

## Grow Your Thinking

### Summer Reading Guidelines & Assignment Information

Dear Rising 6th Graders,

This summer, you will read a book and complete an assignment that will show your thinking and interpretations as a reader. Please choose a book from the list below:

1. *Keeper of the Lost Cities* by Shannon Messenger
2. *Masterminds* by Gordon Korman

While reading the book of your choice above, please “stop and jot” or “track your thinking.” Please track your thinking on lined writing paper and be prepared to bring your work on the **first day of school, Wednesday, August 14, 2024**. You will use these thoughts to complete a writing assignment about your book *within the first few days of school*. You will not complete an entire assignment outside of class, so you only need to read the book and track your thinking during your time away from school.

Please refer to the directions, example, and rubric on the following pages of this document for details on tracking your thinking and completing your **in-class** assignment.

If you have any questions about this assignment, please reach out to me: [jmcmullen@trinitymidland.org](mailto:jmcmullen@trinitymidland.org). I look forward to seeing you again in the fall, or if you are new, meeting you for the first time.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jessica McMullen  
Middle School Reading/Writing Teacher

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Grow Your Thinking - Track Your Thinking Guidelines			
	Not Yet (1 pt.)	Starting To (2 pts.)	Yes! (3 pts.)
<b>Overall</b>			
I <b>averaged</b> about two (2) jots or thoughts per chapter.			
I <b>organized</b> my jots by chapter or section. They are clearly labeled.			
I tried to jot about important elements of the story including <b>plot, character, conflict, theme, setting, or author's craft.</b>			
I asked questions about the reading.			
I worked to make predictions or inferences about the reading.			
I tried to use character names when I tracked my thinking.			
My jots/thoughts are neat and readable.			
<b>Total</b>	/21 pts.		

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#### Directions:

1. Using your summer reading selection and the thoughts you tracked, choose a story element from which to “Grow Your Thinking” in 5 complete paragraphs. **Specifically state** in your writing which story element you are choosing to develop. Choose from one of the following:
  - a. Plot
    - i. Plot addresses the events that happened in the book. **DO NOT** simply write a summary of the story. Instead, you could focus on how one event affects another, or how the events affect the characters, for example.
  - b. Character
    - i. Character addresses who the characters are on the inside and the outside, as well as changes they endure throughout the story.
  - c. Conflict
    - i. Conflict addresses the problems the characters face in the book. You could focus on the primary conflict or the smaller conflicts that arise.
  - d. Theme
    - i. Theme addresses the larger lesson about life the author is trying to teach through the book. It is important to remember that theme applies to people in the whole world, **not** only to the characters in the book. What lesson have you learned about life from reading this book?
  - e. Setting
    - i. Setting addresses where and when the story takes place. Why is this important to the story?
  - f. Author’s Craft
    - i. Author’s Craft addresses **why** the author chose to write certain parts of the book in certain ways.
2. Share your unique thinking about this story element by providing evidence and examples from your book. Work to use your own thinking, exploring voice.
3. Refer to the Grow Your Thinking Scoring Guide for specific elements to include in your writing.
  - a. Use my example as a guide.
  - b. This may be handwritten or typed.
  - c. **It is a major grade and will be completed in class within the first few days of school.**
  - d. **Guidelines for the final writing assignment are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor of the class.**

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## Summer Reading Guidelines & Assignment Information

### Grow Your Thinking Written Assignment EXAMPLE

Jane Doe  
6th Grade  
**Due:** August 16, 2024

Harry Potter & The Sorcerer's Stone by J.K. Rowling

While I was reading *Harry Potter & The Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling, I paid close attention to the story elements. One of the most important elements of the book was character, specifically the character of Harry Potter. Quite obviously, Harry is important to the story as the title character, but readers can learn a lot from Harry. *Harry Potter & The Sorcerer's Stone* teaches, through the character of Harry, that you can dig greatness and bravery out of yourself, even when you think you are ordinary. This is shown in Chapter 7, "The Sorting Hat," Chapter 12, "The Mirror of Erised," and in Chapter 16, "Through the Trapdoor."

