

Hello sixth graders, and welcome to (almost) being seventh graders!

Your summer reading book for 2023 is Jerry Craft's 2019 graphic novel *New Kid*. The seventh grade English teachers have compiled the attached packet to offer you some structure and guidance as you read.

One of our year-long goals in seventh grade is to engage in a more thoughtful and intentional process of reading, shifting to actively understand, consider, and reflect on both the literal and abstract levels of meaning. The material in this packet (available at the QR code below) aims to help you do just that. As you read, use this resource to help you record your observations, reactions, thoughts, and opinions. If used deliberately, it can help you understand the story, organize your thoughts, and keep track of which parts of the book are important.

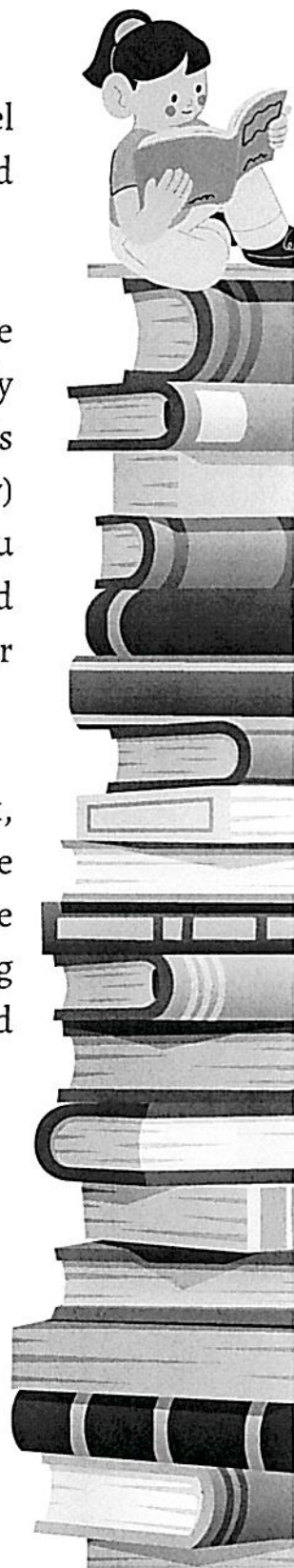
When you begin school, we will focus our first unit of study on the book, and eventually we will assign a first quarter writing assessment by the end of September. You may use these original notes to help you compose that assignment, so we urge you to take advantage of the material being provided to you. Take thorough and accurate notes, enjoy the story, and have a great summer!

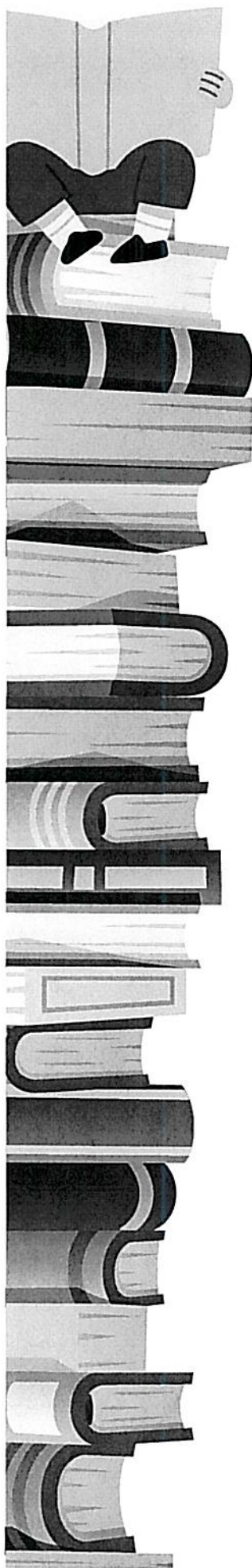
Warmly,
The Seventh Grade English Team

Access a digital copy of the packet here.



SCAN ME!





Dear Parents,

Welcome to seventh grade English! We are eagerly looking ahead to greeting your children when they walk through our doors in September!

Sustained reading over summer months has countless benefits for developing students. It builds skills, combats learning loss, keeps kids engaged in thinking about the world beyond themselves, and deepens knowledge, awareness, and understanding. Reading can have the greatest impact when students select titles that are appropriately suited to their current interests and ability.

If you are interested in supporting your child's pursuit of additional reading over the summer but aren't sure where to start, we offer the following lists. These are merely recommendations, so feel free to be choosy! Use your discretion in identifying selections that you think are good fits for your specific child.

We do hope you find these resources helpful, and we can't wait to see you all in September!

Warmly,
Jennifer Sapir
English Chair

Mensa for Kids Excellence in Reading Program
Grades 7-8



TIME Magazine's 100 Best YA Books of All Time



American Library Association's Best Fiction for
Young Adults



New York Public Library's Best Books of 2022
(Watch for the 2023 release!)



