MIDDLE SCHOOL / 2026-27

BEYOND THE BOOK

READING SHOWCASE

> **Read it. Make it. Share it.**

Bring a book you enjoyed this year to life through creativity, critical thinking, and your own connection to reading.

CHOOSE YOUR WAY TO CREATE

PROJECT CATEGORY	WHAT YOU WILL CREATE
Lyric Lab	Celebrate your book in an original poem or song.
Read & Reel	Create an original book promotion video.
Diorama Drama	Bring a book scene to life in 3D.

- **Every entry:** a project + a presentation about your connection to the book and why you recommend it.
- Each school selects 9 elementary and 9 middle school entries. Middle grades: NDE sends 3; NDJS sends 6. Judges award 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in each category.
- **Choose your book. Pick one project. Follow the checklists inside.**

> **PARENTS, YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!**
>
> Selection is highly competitive! KES representatives will compete against students from other schools across Duplin County. Please help your child plan, gather materials, check progress, and practice presenting a project they can be proud of. The creative work should remain their own.

DCS DISTRICT SHOWCASE

EVENT DETAIL	SCHEDULE & LOCATION
Showcase Dates	Elementary: March 16 | Middle grades: March 17
Location	Ed Emory Auditorium

My project starts here

Read these rules before choosing your project.

Student name / grade / teacher: _____

Book title and author(s): _____

MY BOOK + ENTRY CHECK

- ☐ I read this book during this school year. It may be fiction or nonfiction.
- ☐ My book fits my age and reading level and offers enough challenge and depth for my grade.
- ☐ I may use a book read on my own, in a small group, or with my whole class.
- ☐ I will use the book itself for my project and presentation, rather than a movie or TV version.
- ☐ I will submit only one entry. My entry includes a project and a presentation about my connection to the book and why I recommend it.

HOW SCHOOL SELECTION WORKS

DLMCS work with school leaders and classroom teachers to plan school participation. Schools may enter any combination of categories; they do not need an entry in every category. For example, all 9 entries may be in one category, or 3 in each. Schools may also give additional school-level awards.

My project choice / partner(s), if this category allows them: _____

MY PROJECT DATES

MILESTONE	DATE
School project due for final critique	**December 11, 2026**
Project due for final scoring	**January 8, 2027**
District selections notified by	**February 10, 2027**
Practice/checkpoint 1	
Practice/checkpoint 2	

Lyric Lab

A Celebration of Books in Verse | BUILD CHECKLIST

01 DEVELOP THE PROJECT

- [ ] Create an original poem or song lyrics that reflect your interpretation of a fiction or nonfiction book. Work individually or with one partner. Do not use AI in creating the project.
- [ ] Choose at least one focus: Characters/persons: personalities, challenges, and journeys; setting: how place and time affect the plot; theme: central message or ideas; major conflict: key struggles or turning points; symbols: an important object, image, or idea in the story or theme.
- [ ] Use accurate, specific book details to connect your writing to your chosen focus.
- [ ] Use imaginative language and deliberate word choices. Try imagery, metaphor, simile, or repetition to communicate your message.
- [ ] Organize your writing so it flows naturally and is grammatically correct. Use tone and expression to convey meaning and emotion.
- [ ] Offer a memorable, imaginative perspective that engages the audience.
- [ ] Submit a printed copy by the district deadline. Include the book title, book author, poem/lyrics title, and student name.
- [ ] If working in a pair, both students should help write and prepare the piece and participate in the performance.

MY PLAN

My focus / subject / scene and the book details I will use:

Lyric Lab

PRESENTATION + PRACTICE CHECKLIST

02 GET READY TO SHARE

- [ ] Introduce yourself/yourselves, identify the book and author, and give the title of your original poem or song.
- [ ] Explain what interested you about the character, person, or symbol and why the story is meaningful to you.
- [ ] Perform your poem or lyrics for the judges in poetry-reading style, or sing the lyrics.
- [ ] Express the emotions and message of your piece through tone, expression, and delivery.
- [ ] Speak or sing clearly at an appropriate pace and volume.
- [ ] Keep the performance within 3 minutes. Rehearse multiple times to build confidence.
- [ ] Engage judges and audience through eye contact, gestures, and meaningful delivery.

> **TRY THESE SUCCESS TIPS**
>
> Choose a book you feel strongly about. Use literary devices to explore deeper meaning in moments or objects. Practice until you can deliver your words with confidence and passion.

03 REHEARSE + REFINE

My personal connection and why I recommend this book:

After practice, I want to improve:

Lyric Lab | SCORING CHECKLIST

Review each row. Check the box when your work meets the criterion.

