



# CKLA Independent Reading

Kindergarten - Grade 5

## Facilitation Guide

# Independent Reading with Core Knowledge Language Arts®

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*“The more that you read, the more things  
you will know. The more you learn, the  
more places you’ll go.”*

— Dr. Seuss

*“Many of the things we need can wait. The  
child cannot. Right now is the time his bones  
are being formed, his blood is being made,  
and his senses are being developed. To him we  
cannot answer ‘Tomorrow,’ his name is today.”*

—Gabriela Mistral

*“I have a passion for teaching kids to become  
readers, to become comfortable with a book,  
not daunted. Books shouldn’t be daunting, they  
should be funny, exciting, and wonderful; and  
learning to be a reader gives a terrific advantage.”*

—Roald Dahl

# Introduction

Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Reading is designed to develop and enhance students' reading experiences and abilities. The program aims to promote and instill a love of reading. Exposure to a wide variety of books will improve reading fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and comprehension skills. Reading widely will develop critical-thinking skills and enable students to acquire a greater understanding of the world in which they live.

- CKLA Independent Reading encourages and enables students to:
  - Read chapter books, picture books, informational text, and literature, including fiction, poetry, and plays
  - Select books of personal interest
  - Become engaged learners
  - Develop keen critical-thinking skills
  - Become independent thinkers and lifelong readers
  - Explore and understand the power of language

# Step into CKLA Independent Reading

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## KINDERGARTEN–GRADE 2: LEARNING TO READ

In the early grades, CKLA focuses on oral language development through carefully sequenced, content-rich Read-Alouds as well as systematic instruction in reading and writing skills.

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## GRADES 3–5: READING TO LEARN

In later grades, CKLA continues to advance students' knowledge and vocabulary through Read-Alouds and in-depth discussions, while also immersing students in complex texts and advanced writing assignments that draw on the academic content they've been engaged in since preschool. CKLA Grades 3–5 combine features of both strands and further develop good reading practices and habits, including the promotion of independent reading.

CKLA Independent Reading gives students the opportunity to select books of their choice, including books that may enhance or expand upon what they have learned in CKLA content domains.

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## INTRODUCING CKLA INDEPENDENT READING

Because words give form to our thoughts, dreams, and concerns, reading is, without a doubt, an essential form of engagement. As a result of the knowledge we gain through reading, we're more able to interact, understand, and contribute to the world in which we live. And, as a result of reading widely, we develop a greater understanding of our shared experiences. Reading develops empathy, curiosity, and a sense of belonging. It enables us to become better citizens.

However, in order to become successful and engaged independent readers, students need tools to evaluate and select texts on their own. They will learn to select reading material based on their interest and the text's content. They will become decision-makers, and in doing so, they will help guide their own educational progress.

Through independent reading, students are encouraged to set off on a journey of exploration into the pages of books that may transport them to a bustling foreign city, a rainforest, or a faraway land full of magic and mystery. And, like true adventurers and seekers of knowledge, the students are in charge of their own journey.

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## CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH BOOKS

A key part of an independent reading program involves ensuring that students have access to a variety of books. The following list includes suggestions for where students may select texts for independent reading.

- CKLA Student Reader
  - Many Student Readers include enrichment text selections that students may read independently.
- Classroom library
  - If you need additional text options in your classroom library, you may wish to consult the CKLA Recommended Trade Book List or acquire the CKLA Knowledge Collection (Grades K-2).
- School library
  - Consider scheduling a library session for your students to browse and select books they would like to read independently. Your librarian may also be able to work with students who would like personalized recommendations. This kind of session can offer an opportunity for library skills sessions; for example, students may learn how to research books by a favorite author or on a particular topic of interest.
- Local public library
  - Remind students that local libraries have different selections than the school library. Some students may benefit from learning how to acquire a library card.
  - Many local libraries also host events and programs for students; you may wish to remind students and their families about such events.
- Area bookstores
  - Students and their families may be unaware that many bookstores host events such as story hours and author visits or book signings. These events are typically free and open to all.
  - Bookstores are also able to order books for purchase, so if students are looking for a text they cannot locate elsewhere, the bookstore may be able to get it for them.
- Book swaps
  - One fun way to provide students with different reading options while also building a classroom community is to host a classroom book swap. Students should each bring in a text they have already read and would like to trade with a peer. Students can exchange books with one another. After reading the book, students can exchange with new partners. You can repeat this process throughout the year, allowing students to read multiple new texts.
  - After several students have read a particular book, you may wish to group them and facilitate discussion or other activities around that book.

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## COMMUNICATING EXPECTATIONS

When introducing CKLA Independent Reading, explain to students the guidelines for your class. The materials that follow offer a simple, step-by-step guide for implementing a successful independent reading program, but you should customize the implementation to best suit your students' needs.

Some options you may wish to consider including appear below.

- Explain that independent reading is an opportunity for them to freely, yet wisely, select and read books that they find interesting.
- Identify a routine for independent reading, such as naming a designated time and place for regular independent reading.
- Ask students to keep a log of the books they read.
- Ask students to conference with their teacher, a peer, or within a group.
- Challenge students to continue to read outside of the classroom and to invite their parents, guardians, siblings, and friends to participate in their reading experiences.
- Provide students opportunities to share with others their enjoyment and opinions of the books they are reading.

