

6th Grade Summer Reading Project

Welcome to DSST: Cedar Middle School! As part of our reading curriculum, each grade has a summer reading project. In 6th grade, this project serves to assess student ability, help students prepare for the year, and keep students reading during the summer in order to develop and prevent loss of reading skills.

The text for 6th grade is *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr. Students will receive copies of the book at New Student Academy, where they will begin reading and receiving instruction on the text. Copies of the book will also be available at the school's front desk for families to pick up. All books are expected to be returned when school starts. **A paper copy of the essay will be due on the first day of school.**

The 6th grade Reading teachers are Caleb Williams and Erin Shaheen. Our emails are caleb.williams@scienceandtech.org and erin.shaheen@scienceandtech.org. We will do our best to answer all summer reading questions within a few days of teachers' return to school on August 3rd so students can make changes to their essays before school starts if needed.

Essay Requirements:

The essay may be typed or handwritten. Students MUST include their name and the date in the top right corner of their essay. There are two options for students to choose from. **Please choose only one option.**

- a) Write a 4-paragraph essay describing a major theme (central idea or deeper meaning) or lesson from the book. Your essay should include at least four quotes from the text.
- b) Write a 4-paragraph story from the point of view of another character in the text. Your story should be written in first-person (pretend you ARE the character and use words like "I," "my," and "we.") The story should be true to the text and show a scene from the book from another character's perspective. The story should include at least two lines of directly quoted dialogue.

Outlines and Tips for Essays

Option A: Major Theme

- You are not required to follow this structure, but it is here to help you.

Introduction

- Introduce the most important elements of the novel – what is the setting/context of the novel, who are the main characters, and what are the basic elements of the plot?
- Write a thesis statement in the following format: **The novel *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr presents the theme/lesson of _____ by _____.**

Body Paragraph 1:

- Why is this an important theme? What is the first event in the book that shows this theme? What quote from the text supports your idea?

Body Paragraph 2:

- What is another event in the book that shows this theme? What quote from the text supports your idea?

Conclusion:

- Restate and summarize the main ideas of your essay in a new way.
- Restate your thesis in a different way.
- Consider, why is this theme or lesson important? What should the reader take away from this story?

Option B: Retelling the story from a new point of view.

- Remember to use first-person point of view (using words like “I,” “we,” and “my.”)
- Your story should describe a scene from the book. It could be...
 - Chizuko giving Sadako the crane.
 - One of Sadako’s parents caring for her during her illness.
 - Kenji becoming friends with Sadako.
 - Another scene of your choosing.
- You need to put yourself in the other character’s shoes and pretend to be them! What emotions are they feeling? What are they doing? How are they reacting to what is happening? What do they see, smell, taste, hear, and touch?
- You are required to use at least two lines of exact quotes of dialogue from the story.

Example: If I was describing the scene where Chizuko gives Sadako the crane from Chizuko’s perspective, I might start by writing, *“I could barely contain my excitement, so I ran down the bumpy road to the hospital, my gift for Sadako poking out from my pocket...”*

Essays will be graded according to the following rubric:

Total Points out of 25: _____

	5	3	1
Completeness	The essay is 4-paragraphs long and meets all requirements listed in the instructions.	The essay is 4 paragraphs long, but may be missing a few of the requirements listed in the instructions.	The essay is far shorter than required and meets few to none of the requirements.
Structure/ Organization	Writing is clearly organized into 4 paragraphs. Writing makes sense and flows from one sentence into the next.	Writing is clearly organized into 4 paragraphs, but may have notable lapses in cohesion or flow.	The essay is not organized into paragraphs. The essay’s disorganization makes it difficult to understand.
Editing/ Conventions	Few or no errors in grammar and conventions present, a clear effort at editing was made.	Errors in formatting, spelling or grammar are noticeable, but do not impact comprehension of essay.	Errors in formatting, spelling or grammar are substantial and significantly impact readability of essay
Quotes and Text Usage	Essay references text 4x with direct quotations (theme essay) OR Describes at least two clear and exact details from the text and 2 lines of exactly quoted dialogue (POV essay)	Essay lacks some text evidence (theme essay) OR Essay lacks enough concrete details from the book, including dialogue, that the scene is unclear (POV)	Text Evidence is not included OR It is impossible to tell what scene is being referred to in the book.
Explanation and Analysis	Essay is sensible and describes a clear and accurate theme or lesson from the book by providing examples and analysis (theme essay) OR Essay is reasonable and accurately reflects the character’s experience and the scene. The essay puts us directly in the mind of the character. (POV essay)	The essay is sensible and reasonable, but may be unclear or incorrect in some places.	The essay does not make sense or presents a significantly incorrect view of the text. The essay shows limited knowledge of the text.