UNDERSTANDING CHARACTERS

One of the most important elements of any story is **CHARACTERIZATION**. Who is the protagonist? Is there an antagonist? (Your antagonist is your villain or "bad" character.) Who are the other characters who add detail and meaning to the story? Keep track of who's who, their importance & role in the story, their positive & negative traits, and how and why certain characters change over the course of the story.

CHARACTER	ROLE IN THE STORY	POSITIVE TRAITS	NEGATIVE TRAITS	DOES THIS CHARACTER CHANGE ? HOW & WHY?
JORDAN BANKS				
LIAM LANDERS				

DREW ELLIS				
ANDY PETERSON				
ALEXANDRA				

MISS RAWLE				
JORDAN'S PARENTS				
JORDAN'S GRANDPA				
MAURY				

UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT

Conflict is an essential element of any story, fiction or nonfiction. It is the engine that drives the plot; no problem(s), no story! As you read the story, think about the different conflicts that the characters face. In your notes, EXPLAIN how the struggles are faced, how or if they are overcome, and what is learned from them in the end; that is a key point → the characters are changed by the problems they face.

TYPE OF CONFLICT	CHARACTERS INVOLVED	HOW IS THE CONFLICT BEING FACED? HOW IS IT AFFECTING THE STORY?	HOW IS THE CONFLICT FIXED? WHAT IS LEARNED BY THE CHARACTERS?
CHARACTER VS. CHARACTER(S)			
CHARACTER VS. GROUP			
CHARACTER VS. SELF			

SETTING: This story is going to be about a 12 year old boy starting in a new school where things will be very, very different from his home and neighborhood. Explain how the different settings affect the characters, conflicts, themes, and story.

Themes: Themes are central, unifying ideas. When considering themes, you always want to consider what an author is communicating about that theme. One way to do this is to ask yourself the following questions: How has the story taught me about life in some way? Did I learn anything about myself as a person or about growing up? How does the story explore ideas like family, friendship, maturity, change, race, identity? As you read, and especially when you finish, identify themes from the book, and then think about what the author wants the reader to realize and understand about that theme. **NOTE: A thematic statement should be written as a sentence, not a single word or phrase.**

THE PLOT

A **PLOT** is the organized pattern or sequence of events that make up a story. Every plot is made up of a series of incidents that are related to one another, and together they create the story of what happens to the main character and why. Here are the basic parts:

- 1) **EXPOSITION:** early details & information are introduced: Who's the main character? What is life like? Where does the story take place? Are there any problems?
- 2) **INCITING INCIDENT:** a moment/event where the **main conflict** is introduced; from this point forward the protagonist (main character) will have to try and solve the conflict, dealing with any consequences that happen as a result.
- 3) **RISING ACTION:** where the story begins to develop the conflict(s); a building of interest or suspense occurs. Things get complicated!
- 4) **CLIMAX:** the turning point, typically toward the final third of the story. This important & dramatic scene is often where the main character comes face to face with a conflict and will now change in some way.
- 5) **FALLING ACTION:** after the climax where the writer ties up the loose ends of the plot. We are moving toward the end...
- 6) **RESOLUTION:** the ending where the problems are mostly solved and the main character and others have changed in some important way(s) and learned something about themselves and life.

As you read, keep a plot summary of these different parts; focus on major events - don't list every detail from the book.

<div> PART OF THE PLOT WHAT HAPPENS HERE? WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN THIS SECTION? </div>	
EXPOSITION	
INCITING INCIDENT	

RISING ACTION	
CLIMAX	
FALLING ACTION	
RESOLUTION	

NARRATION/POINT OF VIEW:

This means how the story is told. What kind of narrator has the writer chosen to tell the story?

Does a character in the story tell it? → FIRST PERSON POINT OF VIEW. Is the narrator an "outside observer"? → THIRD PERSON POINT OF VIEW. Think about how Jerry Craft is writing and telling the story of New Kid and how it affects the story.

KEY QUOTATIONS/PASSAGES/IMAGES:

Identify any significant quotes or describe certain images (with page numbers) that best express, describe, or capture an important moment, event, transformation, realization... Explain why you think the quote/image is important and why/how it is affecting the story.



PERSONAL REACTIONS & INTERPRETATIONS: *Once you've finished reading, use this space to record some final feelings or reactions to the book. Some points to consider:*

- *What are your opinions and feelings about the characters & story? Why do you feel that way?*
- *What does this book teach you about the realities of race, social class, and stereotypes in our society?*
- *How does the title connect to and lend meaning to the story?*
- *Overall, in your opinion, was this a "good" book? Explain.*