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## SEVEN STEPS TO IMPLEMENTATION OF A SUCCESSFUL INDEPENDENT READING PROGRAM

1. Establish structure and procedures by creating a designated time and place for independent reading.
2. Manage and maintain a successful independent reading program by monitoring, assessing, and encouraging reading experiences.
3. Ensure that students understand that their role as independent readers is to engage, interact, and make good choices.
4. Ensure that there are regular opportunities for conferencing and interaction with students.
5. Maintain regular communications with parents, guardians, and other adults (i.e., a librarian).
6. Set achievable goals for students and monitor outcomes.
7. Communicate the power and joy of reading.

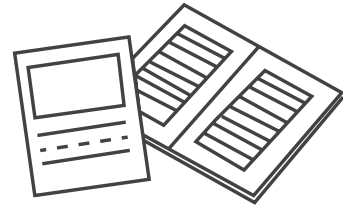
# Seven Steps to Implementing a Successful Independent Reading Program

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Create a designated time, place, and routine for independent reading.

1



2

Monitor, assess, and encourage reading experiences.



Equip students to engage, interact, make good choices, and be accountable.

3

4



Provide regular opportunities for conferencing and interaction with students.

5

Maintain regular communications with parents, guardians, and other adults (such as a librarian).



6



Help students set achievable goals and monitor outcomes.

7

Communicate the power and joy of reading.



## Step One:

# Create a Designated Time, Place, and Routine for Independent Reading

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It is essential to provide a time and place for students to explore a range of books freely and independently. Therefore, regular exposure to books—to language, content, art, graphics, and the other creative forces that enable us to communicate on many different levels—is the fundamental goal of CKLA Independent Reading. The cycle of reading, learning, and sharing nurtures intellectual growth.

Create a Designated Time, Place, and Routine for Independent Reading	
<b>Time</b>	Recommended minimum: Twice a week for at least thirty minutes. However, teachers should encourage independent reading whenever time allows (rainy days inside the classroom, first ten minutes of the school day, five minutes after lunch, last ten minutes of the school day, etc.).
<b>Place</b>	Consider whether or not students have an inviting space for reading. Is that space conducive to reading quietly and thoughtfully? If students are not moving to a designated place, make sure there is clear instruction that quiet reading time has begun at their desks.
<b>Books</b>	Prior to your first independent reading session, review resources where students may locate books. You may also wish to schedule time for students to procure books for independent reading; for example, you may consider arranging a library visit. Ensure that your classroom library has several back-up text options in case students forget their book on independent reading days.
<b>Procedure</b>	Before students begin quiet and independent reading time, check in with them. Did they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Select a book they are interested in?</li><li>• Set reading goals?</li><li>• Remember to fill out their reading log information?</li></ul>

## Step Two:

# Monitor, Assess, and Encourage Reading Experiences

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The most important element of building a successful independent reading program is creating a classroom culture that values and celebrates reading. Students who believe that their excitement about books matters to their peers and to adults are more likely to read widely and frequently. The following list includes ideas for promoting this kind of culture.

- Ask students what they are reading for fun or on their own on a regular, even daily, basis.
- Share your own reading experiences with students. You might casually mention a trip to the library or describe (with age-appropriate language and context) a book you are reading. It is important for students to see adult readers.
- Share memories of your favorite childhood books. If possible, curate a selection of these for students to read during independent reading time.
- Invite guest readers to your classroom. These may be older students, teachers or other school employees, parents, or community members. If possible, select a wide range of readers so that students come to understand that people in all professions and walks of life enjoy reading. (Students may expect the librarian to have a favorite book, but it might surprise them to learn that their physical education coach has one, too!) These readers might read aloud to your class and also discuss a book they loved reading as a child.
- Host a classroom, grade-level, or school-wide character parade, in which students dress as their favorite book character and parade together to celebrate their costumes. Alternatively, create a character wall and allow students to draw their favorite book character.
- Host a character conversation in which students work in partners or small groups. Each student should identify a favorite character, name the character's book, and offer a brief description of the character. Students should then have conversations with each other in the role of their characters. Challenge students to think about would happen if Harry Potter met Laura Ingalls Wilder, for example, then to use their conversations to explore the possibilities.
- Have students give each other book recommendations. You may wish to provide sentence starters or frames, such as *If you enjoyed \_\_\_\_\_, you'd really like \_\_\_\_\_.* or *I think you would enjoy reading \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Partner with a teacher of older students to create year-long reading buddies. Each younger student would have an older reading buddy (a student from the other class) who reads to him or her one-on-one.
- Have students write letters to their favorite characters or authors.

## Monitor, Assess, and Encourage Reading Experiences

### Monitor and Assess

- Set reading goals and provide strategies for helping students meet these goals. For example, if a student's goal is to read twenty-five pages each week, help them understand that they need to read five pages per weekday to reach their goal.
- Whenever possible, allow students to set their own reading goals.
- Model the book selection process by discussing the process aloud.
- Create a chart for students to refer to as they select their books. For example, you may wish to create recommendations based on the CKLA Trade Book List so that if students want to learn more about a particular domain, they have some suggestions for additional texts on that domain content.
- Track goals and progress on a regular basis, preferably when each student completes a book. This will give them a sense of accomplishment and provide evidence of their growth and development as a reader.

### Book Selection

Students will, over time, be able to take full ownership of their book selections. Initially, though, a certain degree of guidance may help students find success and enjoyment.

Use feedback sessions to understand students' reactions to books they have selected and read. If students did not enjoy a previous selection, consider how they made their selection. Students, particularly those who are in younger grades or who are new to independent reading, may need support making selections they will enjoy reading. Remember, though, that the goal of an independent reading program is to equip and empower students to make their own choices. Any support should be helping students find texts that interest them rather than dictating what they must read.

