Community High School

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The Community School
For the child whose potential exceeds performance

June 2025

Dear Parents and Students:

As summer approaches, we here at Community High School are busy planning for an exciting and challenging new school year. This letter will provide you with important information about your student's summer reading requirement, an important extension of our educational program.

We have found that a student's reading ability greatly influences academic success, both in the classroom and on standardized tests. Our summer reading program has been designed to both foster the habit of lifelong reading and to prepare students for the classes they will be taking in the fall.

As such, we are <u>requiring</u> all students to read one book and complete one coordinating Summer Reading Project. Students completing more than one assignment will receive extra credit. The completed reports are due back by Friday, September 12, 2025.

Enclosed is a list of *Suggested Summer Reading Titles* for incoming Grade 11 students. This list provides a recommended selection of books and authors that are known to be of interest to high school students. Students may elect to choose substitute titles/taped selections not included on the grade list; however, please make sure selections are appropriate choices for school reading. The Summer Reading Project options and guidelines are also provided to assist students in their writing. Students are able to choose and complete one of the projects from the Summer Reading Project options.

This packet includes suggestions that parents can use to support students as they complete the project and strengthen their reading skills. It also contains links to helpful resources. To access these links, visit the Community School website, choose the High School, click on "Documents and Forms," and select "Summer Reading Project."

We hope you enjoy your summer reading experience. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Cheryl Pettway at cherylp@communityschool.k12.nj.us or 201-862-1796 X136.

Sincerely,

Scott Parisi
Executive Director

How Can Parents Help with Inferencing?

Inferencing is when readers have to 'read between the lines' to figure out something that isn't directly stated. Readers do this by using clues from the text and their own background knowledge.

For example: If a story says, *"She grabbed her umbrella and rushed out the door late for work again,"* we can infer that she is often late for work and it is likely raining—even if the story doesn't state that directly.

Why is inferencing important? Inferencing helps readers better understand stories and information. It encourages critical thinking and problem-solving and builds real-world skills that are needed to understand people and situations.

As kids read texts with more complex plots, subtle details, and deeper meanings, inferencing becomes a critical thinking skill that affects reading comprehension, writing, and even how they understand news, media, and real-life situations. Check out some helpful hints below to support inferencing at home.

While reading, ask open-ended questions, discuss themes & feelings.

- "Why do you think the character made that decision?"
- "What do you think the author is trying to suggest here?"
- "Can you explain what the author is *suggesting*?"
- "What's the evidence for that interpretation?"
- Talk about a character's intentions and the consequences of their actions

Present questions during movies, shows, media, or real-life situations

- During a show or after a movie, ask, "What do you think that look meant?"/"How do you know that character wasn't telling the truth?"
- In news stories, ask, "What's being implied here?"/ "What's not being said, but you can tell it's true?"
- In social media posts, "What's the tone of this post?"/ "What might that politician or celebrity be really trying to say?"

Before, During & After Reading Strategies

Before Reading: Preparing for Comprehension

1. **Preview the Text**: Examine the title, cover, headings, and illustrations to make predictions about the content. https://resourcehub.readingpartners.org/

2. **Activate Prior Knowledge**: Discuss what you already know about the topic to build a connection with the new material. Supporting Your Children's and Teens' Home Learning: Using a K-W-L Chart to Activate Background Knowledge | Iowa Reading Research Center

3. **Set a Purpose for Reading**: Decide on a specific goal, such as finding answers to questions or understanding a particular concept. k5ChalkBox.com

4. **Introduce Key Vocabulary**: Identify and discuss challenging words or phrases that may appear in the text. Reading Rockets

5. **Make Predictions**: Based on the preview, hypothesize what the text will be about and what might happen. https://resourcehub.readingpartners.org/

During Reading: Engaging with the Text

1. **Monitor Understanding**: Pause periodically to ensure comprehension and clarify any confusion. Reading Rockets

2. **Visualize Content**: Create mental images of characters, settings, and events to enhance understanding.Visual Imagery | Reading Rockets

3. **Make Connections**: Relate the material to personal experiences, other texts, or world events. 10 Ways To Help Students Make Text Connections

4. **Ask Questions**: Pose questions about the text to deepen understanding and engage critically. Reading Rockets

5. **Summarize Key Points**: Periodically restate important ideas or events in your own words. Reading Rockets

6. **Use Graphic Organizers**: Employ tools like story maps or Venn diagrams to organize information visually.

After Reading: Reflecting and Extending Understanding

1. **Summarize the Text**: Recap the main ideas and events to reinforce comprehension. [Reading Rockets](#)

2. **Discuss Reactions**: Share personal thoughts and feelings about the text to deepen engagement. [Mrs. Nagelhout](#)

3. **Evaluate the Content**: Assess the effectiveness of the text in conveying its message or achieving its purpose. [Jennifer Byzewski: EDTECH Learning Log+8Reading Rockets+8IRIS+8](#)

4. **Apply New Knowledge**: Use the information gained to inform decisions, solve problems, or create new ideas.

5. **Extend Learning**: Explore related topics or texts to broaden understanding and maintain interest.

The Importance of Reading at Home

Reading isn't just for school. Research shows that students who read regularly outside of school perform better academically and develop stronger communication skills.

Tips:

Designate Reading Space: Find a quiet, comfortable area in your home with good lighting.

Daily Reading Routine: Encourage your child to read for at least 20 minutes each day.

Choose Their Own Books: Allow your child to pick books that interest them.

Discussion: Ask questions about the books your child is reading.

Different Formats: Audiobooks, e-books, and graphic novels.

Library Visits: Libraries have a wide range of books and resources, and many offer reading programs and events.

Family Book Club: Reading the same book as a family and discussing it can be a fun way to bond and encourage reading.

Set Goals: Establish clear and attainable reading goals, such as reading a certain number of pages or chapters each week. Tracking progress can motivate your child and provide a sense of accomplishment.

Celebrate Milestones: Acknowledge milestones like finishing a book or reaching a reading goal. Positive reinforcement can motivate continued reading.

Limit Screen Time: Encourage reading by setting limits on screen time. Use the extra time for reading activities.

Your involvement and encouragement help your child develop a lifelong love of reading.

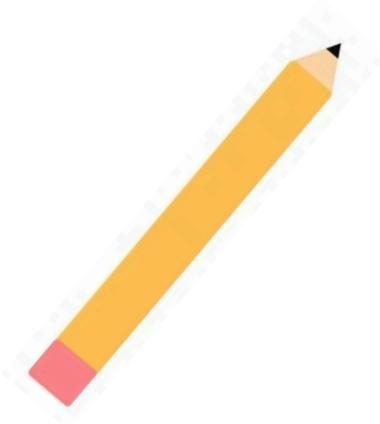🍎Marie Dembowski, Ed.D., Community High School Reading Department, 2025
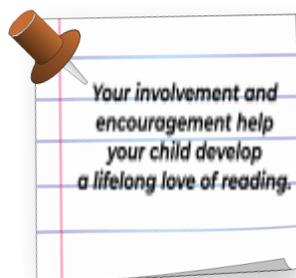
Graphic Organizers for Reading

Graphic organizers help reading comprehension by providing a visual structure for the information in the text. They support better understanding, retention, and analysis of texts.

Graphic Organizers...

➔ **Organize Ideas Logically**

➔ **Focus Attention on Key Elements**

➔ **Improve Retention and Recall**

➔ **Support Active Reading**

➔ **Aid Struggling Readers**

➔ **Enhance Critical Thinking**

Some examples of Graphic Organizers can be found @ HMH Free Graphic OrganizerTemplates