

Summer Reading for Incoming 7th Graders

Read one of the following books and complete the Casting Call book report. This will be handed in with the rubric when we return to school. We will have another activity regarding your summer novel when we meet in August.

1. *One for the Murphys* by Linda Mullaly Hunt

- Carley uses humor and street smarts to keep her emotional walls high and thick. But the day she becomes a foster child, and moves in with the Murphys, she's blindsided. This loving, bustling family shows Carley the stable family life she never thought existed, and she feels like an alien in their cookie-cutter-perfect household. Despite her resistance, the Murphys eventually show her what it feels like to belong--until her mother wants her back and Carley has to decide where and how to live. She's not really a Murphy, but the gifts they've given her have opened up a new future.

2. *Well Wished* by Franny Billingsley

- "A coin for passage to your heart's desire," says Agnes, Guardian of the Wishing Well in the village of Bishop Mayne. "That is the first rule." Wishing on the Well is dangerous. That's why there are no other children around. A wish-gone-wrong took them all away. But now, because her grandfather has wished for them to come back, Nuria is sure that the one thing she wants -- a friend her own age -- will soon be there. "One wish each lifetime," says Agnes. "One cycle of the moon to repent and call it back. That is the second rule." Only a fool would make a wish that needs to be called back. But what if the wish goes horribly wrong?

3. *The Schwa Was Here* by Neal Shusterman

- When Anthony "Antsy" Bonano and his friends meet Calvin Schwa, they are impressed and puzzled by his ability to appear and disappear before their very eyes. Antsy concocts a moneymaking scheme based on the Schwa's invisibility that seems promising until he and his friends overreach and are caught by the town's legendary mean millionaire, Mr. Crawley. Their penance--walking the 7 virtues and 7 vices (Crawley's 14 afghan hounds) and going out with Crawley's granddaughter Lexie--cements and ultimately challenges friendships. The complexity of plot, the depth and richness of the characters, and the underlying seriousness of the issues deepen wonderful comedy.

4. *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* By Jordan Sonnenblick

- Steven Alper is a typical eighth-grader--smarter than some, a better drummer than most, but with the usual girl problems and family trials. Then, on October 7, his five-year-old brother, Jeffrey, falls, has a nosebleed that doesn't stop, and is diagnosed with leukemia. Mrs. Alper's days and nights revolve around getting Jeffrey to his treatments, and Mr. Alper retreats into a shell, coming out only occasionally to weep over the mounting medical bills. Steven becomes the forgotten son, who throws himself into drumming, even as he quits doing his homework and tries to keep his friends from finding out about Jeffrey's illness. A story that could have morphed into melodrama is saved by reality, rawness, and the wit Sonnenblick infuses into Steven's first-person voice. Sonnenblick shows that even in the midst of tragedy, life goes on, love can flower, and the one thing you can always change is yourself.

CASTING CALL BOOK REPORT

Picture yourself as a director of a play or a movie based on the novel you read. Usually, directors will have scripts that they use as to create a work (play, movie, musical, etc.). Your script will be the book that you read. You have your story, but now you must cast your actors and actresses to play key roles in the stage play or film version.

In this book report, you must pick **five** characters out of the book that you are going to cast for the play or movie. Try to pick characters that have unique characteristics and who play something of an important role in the story. After you pick the characters, you must fill their spots using people that work at or attend our school or parish. Some people that you might consider casting are teachers, priests, administrators, custodians, and students. You may feel free to cast yourself in a role, too. Do not go for the obvious choices for all your actors. Try to think outside the box and be creative!

Write a brief introductory paragraph explaining your purpose (to cast actors for a movie or play version of the novel) and one short paragraph for each character. In each paragraph you must write down the name of the character and the person who will be playing that character. Then, you must provide a character trait rationale for your decision. This can include physical descriptions, but must take other characteristics into consideration. Think about their personalities, temperaments, talents, etc. Be sure to describe the character assuming your reader has not read the book. You must also be specific and descriptive in indicating why you chose to cast each person in the assigned roles.

Your book report must be typed and should be between 1-2 pages. **It must include the title of the book and a standard heading.**

Happy reading!

CASTING CALL BOOK REPORT

NAME _____

Giving 0 points is an option-no evidence, no credit.

| Criteria | 1 point Needs improvement | 2.5 points Getting there | 3.5 points Meets expectations | 4 points Exceeds expectations | Total Points |
|--------------------|--|---|---|--|--------------------------|
| Quality of content | The report offered few descriptive details, did not touch on clear rationales, and left the reader with questions about the characters or casting. | The report did not give detailed descriptions and rationales for each character and casting choice, OR it gave the reader no feel for the type of book being covered. | The report showed an overall understanding of the book's characters and the St. James people cast. Good descriptions were given for all St. James casting choices and the novel's characters. | The report was detailed and gave excellent descriptions about the characters and the St. James people cast. It showed clear understanding of the characters and their St. James counterparts. The writer used creativity in casting, and did not always use the obvious choice. The descriptions gave a feel for the flavor of the book. | _____ x 5 = _____ points |
| Required elements | Two or more required elements were missing. | One required element was missing. | All required elements were present. | The report had at least 5 character & casting descriptions and rationales. Some interesting, inspired choices were made and explained. | _____ x 3 = _____ points |
| Conventions | Errors interfered with the reader's understanding. | The report had a number of errors and could confuse the reader. | The report had a few, minor errors that did not interfere with the reader's understanding. | The report had no errors in format, spelling, structure, punctuation, grammar, or diction. | _____ x 2 = _____ points |

TOTAL SCORE _____ / 40 = _____