### Step Three:

## Equip Students to Engage, Interact, Make Good Choices, and Be Accountable

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Independent reading is, for the most part, a solitary experience. However, the knowledge, inspiration, and creative forces acquired as a result of reading can and should be shared. Therefore, provide frequent times for students to share and discuss their thoughts about the books they read. Encourage discussion and debate. These sharing experiences will provide students with the opportunity to articulate their ideas and develop their critical-thinking skills.

Equip Students to Engage, Interact, Make Good Choices, and Be Accountable	
<b>Book Talks and Sharing</b>	Book talks and sharing experiences give students the opportunity to develop their critical thinking skills, as well as a chance to share the knowledge they have gained. Students can give book talks and share with a partner, a small group, or the whole class. Students may also enjoy and gain motivation from sharing with external groups such as parents or other family members, an older reading buddy, a librarian, or others.
<b>Discussion and Debate</b>	<p>Discussion is a fun and interactive way for students to share and learn from each other. Students can be placed in discussion groups based on varying criteria, including text topic or theme, text genre, text format, or other factors. Students will benefit in working with both heterogeneous and homogeneous groups throughout the year.</p> <p>Older students may enjoy staging book debates, which may take many forms. Students may nominate books or characters, then debate which is best, funniest, or so forth. Students may also debate the merits of character decisions or behaviors, incorporating textual evidence to support their ideas.</p>
<b>Writing</b>	Writing is, of course, powerfully integrated with reading. Whenever possible, allow for writing opportunities that connect with independent reading. Students may enjoy writing letters to an author, journaling about what they have read, writing a book review, composing a creative piece inspired by what they have read, or other such activities.
<b>Visuals</b>	Many visual activities and supports can help enliven works students have read; they can also help students express what they have learned from a text. You may wish to create book-related visuals or art to hang in the classroom. You may also wish to have students illustrate a book they have read, design an alternative cover for the text, or create a poster for a movie version of the text. Advanced students may enjoy drawing a character or scene; they may also imagine what a setting for the text might look like and create a drawing, painting, diorama, or other visual representation of that setting.
<b>Performing</b>	Whenever possible, bring words to life by encouraging students to perform dramas or skits, recite poetry aloud, or use multimedia (such as audio or videos).

Step Four:

# Provide Regular Opportunities for Conferencing and Discussion with Students

Strategic reflection develops students’ awareness of how they read and how they can improve upon their reading experiences. Build in time for reflection through one-on-one conferencing. Encourage them to maintain a reading log. (Several types of reading logs are provided in the Additional Resources section of this guide.) Carefully crafted, reflective questions will focus students’ attention on how and what they read. Continue to monitor their reading choices and outcomes.

Provide Regular Opportunities for Conferencing and Discussion with Students	
Conferencing	<p>Conferencing is an opportunity to inspire students as readers and to nurture their exploration of ideas. It is also an opportunity to assess student progress. Offer pertinent prompts and questions, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What kinds of books do you enjoy?</li><li>• Tell me about the book you’re currently reading.</li><li>• What is the best thing about the book you are reading?</li><li>• What is one thing you wish were different about the book you are reading?</li><li>• What kind of book would you like to read next?</li></ul> <p>Help students explore the text more critically by providing open-ended questions. (Samples are included in the back of this guide.)</p> <p>Encourage students to brainstorm questions and to make connections across high-level concepts for a deeper understanding of texts they have read.</p>
Reading	<p>Ask students to be aware of when, where, and how long they are reading. Encourage them also to consider how their environment affects their reading experience.</p>

Provide Regular Opportunities for Conferencing and Discussion with Students	
<b>Setting Goals</b>	<p>Work with students to set strategic goals. One example of a strategic goal is a SMART goal: "I will read 20 pages of <i>Green Eggs and Ham</i> by Friday."</p> <p>SMART stands for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Specific:</b> Student has selected a specific book, <i>Green Eggs and Ham</i></li> <li>• <b>Measurable:</b> Student will read twenty pages</li> <li>• <b>Achievable:</b> Student has time to read twenty pages by Friday</li> <li>• <b>Relevant:</b> Student enjoys Dr. Seuss books</li> <li>• <b>Time-bound:</b> Student will complete reading by Friday</li> </ul> <p>When students set SMART goals, they can track those goals and feel a sense of accomplishment each time they achieve one.</p>
<b>Progress Review</b>	Be sure to incorporate a review of reading progress during one-on-one conferencing or at other times in the classroom. During this time, you may record progress, discuss that progress with the student, and celebrate students' reading successes.
<b>Log</b>	Use a log that allows students to think critically about book selection.

## Step Five:

# Maintain Regular Communications with Parents, Guardians, and Other Adults (Such as a Librarian)

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It is essential to establish regular forms of communication with parents, guardians, and other important family members. Consider sharing weekly updates on reading experiences, which could take the form of a letter or newsletter or could consist of a student-produced item, such as a report on the text they read in the previous week. Alternatively, students could take their individual reading logs home for a family member to review.

