete a "Character Head Analysis" project along with a "Book Review.". Attached, you'll find the full packet with instructions and a grading rubric.

We're excited to see the insights you gain through your reading! Character Head Analysis is due on August 14, 2026. Happy Reading!!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Valerie Rodriguez,
6th/7th Grades
English Language Arts and Reading
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Why Summer Reading Matters: Key Benefits for Students

Summer often means time away from school, a break from homework, and a chance to relax. But while students might be eager to put their textbooks aside, summer is also an excellent opportunity for reading—something that offers numerous benefits, both academically and personally. Encouraging students to engage in summer reading can help them stay sharp, discover new interests, and start the next school year with confidence. Here's why summer reading matters and how it can positively impact students.

Preventing the "Summer Slide"

One of the most significant reasons for promoting summer reading is to combat the "summer slide," the tendency for students to lose some of the progress they made during the school year. Studies have shown that students who don't participate in educational activities over the summer can fall behind, especially in reading and math. This loss of momentum can make it difficult for them to catch up when they return to school.

- **Keeps minds engaged**: Regular reading helps maintain academic skills during the break.
- **Reinforces skills**: Prevents loss of progress in key areas like reading.
- **Promotes continuous learning**: Helps students start the new school year on solid ground.

Strengthening Reading Skills

Summer isn't just about maintaining skills; it's also a prime time for building them. With fewer academic pressures, students can choose what they want to read and take the time to explore books that truly interest them. This freedom allows them to delve into genres or topics they might not encounter during the school year, which can lead to improved vocabulary, better comprehension, and a deeper understanding of different writing styles.

- **Encourages exploration**: Students can discover new genres and topics.
- **Improves comprehension**: Reading a variety of materials strengthens understanding.
- **Expands vocabulary**: Exposure to new words and phrases enhances language skills.

Cultivating a Love of Reading

Perhaps one of the most important benefits of summer reading is the opportunity it gives students to discover a love of reading. When students can choose their own books, reading becomes a personal and enjoyable activity rather than just another school assignment. This autonomy can lead to a lifelong passion for reading, as students begin to see it as a source of pleasure and personal growth.

- **Promotes autonomy**: Letting students choose their books fosters a personal connection to reading.
- **Encourages lifelong reading habits**: Positive reading experiences can lead to a lasting love of literature.
- **Make reading enjoyable**: Freedom to explore different books makes reading feel more like a leisure activity.

Enhancing Critical Thinking and Creativity
Reading is a powerful way to stimulate the mind, and summer reading can play a big role in enhancing students' critical thinking and creativity. As they read, students are constantly analyzing, interpreting, and making connections between the text and their own experiences. This active engagement strengthens their ability to think critically, a skill that's valuable in all areas of life.

- **Strengthens critical thinking**: Analyzing and interpreting text hones critical skills.
- **Fosters creativity**: Reading introduces new perspectives and ideas, sparking imagination.
- **Encourages deeper engagement**: Making connections between texts and personal experiences enhances understanding.

Preparing for the Upcoming School Year
Finally, summer reading can give students a head start on the upcoming school year. Students who read during the summer are more likely to return to school with strong reading skills and a positive attitude toward learning. They're also better prepared to tackle the curriculum, especially if they've chosen books that align with what they'll be studying in the fall.

- **Builds confidence**: Students return to school ready to take on new challenges.
- **Aligns with curriculum**: Reading books related to upcoming studies provides a useful preview.
- **Sets a positive tone**: Starting the school year with strong reading skills fosters a positive learning environment.

Conclusion
Summer reading is much more than a way to pass the time—it's an investment in students' academic success and personal growth. By encouraging students to read over the summer, we help them stay on track academically, explore new interests, and develop critical thinking and creativity. Whether through a structured reading program or simply allowing students to choose their own books, summer reading is a simple but powerful way to support students' long-term success and love of learning.

https://literacylightbulb.com/why-summer-reading-matters-key-benefits-for-students/

Name: _____ Date: _____

Character Head Characterization Rubric

Directions: Choose the main character and characterize him/her using the following criteria. You must return the Rubric with the project. The project must be entirely colored and will be graded on creativity. Be prepared to give a short presentation on your project. **Due Date: August 14, 2026.**

Criteria	**Points Available**	**Points Earned**	**Teacher Comments**
Book Title can be read from a distance and is creative.	5 pts		
Author	5 pts		
Genre	5 pts		
The character's name can be read from a distance and is creative.	5 pts		
Speech: Give a significant quote from the Character:	8 pts		
Thoughts: What does the character think?	8 pts		
Effects: How does this character make people feel or react?	8 pts		
Actions: Give two adjectives that describe the character.	8 pts		
Looks: What does the character look like?	8 pts		
The project is attractive in terms of layout-cut out and trimmed neatly.	10 pts		
The project is attractive in terms of design and neatness. The final project must be colored. (No pencil)	10 pts		
Grammar, Mechanics, and Spelling are correct.	10 pts		
Students can accurately answer all questions related to story and project in a short presentation.	10 pts		

BOOK REVIEW

of

AUTHOR:

RATING: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

BOOK COVER (F/NF)

GENRE

Fantasy Fiction	Realistic Fiction	Historical Fiction
Traditional Fiction	Nonfiction	Poetry

