

# FOX RIVER COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

## Lower School Summer Reading Expectations Grades 3-5

Dear Parents,

Reading is the foundation on which almost all subsequent learning takes place. It is one of the most challenging achievements we ever accomplish and one of the most important as it opens windows and doors to the world. Vacation is a great time for reinforcing the joy of reading. Research about how much children lose ground over the summer is well documented. Harris Cooper of Duke University notes, "Overall, children experience an average summer learning loss across reading and mathematics of about one month" (1996). By contrast, "Reading four to five chapter books over the summer has a positive impact on fall reading achievement comparable to attending summer school" (Kim, 2004). Reading takes us on new adventures, exposes us to new ways of thinking and information, and it helps us make connections with our world.

Summer reading expectations are common in independent schools. We understand that reading is imperative to successful learning throughout the calendar year. While we certainly expect your children to enjoy themselves and relax during the summer months, it is also essential that they keep their minds engaged and active to retain all the meaningful learning developed and refined during the 2008-2009 school year. Therefore, please note the following Fox River Country Day School expectations for summer reading for incoming third, fourth, and fifth grade.

1. Students will engage in reading activities for a **minimum of 20 minutes each day** over the summer.
2. Students will read **three books: one common book and two additional books of their choice**. These three books will be incorporated into one project that will be presented during the first week of school. We suggest reading the common book in August so that the reading is fresh for class discussion.

Attached you will find the common book titles as well as a list of "teacher favorites" for each grade level. Using this list or other resources, students are encouraged to make reading selections based on their interests and the reading level that best suites them (for example some upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> grade students might find 5<sup>th</sup> grade books more appropriate). Additionally, local libraries are a wonderful resource in selecting summer reading.

Finally, you will find a note attached from your child's future teacher, detailing the "Back to School" reading project requirements based on their summer reading.

Sincerely,  
Karen Morse

**Incoming 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade:**

**Common Reading (you must read this book!):**

*Stuart Little* by E.B. White

**Teacher Favorites (or chose one of your own)**

*Good Grief, Third Grade*  
by Colleen McKenna

*Ribsy* by Beverly Cleary

*Soupy Saturdays* by Judy Blume

*7 x 9 = Trouble* by Claudia Mills

*The New Kid on the Block* by Jack Prelutsky

*Chocolate Fever* by Robert Kimmel Smith

*Sarah Plain and Tall* by Patricia MacLachlan

*Encyclopedia Brown series* by Donald J. Sobol

*Strawberry Girl* by Lois Lenski

*Who was Marco Polo?* by Joan Holub

*Clarice Bean Spells Trouble* by Lauren Child

*Sing a Song of Popcorn: Every Child's Book of Poems* by Beatrice S. DeRegniers

**Incoming 4<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

**Common reading (you must read this book!):**

*Tales of a Fourth Grade*

*Nothing* by Judy Blume

**Teacher Favorites (or chose one of your own)**

*Dear Mr. Henshaw* by Beverly Cleary

*The Indian in the Cupboard* by Lynne Reid Banks

*How to Eat Fried Worms* by Thomas Rockwell

*The Kid in the Red Jacket* by Barbara Park

*No Talking* by Andrew Clements

*Matilda* by Roald Dahl

*Soup* by Robert Newton Peck

*From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by E.L. Konigsburg

*A Dog Called Kitty* by Bill Wallace

*Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder

*The Flunking of Joshua T. Bates* by Susan Shreve

*Heat* by Mike Lupica

**Incoming 5<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

**Common Reading (you must read this book!):**

*Julie of the Wolves* by Jean Craighead George

**Teacher Favorites (or chose one of your own)**

*Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster

*Sing Down the Moon* by Scott O'Dell

*Things Hoped For* by Andrew Clements

*Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt

*Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen

*Holes* by Louis Sachar

*Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis

*A Wind in the Door* by Madeline L'Engle

*Joshua's Song* by Joan Harlow

*Chasing Vermeer* by Blue Balliett

*Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine

*Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynold Naylor

*Fairest* by Gail Carson Levine

# Back to School Reading Project

## **The Great Character Caper!**

Dear Parents:

Let's start the school year off right! Your child will have the opportunity to present his or her book project based on summer reading during the first week of school. This will be a great way for our new class to get to know each other and share fun reading experiences at the same time. Please help your child find time this summer to read *Julie of the Wolves* by Jean Craighead George and two other books of his or her choosing. The children will report on their books using any format they wish. Be creative! Projects can range from a short story intertwining a main character from each of the three books to a clay diorama of a scene where the three characters meet in a movie yet to be released. Simply follow the directions below and meet the project criteria on the attached rubric.

The final project is due on **Tuesday, September 1, 2009**. I can't wait to see your creative character caper projects!

Thank you,

Your Fifth Grade Teacher

P.S. We encourage you to read as many wonderful books as you can this summer! See the list attached for ideas if needed.



# The Great Character Caper!

## Project Directions

1. Read *Julie of the Wolves* and two other books of your choosing.
2. Choose one character from each of your three books to include in your project.
3. Before you begin your project, identify three unique characteristics or personality traits for each of your three characters.
4. Use these characteristics to help you decide on a great project.
5. Your characters should “meet” in your project in some way. (Perhaps your characters wind up at the same dinner party. Maybe they are all waiting in line together in the dining hall. Or, two of them may be students in a classroom, and one of them is their substitute teacher!)
6. After you have decided on the “setting,” use your creativity to tell or show us what happens next.
7. Your project format can be any of the following or something of your own choosing.
  - Short story
  - Diorama of a scene
  - Script you can act out
  - Board game
  - Movie poster
  - Song
  - Poem
  - Sculpture
  - Travel itinerary
  - Poster of one character that combines qualities of all three
8. Finally, please bring in your project on **Tuesday, September 1, 2009** to share with your classmates.
9. Have fun!

# The Great Character Caper!

I have read *Julie of the Wolves*.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (5 pts.)      No \_\_\_\_\_ (0 pts.)

I have read two other books of my choosing.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (5 pts.)    No \_\_\_\_\_ (0 pts.) / Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (5 pts.)    No \_\_\_\_\_ (0 pts.)

My final project was turned in by September 1, 2009

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

I included at least three unique characteristics about each character in my project.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

The meeting of my three characters is logical and creative.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

My work is neat. I have used my best handwriting and/or skills.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

I have done my best work.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Total Points \_\_\_\_\_

# The Great Character Caper!

## Example

Name: Mrs. Neville  
Date: September 1, 2009  
Books read: *Stuart Little*, by E.B. White  
*Wayside School Gets a Little Stranger*, by Louis Sachar  
*Frindle*, by Andrew Clements  
Format: Poem

### Time Well-Spent

Adventurous Mr. Little  
Awaited an event.  
It would happen in New York City  
And his time would be well-spent.

A dinner party at the Park,  
You know the one I mean?  
Where Stuart raced a sailboat  
It was really quite a scene.

When he arrived at his table.  
Much to his surprise  
He saw a very pregnant teacher  
And a boy with expressive eyes.

"My name is Stuart," he said kindly  
To his tablemates.  
He paused for their replies  
As the waiter set down their plates.

"I'm due in November,"  
Mrs. Jewls said with a grin.  
"And I brought something special,"  
The boy said about his pen.

The tiny mouse enjoyed his dinner,  
But, most of all, his new friends.

He learned about two schools,  
Two stories he would recommend!

Mr. Little even offered  
To teach the lady's students--  
Her only requirement was that what he  
taught be prudent.

"Your charity, little Stuart  
Is one important character trait  
That I desire for my 28 students  
In our school that isn't straight."

"I wish I could attend your school,"  
The boy with the pen chimed in.  
He said his name was Nick,  
And he had learned to play to win.

He said "I'll be famous one day."  
As dinner time began to dwindle.  
Stuart asked them for their numbers  
And Nick passed him a frindle.

"Let's keep in touch," they said  
As they headed for the door.  
It'd be great to get together  
To discuss good books some more.