<b>Maintain Regular Communications with Parents, Guardians, and Other Adults (Such as a Librarian)</b>	
<b>Home Component</b>	<p>The following suggestions help advise family members on how to create a home environment that support independent reading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiate frequent communication with parents and guardians regarding the books students are reading, and include suggestions for discussion topics at home. Weekly updates will provide a bridge between home and classroom reading expectations and successes.</li><li>• Involve siblings and friends in students' reading experiences.</li><li>• Assign reading time to take place outside the classroom.</li><li>• Encourage students to discuss the books they are reading with family members, and provide questions to help family members generate discussion.</li></ul>
<b>Bridging the In- and Out-of-Classroom Reading Experiences</b>	<p>Reading comes alive when students can apply the knowledge they acquire to their everyday lives. Create opportunities for students to discuss their independent reading experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make time for students to discuss connections between the books they are reading and their day-to-day lives.</li><li>• Make time for students to discuss the reading experiences they've had outside of the classroom.</li><li>• Provide time for students to discuss life experiences that might connect with their in-school reading and learning experiences.</li></ul>

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Step Six:

# Help Students Set Achievable Goals and Monitor Outcomes

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Help students establish clear and realistic expectations. For example, students may read a certain number of pages per week, or they may select a date to complete a book review or give a book talk. Continually invite them to discuss the books they are reading. Revise expectations based on monitoring and assessments of reading progress.

Help Students Set Achievable Goals and Monitor Outcomes	
Achievable Goals	<div>Each week, establish reading goals and expectations.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check in with students at the end of each independent reading block</li><li>• Set reading targets (number of pages)</li><li>• Check reading logs and charts</li><li>• Adjust goals and expectations according to student needs</li></ul>

Step Seven:

# Communicate the Power and Joy of Reading

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Discuss books frequently. Select a book of the week to highlight and profile in the classroom. Share examples of reading experiences and goals. Encourage students to speak, share, critique, dramatize, and promote the books they’re reading. Most of all, share the joy of reading by celebrating students’ reading successes and experiences.

Communicate the Power and Joy of Reading	
The Joy of Reading	<div>Discuss books as often as possible. Begin or end each day with a fun fact about a book, author, or other literary topic.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read quotes or citations from classical texts.</li><li>• Challenge students to memorize favorite age-appropriate lines or stanzas.</li><li>• Share your favorite books, plays, or poems.</li><li>• Introduce students to work by celebrated authors.</li></ul>

# Additional Resources

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The following materials are intended to support implementation of an independent reading program. These Blackline Masters may be reproduced for students and family members.

Teachers may use these materials flexibly to support independent reading. Not all teachers will use all materials. For example, different versions are provided for some student-facing materials; teachers should select the form that best suits their students' needs. It is acceptable to use different forms in one classroom; for example, different reading logs may best suit students of various reading abilities.

Younger students may need adult support in completing materials such as the reading log; however, teachers may instruct students to use drawings, check marks, or other such notations as appropriate.

- Family Member Letter (English and Spanish versions)
- Reading Log Templates
- Book Review Templates
- Independent Reading Enrichment Activities
- Discussion Questions and Application Activities
- KWL Chart Templates
- Setting SMART Goals & Goal Guide
- Character Weather Report
- Supporting Independent Reading at Home
- Reading Selection Guide
- Reading Preview
- Vocabulary Organizer
- Reading Reflection Templates
- Author Letter Template
- Book Talk Guide

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Date:

This week your child \_\_\_\_\_

is reading the book \_\_\_\_\_

by \_\_\_\_\_.

Reading independently is an essential part of your child's education. Please encourage your child to read after school. Whenever possible, read with your child and/or listen to your child read. Try to find opportunities to discuss the book he/she is reading. To encourage discussion, you may ask your child some of the following questions, which will apply to a range of books your child will be reading during the year.

1. Why did you choose this book?
2. Do you like to book you are reading? Why or why not?
3. Is the book you are reading literature or informational text? How do you know?
4. Can you tell me three things about the book you are reading?
5. Would you recommend this book to others? Why or why not?
6. What kinds of books do you enjoy reading?
7. Do you have a favorite book?
8. What book do you hope to read next?

In addition, ask your child specific questions about the book he or she is reading.

Please make sure that you or your child record the relevant information on the home reading log provided. This will ensure that you and your child's teacher can monitor his or her reading progress. Please record any comments or feedback you have in the box provided below.

Thank you for supporting and encouraging your child to become an engaged and accomplished independent reader.

Parent/Guardian Comments:

Estimado padre o guardián,

Fecha:

Esta semana, su niño(a)\_\_\_\_\_

está leyendo el libro\_\_\_\_\_

de\_\_\_\_\_.

Por favor, anímelo(a) a leer después de la escuela. Cuando sea posible, lean juntos y/o escuche mientras él(ella) está leyendo. Busque oportunidades para conversar sobre el libro y, si puede, use las preguntas que incluimos a continuación y que pueden aplicarse a una gama de libros que se leerán durante el año.

1. Por qué elegiste este libro?
2. Te gusta el libro que estás leyendo? ¿Por qué?
3. Es de ficción o no ficción?
4. Me puedes contar tres cosas sobre el libro que estás leyendo?
5. Se lo recomendarías a otra persona? ¿Por qué?
6. Qué tipo de libro te gusta más?
7. Tienes un libro favorito?
8. Qué libro te gustaría leer después?

También hágale preguntas específicas sobre el libro que está leyendo.

Asegúrese de que su niño(a), o usted, anote la información pertinente en el registro de lectura en casa que se le ha proveído. De ese manera, usted y el maestro podrán monitorear cómo su niño(a) va avanzando en la lectura. Leer independientemente es una parte esencial de la educación de su niño(a). Anote cualquier comentario que tenga en la casilla de abajo.

Gracias por apoyar y ayudar a que su niño(a) aprenda a leer bien de manera independiente y confiada.