AUTHOR'S PURPOSE

Persuade	Inform	Entertain

3 WORDS THAT BEST DESCRIBE THIS BOOK

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

IDEAS: imaginative surprising educational touching serious interesting silly scary funny sad exciting suspenseful informative

MY RATING

I rated this book ____ stars because:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

MY RECOMMENDATION

I would recommend this book to:

_____

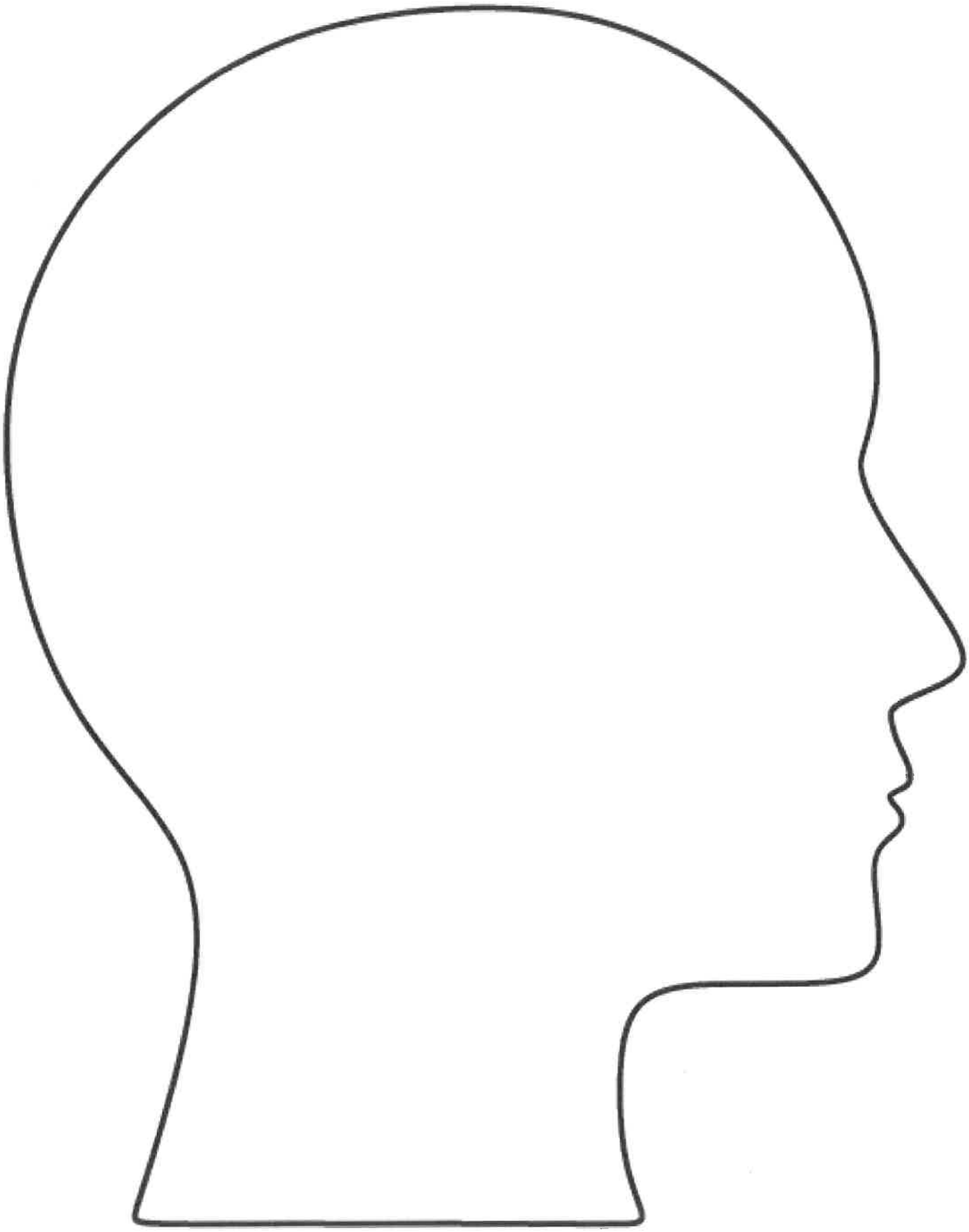
_____

_____

_____

NAME: DATE:

teachertrap.com



Book Consent Form-6th Grade
Summer Reading Program
Due: May 15, 2026

The following Books are approved for Summer Reading:

Title	*Author*	*Reading Level*
Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nimh	*Robert O'Brien*	*5.1*
Island of the Blue Dolphins	*Scott O'Dell*	*5.4*
The Westing Game	*Ellen Raskin*	*5.3*
The Thief and the Beanstalk	*P.W. Cantanese*	*5.7*
Freak the Mighty	*Rodman Philbrick*	*5.5*

My Current Instructional Reading Level (IRL): _____

Book Title: _____
Author: _____

Is there a movie about your book? Yes_____ No_____
If there is a movie about my book, I promise to read the book and not base my project off a movie.

Student Signature: _____

I understand it is my responsibility to read the book over the summer and to complete my Summer Reading Project, "Character Head Analysis" along with a "Book Review." I understand it is due Friday, August 14, 2026.

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____