One way *Harry Potter & The Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling teaches that we all have greatness within us is through Chapter 7, "The Sorting Hat." In this chapter, a nervous Harry is coming to Hogwarts for the first time and will soon be learning which dorm, or house, he will be placed in. As Harry watches other first-year students try on the Sorting Hat, he begins to question and doubt himself and his potential abilities as a wizard. On page 120, Rowling writes "A horrible thought struck Harry... What if he wasn't chosen at all? What if he just sat there with the hat over his eyes for ages, until Professor McGonagall jerked it off his head and said...he'd better get back on the train?" This shows that Harry doesn't trust or understand his worth as a wizard. However, on page 121, as the Sorting Hat is placed on Harry's head, he hears the hat mulling over where to place him, noting that it sees courage and talent in Harry. Harry silently begs, "Not Slytherin," and the hat shouts out "GRYFFINDOR!" Gryffindor wizards are known for their bravery, and this foreshadows the greatness to come for Harry. These events show that sometimes others see the greatness in us before we see it ourselves.

Another example of Harry discovering greatness outside of the ordinary is in Chapter 12, "The Mirror of Erised." On page 205, it is the middle of the night and Harry is just finishing his first Christmas at Hogwarts. He really wants to use one of his new gifts -- an Invisibility Cloak he learned belonged to his father. "Ron grunted in his sleep. Should Harry wake him? Something held him back -- his father's Cloak -- he felt that this time -- the first time -- he wanted to use it alone." Ultimately, Harry decides to use the Invisibility Cloak alone for the first time. Using the cloak alone shows one of Harry's first steps of bravery and gives the reader a glimpse into the character he will become later. These events prove that taking one small step can help us pull out the greatness we have within us.

A final example of *Harry Potter & The Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling showing that we all have greatness, even when we think we are ordinary is in Chapter 16, "Through the Trapdoor." In this chapter, Harry, Ron, and Hermione have decided to leave their house and go find the Sorcerer's Stone. After overcoming a number of enchantments, they realize Harry has to complete this quest on his own. "Harry -- you're a great wizard, you know," Hermione said. Harry protests and says he's not as great as Hermione and she tells him things like friendship and bravery are more important than cleverness. In the following chapter, Harry faces Professor Quirrell and Voldemort without the support of his friends, to the point that it almost kills him.

## **Grow Your Thinking**

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These events show that with the encouragement of our friends, we are often capable of more than each of us realizes.

Harry thinks himself to be ordinary and not always great at magic, but when faced with the challenge of protecting the Wizarding World from Voldemort, he shows courage and bravery. *Harry Potter & The Sorcerer's Stone* teaches that everyone is filled with greatness and bravery, even when we think we're ordinary. This is shown when Harry is sorted into Gryffindor, when he uses the Invisibility Cloak for the first time, and when he stops Quirrell and Voldemort.

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Grow Your Thinking Scoring Guide - Writing Assignment			
	Not Yet (1 pt.)	Starting To (2 pts.)	Yes! (3 pts.)
<b>Overall</b>			
My work is completed in my neatest handwriting or typing. My typing work has been double-spaced.			
I used my best spelling, grammar, and punctuation.			
I completed the assignment in 5 paragraphs and followed all directions.			
My <b>heading</b> contains my first and last name, grade and period, and today's date.			
<b>Structure</b>			
I mentioned the title and author of my book. <b>Each word is appropriately capitalized.</b>			
I mentioned the story element I was writing about.			
I showed the reader I was beginning a new paragraph by indenting <b>OR</b> skipping lines between, but not both.			
<b>Development</b>			
My work includes an <b>introduction</b> which provides a <b>claim/thesis</b> connected to my story element. It previews the ways I will prove my claim.			
My work contains <b>three body paragraphs</b> . Each paragraph is dedicated to a single reason/example.			
I mentioned the characters by name in my writing.			
I used my own <b>thinking, exploring voice</b> to develop my writing.			
I used <b>quotes or other evidence</b> from the book to support my thinking.			
My work includes a conclusion that restates my claim/thesis and examples.			
<b>Total</b>	/39 pts.		

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<b>Tracking Your Thinking Score</b>	
<b>Writing Assignment Score</b>	
<b>Total</b>	/60 pts.