Estimado padre o guardián comentarios:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Log

Reading Homework	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday & Sunday
<b>Reading with someone</b> 						
<b>Listening to someone read</b> 						

Book Title	Author	Goals / Thoughts

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Log

Reading Homework	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday & Sunday
Reading independently 						
Reading with someone 						
Listening to someone read 						

Book Title	Author	Goals / Thoughts

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

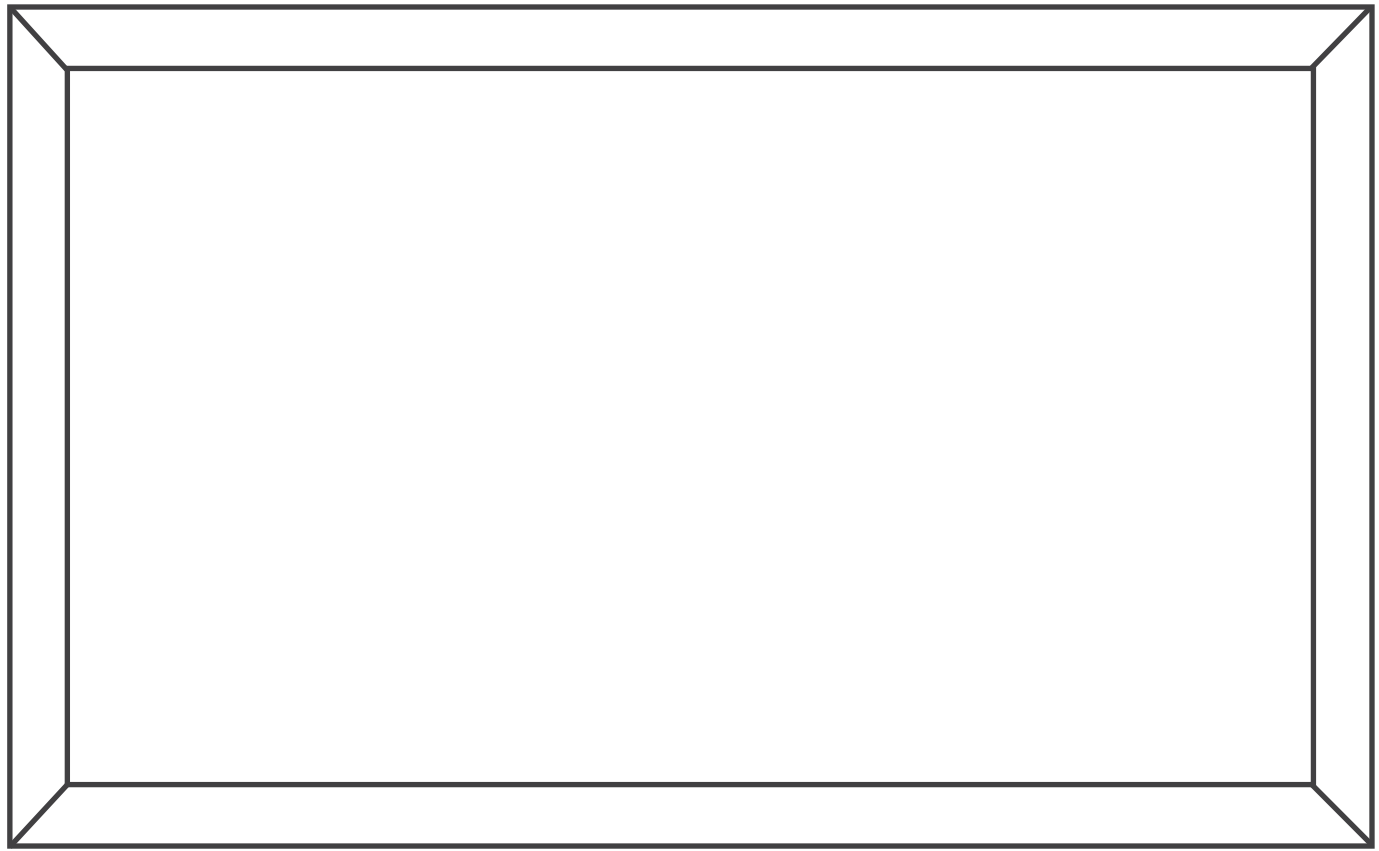
Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Book Review

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Students should complete the title and author of the book (with adult support if needed) and draw an illustration or cover for the book. They should write something they thought about this book on the line below their illustration.