CRITERION	POINTS
POETRY/LYRICS / 25 POINTS	
☐ Focuses on at least one of these aspects: characters/Persons, setting, theme, major conflict, symbols	4
☐ Uses creative language, word choice, and literary devices, such as imagery, metaphors, similes, or repetition, to communicate your message	5
☐ Offers a memorable, imaginative perspective that engages the audience	4
☐ Demonstrates an accurate understanding of the book and includes specific details that clearly connect their writing to the aspect(s) they have chosen to highlight.	4
☐ Writing should be organized, flow naturally, and be grammatically correct	3
☐ Tone and expression convey meaning and emotion	3
☐ Poem/lyrics are original student writing	2
PERFORMANCE / 25 POINTS	
☐ Introduces themselves and identifies the book, author, and title of the original poem/song	2
☐ Explains what interested them about this character/person/symbol and why they find their story meaningful	5
☐ Performance conducted in "poetry reading" style or lyrics may be sung.	5
☐ Voice is clear and audible with appropriate pacing	5
☐ Tone, expression, and delivery convey meaning and emotion	5
☐ Prepared performance stays within 3-minute limit	3
50 POINTS POSSIBLE	**My review date:** _____

Read & Reel

Book Video Promotion | BUILD CHECKLIST

01 DEVELOP THE PROJECT

- [ ] Create an original book promotion video that captures the book and reflects your interpretation. Work alone or in a group of up to 4 students. Do not use AI in creating the project.
- [ ] Develop at least one focus: Characters/persons: personalities, challenges, and journeys; setting: how place and time affect the plot; theme: central message or ideas; major conflict: key struggles or turning points; symbols: an important object, image, or idea in the story or theme.
- [ ] Use accurate, relevant book details to demonstrate your understanding. Keep your interpretation true to the book while making it engaging and original.
- [ ] Keep the video at 3 minutes or less. You may use stop motion, live action, or animation.
- [ ] Use clear visuals, readable text, understandable and balanced audio/voices, and smooth scene transitions. Editing, pacing, and effects should support the story.
- [ ] Opening credits must include the book title and author, video title, and student director name(s). You may also name the chapter or scene that inspired the video.
- [ ] Use original content or obtain proper permission for all music, visuals, and video. Include credits at the end and copyright acknowledgments for materials used, if applicable.
- [ ] By submitting, you confirm that all content is original or used with permission and grant permission for your video to be shared in the competition.

MY PLAN

My focus / subject / scene and the book details I will use:

Read & Reel

PRESENTATION + PRACTICE CHECKLIST

02 GET READY TO SHARE

- [ ] Upload the video file (MP4, MOV, etc.) to Google Drive and share a viewable link. Test the file, compatibility, and link before submitting.
- [ ] Be ready to present the video to a panel of judges. Introduce yourself/yourselves, the book, author, and original video title.
- [ ] Explain what interested you about your character/person, theme, conflict, setting, or symbol and why the story is meaningful.
- [ ] Explain your focus and personal connection clearly and meaningfully, using specific book details.
- [ ] Explain how creative choices connect to the book and why you selected particular scenes, characters, or elements.
- [ ] Speak clearly and confidently when introducing the video.

TRY THESE SUCCESS TIPS

Storyboard each scene before filming: plan visuals, text, and voiceovers for a cohesive story that makes people want to read. Use sound effects and permitted music to support mood and theme. Practice explaining your choices. Suggested digital tools: iMovie, Canva, Adobe Spark.

03 REHEARSE + REFINE

My personal connection and why I recommend this book:

After practice, I want to improve:

Read & Reel | SCORING CHECKLIST

Review each row. Check the box when your work meets the criterion.

CRITERION	POINTS
VIDEO / 25 POINTS	
☐ Video presents an original interpretation of the book that is compelling.	3
☐ Selected literary elements are accurate and relevant to the book (characters, setting, theme, conflict, or symbols)	4
☐ Video includes accurate details from the book that demonstrate understanding of the aspect(s) chosen to highlight	4
☐ Images and text are clear and legible. Audio and voice are understandable and balanced	3
☐ Editing, pacing, and effects support storytelling	2
☐ Opening credits identify book, author, and student director(s)	2
☐ Credits include copyright acknowledgment for all materials used (if applicable).	2
☐ Visual and narrative choices engage the intended audience and stand out as memorable and impactful	4
☐ Video is 3 minutes or less	1
ORAL PRESENTATION / 25 POINTS	
☐ Introduces themselves, book title, author, and video title	2
☐ Explains what interested them about character/person/theme/conflict/setting/symbol they focused on from the book. and why they find their story meaningful	8
☐ Explains focus and personal connection using book details	8
☐ Explains how your creative choices connect to the book and why they selected particular scenes, characters, or elements	5
☐ Speaks clearly and confidently	2
50 POINTS POSSIBLE	**My review date:** _____