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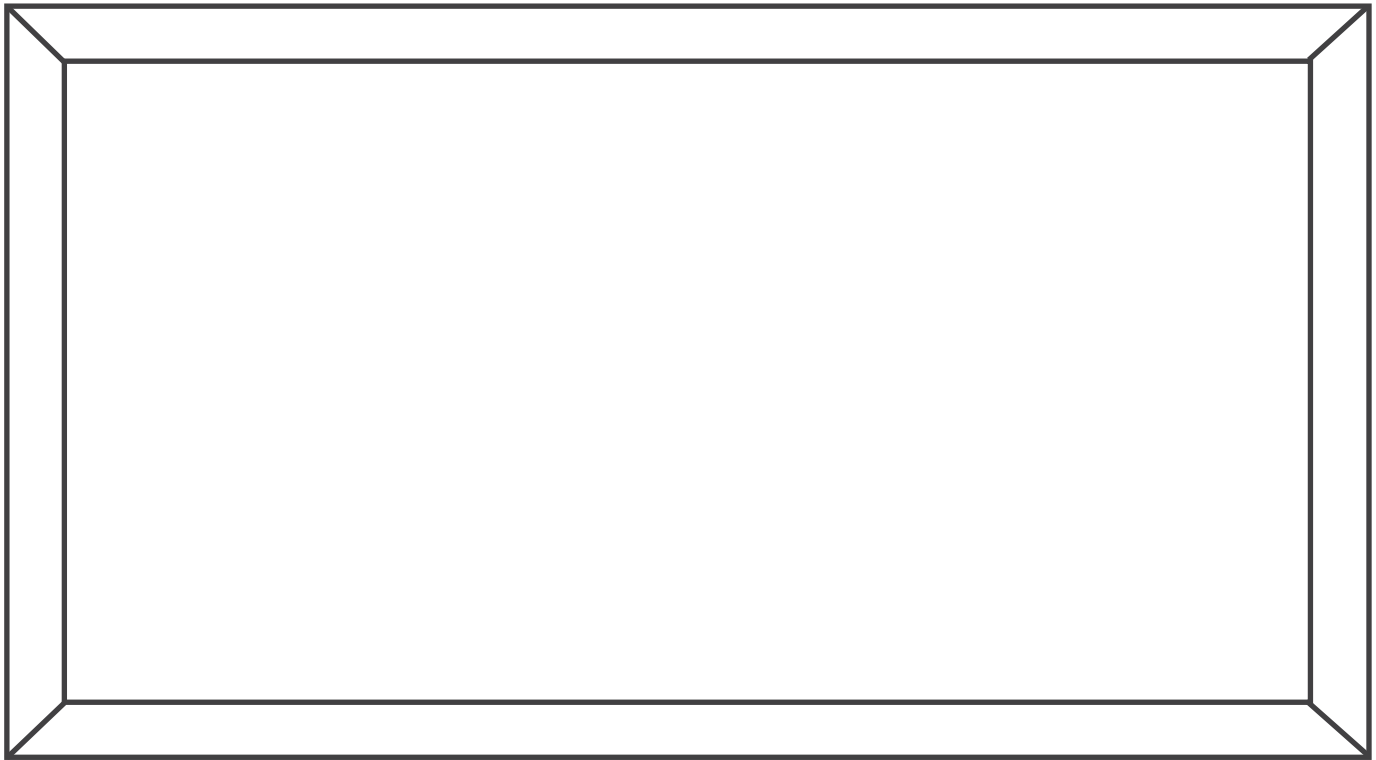
Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Book Review

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Students should complete the title and author of the book, then use the framed space to create an image associated with the text. They might draw an illustration or cover for the book, create a poster advertising a movie version of the text, or construct another kind of image. They should write their review about this book on the lines below their illustration.



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\_\_\_\_\_

# Independent Reading Enrichment Activities

Students who read independently often grow excited about what they are learning. Teachers may offer these additional enrichment activities for students to share or apply what they are learning. Alternatively, students may complete these for enrichment at home.

**Fast Facts:** Have students make a poster sharing the five most important facts they learned from an informational text.

**Graphic Novel:** Ask students to create a graphic novel version of a text they have read.

**Focus On:** Invite a group of students to orally present a short profile on a historical figure they have read about.

**Creative Expression:** Ask students to create a creative text, such as a poem based on the book or a new scene for a fictional work.

**Drama:** Challenge students to create and present a short skit based on a book they have read.

**Recitation:** Ask students to recite a passage they have memorized from a book they have read.

**Art:** Have students illustrate key parts of a text they have read, design posters for a film version of the book, or create covers for the book. Create an art gallery to display students' work and provide time for students to conduct a gallery walk and view their peers' creations.

# Discussion Questions and Application Activities

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Use the following prompts, questions, and activities to help students reflect on, explore, and apply what they have read.

## **Items for literary or informational text:**

1. Summarize the text you read in a paragraph or several sentences.
2. Draw a picture of what you read today and write a caption or sentence about your picture. Be prepared to explain your image.
3. After reading this text, I wonder. . .
4. Would you recommend this text to a friend? Why or why not?
5. Write a letter recommending this text to a friend and giving at least three reasons for your recommendation.
6. Write a review of what you read and describe whether or not you liked it. Make sure to include reasons for your opinion.
7. If you could be any character in the text you read today, who would you be and why? Give three reasons for your choice.
8. Invent a conversation or dialogue between two characters or persons in the text you read. Write what each character says in the dialogue. Remember to use quotation marks.
9. Was there anything in the text that surprised you? Explain what it was and why it surprised you.
10. Describe a problem that someone in the text faced and what he or she did about it.
11. Make a timeline of three to five events that took place in your text.
12. Pretend you are a reporter who has to interview the main character or person in the text you read, and write down five questions you would ask.
13. Make a prediction about what will happen next in the text. Explain why you think this will happen.
14. Write a diary entry from the perspective of a character or person in the text you read.
15. Talk about something in the text you read today that is similar to another work you have already read.
16. Draw a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences between yourself and a person in the text you read.
17. Draw a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts your home with how, when, and where a person from your text lives.
18. Imagine you had to write a new title for the work you read. Suggest several new titles for it.
19. If your text included any words you did not know, write them down. Use a dictionary to look up their meaning. Write that meaning down and use each word in a new sentence.
20. Name three questions you would like to ask the author of the work you read.

21. Imagine that the author asked your advice on how to make the text better. Give the author a few ideas of things that might be changed, added, or removed to improve the text.
22. Imagine that your book was made into a movie, then draw a movie poster for it.

### **Items for Fiction or Drama:**

1. Describe the setting.
2. Describe the plot.
3. Describe your favorite character. Write three reasons why this character is your favorite.
4. Describe your least favorite character, giving three reasons for your choice.
5. Is there anything in your book that could never happen in real life? Why or why not?
6. Record as many examples as you can of personification, transition or linking words, or figurative language in the text you read.
7. Draw a line down the center of your paper. On one side write the title of your favorite story and on the other side write the title of what you are reading today. Compare and contrast the main character, the setting, and the plot from each text.
8. Write a different ending to the text.

### **Informational Text:**

1. Describe something that you learned from the text.
2. Think about the topic of your text, then write at least three questions about new things you would like to learn on this topic.

### **Poetry:**

1. Read the poem aloud and write down any rhyming words it contains.
2. Write down any metaphors or similes found in the poem. If the poem has no metaphors or similes, write one to add to it.
3. Rewrite the poem in paragraphs instead of lines. Read the paragraphs and describe what changes when you change the way the text is written. Pick out which form you prefer and give a reason for your choice.
4. Write a poem that responds to the poem you have read.
5. Write a poem that imagines what happens after the events in the poem you have read.
6. List the word at the end of each line of the poem you read, then write down a word that rhymes with each word on your list. Use the list of new rhyming words to write your own poem.
7. Write a poem with the same number of lines as a poem you read.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# KWL Chart

Instructions: Write down the topic of the book you are about to read. Think about the topic, then write down at least one thing you already know about the topic (K) and at least one thing you want to know about the topic (W). After you have read the book, write down at least one thing you have learned about it (L).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

K	W	L

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# KWL Chart

Instructions: Write down the topic of the book you are about to read. Think about the topic, then write down at least one thing you already know about the topic (K) and at least one thing you want to know about the topic (W). After you have read the book, write down at least one thing you have learned about it (L).

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

K	W	L

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Alternative Choices Chart

Instructions: Write down your text's main character and one of the main events or problems the character experiences. Then list the choice the character makes about that event. Write down any consequences the character experiences as a result of that choice. Then name alternative choices the character could have made and the consequences you think those choices would have. At the bottom of the page, write down which choice you think the character should have made. If you think the character should make a different choice than what happened in the book, write an alternate ending that shows what would happen with that choice.

Character \_\_\_\_\_

Event or Problem \_\_\_\_\_

Character's actual choice in the book \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Consequence or Result \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Alternative Choice 1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Consequence or Result \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Alternative Choice 2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Consequence or Result \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Alternative Choice 3 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Consequence or Result \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Best Choice \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Reason \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you would like, you may also use notebook paper to write an alternative ending that shows what would happen if the character made the choice you recommend.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Setting SMART Goals

If you want to improve at something, it's important to set goals. But not just any goal will do—you want to set SMART goals! This kind of goal is called SMART because the name reminds you what your goal should be like.

## **S—specific**

- Goals should name one thing you will do.
- Sometimes if you have a really big idea, you might need to break it down into pieces to develop SMART goals. For example, let's say you want to get better grades. That's a good idea, but it's not specific. You need to pick a place to start, so you might set a SMART goal of learning all this week's spelling words.
- Get better at school—not specific
- Learn all this week's spelling words—specific

## **M—measurable**

- This means you will be able to tell if you succeed or not.
- If your goal is to get better grades, how will you know if you met it? Do you have to get better grades in every class, or just in one subject? Do you mean on one test or on your overall report card?
- Get better grades—not very measurable
- Get an A on the next spelling assessment—measurable

## **A—achievable**

- This means you can accomplish your goal. Sometimes, you might really want to do something, but it's just not possible. For example, let's say you bombed your last spelling assessment. You can't change that now.

## **R—relevant**

- This means your goal is connected to something you want. For example, if you want to make better grades, your goal should relate to that somehow. It wouldn't make sense to set a goal such as "learn to sing" unless you are taking a music class! A better goal might be to get an A on the next spelling assessment.
- Learn to sing—not relevant to getting better grades
- Get an A on the next spelling assessment—relevant to getting better grades

## **T—time-bound**

- This means that your goal is something you will accomplish by a certain date or benchmark. You know when you will do it.
- Get an A in spelling—not clearly time-bound
- Get an A on the next spelling assessment—time-bound

Now that you know how to set SMART goals, you can use the Goal Guide to set goals for yourself. Good luck—you've got this!

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Goal Guide

Instructions: Use the following guide to help you set a goal and plan how you will reach it.

First name something you would like to be able to do or accomplish during your independent reading time.

I would like to \_\_\_\_\_

Now let's make your goal SMART!

**S—** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the line above to write how you can make your goal SPECIFIC.

**M—** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the line above to write how you can make your goal MEASURABLE.

**A—** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the line above to write how you can make your goal ACHIEVABLE.

**R—** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the line above to write how you can make your goal RELEVANT.

**T—** \_\_\_\_\_

Use the line above to write how you can make your goal TIME-BOUND.

Rewrite your goal, incorporating all the above elements.

MY SMART goal: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now that you've identified your SMART goal, you're all set! Good luck!

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Character Weather Report

Instructions: Consider how the main character in the text feels in the last section you read. Then imagine what that character's mood would look like if it were weather. For example, if the character feels happy, would the weather be sunny and warm or full of thunderstorms? Decide what kind of weather the character's mood would be and draw a picture of that weather in the box below.

A large, empty rectangular box with a dark gray border, intended for a student to draw a picture of weather that represents a character's mood.

# Supporting Independent Reading at Home

Family members who would like to support a child's independent reading can consider the following strategies.

- Read to your child or listen to your child reading aloud.
- Take your child to the public library for a wide range of books to read and explore.
- Many libraries offer free children's educational programs, such as story time, reading hours, or author visits; such events help promote a love of reading.
- Make reading part of your daily home routine. You may wish to let your child read for a set amount of time during the day. Another option is to have a family reading time in which all family members read. When adults model a love of reading, it often rubs off on children!