Diorama Drama

Bringing Books to Life | BUILD CHECKLIST

01 DEVELOP THE PROJECT

- [ ] Create an original 3D diorama showing a scene from your fiction or nonfiction book. Work individually.
- [ ] Choose one or more focus areas: Characters/persons: personalities, challenges, and journeys; setting: how place and time affect the plot; theme: central message or ideas; major conflict: key struggles or turning points; symbols: an important object, image, or idea in the story or theme.
- [ ] Represent the scene accurately with recognizable book details showing characters, setting, and/or important events.
- [ ] Keep dimensions at or below 12 inches long × 12 inches wide × 24 inches high (L × W × H).
- [ ] Use school-appropriate, transportable materials. Fabric, paper, paint, clay, and other decorations may enhance the scene.
- [ ] Make at least 60% of the diorama by hand yourself. Store-bought items may enhance it, but most of the work must show your own creativity and craftsmanship.
- [ ] Build neatly and securely, with careful detail and creative materials that bring the scene to life. Make sure it is stable.
- [ ] Add a visible label with the book title, author, and represented chapter or scene.

MY PLAN

My focus / subject / scene and the book details I will use:

Diorama Drama

PRESENTATION + PRACTICE CHECKLIST

02 GET READY TO SHARE

- [ ] Be ready to present, discuss your diorama, and answer judges' questions in a 3-minute session.
- [ ] Introduce yourself, identify the book and author, name the chapter or scene, and explain why you chose the book.
- [ ] Use the diorama and specific book details to explain your focus and why it matters to the story.
- [ ] For characters, explain personalities, challenges, and relationships. For theme, describe the message and how the story shows it. For conflict/events, explain turning points and their effects.
- [ ] Explain what interested you about the book and scene and why the story is meaningful to you.
- [ ] Speak clearly and confidently. Explain how your design represents important elements of the scene and prepare thoughtful responses to questions.

TRY THESE SUCCESS TIPS

Choose a meaningful scene with strong visual possibilities. Sketch the arrangement of characters, props, and details before building. Combine materials and textures for depth and interest. Practice explaining choices. Test stability and secure every piece before transport.

03 REHEARSE + REFINE

My personal connection and why I recommend this book:

After practice, I want to improve:

Diorama Drama | SCORING CHECKLIST

Review each row. Check the box when your work meets the criterion.

CRITERION	POINTS
DIORAMA / 25 POINTS	
☐ Original creation that reflects your own interpretation of the book	2
☐ Accurately represents a scene from the book and includes recognizable details that demonstrate your understanding of the characters, setting, and/or important events being portrayed	4
☐ Details convey relevant characters, setting, theme, conflict, or symbols	4
☐ Construction is neat, stable, and detailed	4
☐ Materials effectively support the scene; at least 60% is handmade	3
☐ Creative design communicates the chosen scene	4
☐ Dimensions are no larger than 12 in L × 12 in W × 24 in H	2
☐ Visible label identifies book title, author, and scene/chapter	2
ORAL PRESENTATION / 25 POINTS	
☐ Introduces themselves, the book, the author, and the scene/chapter	2
☐ Explains represented literary elements clearly and their significance to the story	8
☐ Explains personal connection to book and scene	8
☐ Communicates clearly and engages judges with prepared responses	5
☐ Presentation/discussion within 3 minutes	2
50 POINTS POSSIBLE	**My review date:** _____

Parent Guide

Support the process. Help your reader prepare to shine.

This guide turns the source requirements into family support steps. The project should reflect your child's own reading, understanding, and creative work.

HELP YOUR CHILD GET STARTED

- [ ] Read the event flyer and the checklist for your child's chosen category. Confirm school deadlines and submission details with the teacher or DLMC.
- [ ] Help your child choose a book read this school year that fits their age, reading level, and grade-level challenge. Independent, small-group, and whole-class books are allowed.
- [ ] Talk about the book itself. Ask: What interested you? Which details support your ideas? Why would you recommend this book?
- [ ] Help plan time, gather appropriate materials, and arrange safe transport. Use the exact size, format, and group rules for the chosen category.

SUPPORT STUDENT OWNERSHIP

Lyric Lab allows individuals or pairs; Read & Reel allows 1-4 students; Diorama Drama is individual. Lyric Lab and Read & Reel explicitly prohibit AI. The source does not state an AI rule for Diorama Drama; ask the teacher for any additional school guidance.

- [ ] Encourage your child to make and explain their own creative choices. Review the scoring checklist together and let your child revise the work.
- [ ] Listen to practice presentations. Help check clarity, pacing, confidence, and the category's 3-minute limit. For Read & Reel, the video itself is limited to 3 minutes; the source gives no separate introduction time limit.

BEFORE SUBMISSION

- Confirm that the project and presentation are ready, required names/titles/labels or printed materials are included, and the work meets its category rules. For video entries, check permissions, end credits, file playback, and the viewable Google Drive link.
- **District event:** March 16 - elementary; March 17 - middle grades.
- **Location:** Ed Emory Auditorium. Schools select district entries; judges award 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in each category.

Teacher / DLMC contact: _____

Final scoring due: Jan. 8, 2027 | Family practice date: _____