**Note:** In determining a reading routine, consider how to establish a time that will not be interrupted or overlooked. For example, many parents report that reading before bedtime often gets rushed or skipped at the end of a busy day, when children may be overtired or well past their bedtime. They have found more success by establishing a reading time earlier in the day—and then if their children also read at night, all the better.

- Ask your child detailed questions about what he or she has read. Encourage children to explain what they liked or disliked about a text; to describe the characters, plot points, or settings of a fictional text; or to explain what they learned from an informational text.
- When possible, build family outings or recreational activities around what children are reading. For example, if your child enjoyed a book on the National Parks, you might plan to explore a park in your area. Even if you do not live near a National Park, you could visit a state or local park for a family picnic or hike.
- Ask your children to identify a topic they would like to learn more about, then declare that topic a “Family Focus” for a specific period of time. During this time, have every family member read an age-appropriate book about the topic. When the time concludes, have a special event in which everyone shares what they learned about the topic.

**Note:** The special event does not have to be elaborate. The point is to designate a time and place to focus on sharing. For example, if your family focused on Hawaii, the special event could simply be discussion over a family dinner. If you wanted to be elaborate, you could serve pineapple (which was traditionally grown in Hawaii) as dessert and have everyone try hula dancing after eating!

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Selection Guide

Instructions: Answer the following questions. Use the completed sheet to decide what kind of book you would like to read next. If you need help finding this kind of book, ask a teacher or librarian for help.

1. I am interested in books that \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

2. I would like to learn more about \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

3. The worst book I have read is \_\_\_\_\_.

I did not like it because \_\_\_\_\_.

4. If I had to reread any book I have already read, I would want to reread

\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

5. The most important part of a book is\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

6. When I think about reading a kind of book I have not read before, I feel

\_\_\_\_\_.

Once you have selected a book, write its title here\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

After you have read the book, record your review of it on the lines below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Preview

Instructions: After you select the next book you will read, but before you start reading it, answer the following questions.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

1. I picked this book because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

2. I think this book will make me \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

After you have read the book, record your review of it on the lines below.

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Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary Organizer

As you read a new book, write down any unfamiliar words you encounter. There is also space for you to record the page number where you found it, along with the sentence from the book that includes each word. Complete the chart by using a dictionary to look up the word and record its definition, then write a new sentence using the word.

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_

New Vocabulary Word	Page Number	Sentence from the book that uses the word	Definition	New sentence that uses the word

New Vocabulary Word	Page Number	Sentence from the book that uses the word	Definition	New sentence that uses the word

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Reflection

After reading a book, answer the following questions to record your thoughts about it.

The book I read is titled \_\_\_\_\_

1. I picked this book because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

2. This book was surprising because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

3. This book made me \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

4. After reading this book, I \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

5. When imagining reading another book like this, I \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

6. If I had to grade this book, I would give it \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

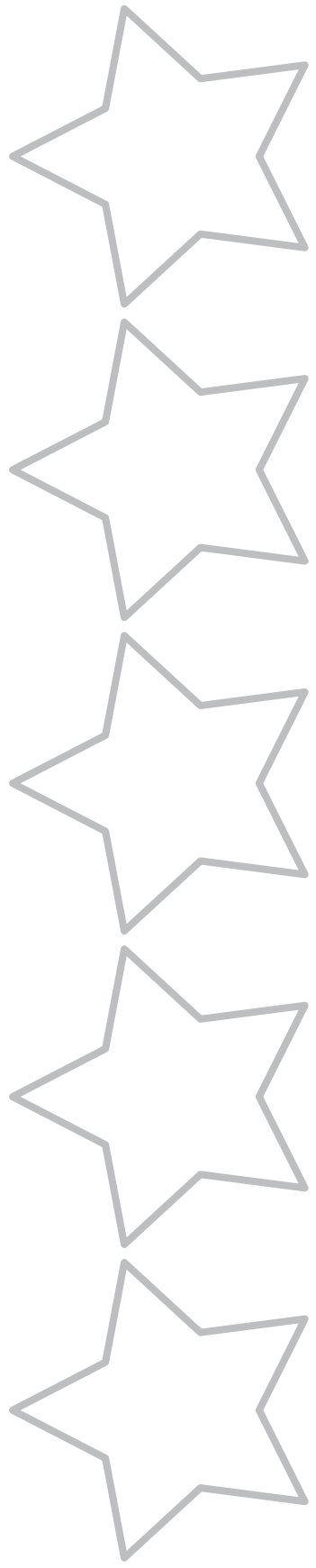
Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Reflection

Tell students that they will rate or grade the book they have just read. Ask students to color the correct number of stars for their book. Remind them that five stars would be the very best rating, while one star would be the worst rating. If necessary, assist students in recording the title and author of the book.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_



Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,  
(author name)

I just read your book \_\_\_\_\_.  
(title)

I thought it was \_\_\_\_\_. My favorite part was  
(word describing the book)

\_\_\_\_\_.  
(something you liked about the book)

One question I have is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a question you would like to ask the author)?

\_\_\_\_\_,  
(friendly closing)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your name)

# Book Talk Guide

If you are planning a book talk, make sure to include the following things.

- Title of book
- Author of book
- Kind of book (chapter, picture, informational text, fiction, poetry, graphic novel, etc.)
- The book's subject or topic
- Something you learned from or enjoyed about this book
- What kind of readers might enjoy this book
- Is this book like any others your class has read?
- Your overall rating of the book (for example, if you loved it, you might give it five stars) and a reason or reasons for that rating
- Would you recommend that your classmates read this? Why or why not?

