



# America's School of Heroes

## Middle School 137

109-15 98<sup>th</sup> Street, Ozone Park, N.Y. 11417

Tel: 1-718-659-0471 Fax: 1-718-659-4594

<http://www.heroesofms137.org>

Pamela Trincado, Principal

Assistant Principals:

Frank Bennici • Francesca Casale • Dimitra Galatsanos • Mark A. Main • Christina Reilly-Derasmo • Michael Troy

## Middle School 137's Incoming 7th Grade

### Math & ELA Summer Packet



Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

-

As we close out the 2024-2025 school year, we want to make sure you don't forget all the reading and writing strategies you learned this year. In efforts to better prepare you for the **7<sup>th</sup> grade**, we have attached assignments, for ELA & Math which must be completed over the summer break.

**ELA:** Please read the passages and answer the multiple choice questions and short responses for each. As well as the interview writing assignment.

**Math:** In efforts to better prepare you for 7th grade math we have included your assignment, which must be completed over the summer break. Your work must be shown and if you need additional space please use the work space on the right side of the packet.

This completed packet must be brought with you on the first day of school. Your new ELA & Math teachers will collect and grade your work. We wish you a very exciting summer and look forward to you joining us here at MS 137 in September.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Arts & Culture

# Forget tough love; treating yourself with kindness is the way to go



Image 1: Doing something that you enjoy, whether it's going for a hike or cozying up with a novel, is one way of practicing self-compassion. Photo: ClickAlps/REDA&CO/UGC via Getty Images.

By Washington Post, adapted by  
Newsela staff  
Published: 11/19/2019

If you think you need to yell at yourself to force yourself to finish your homework, think again. If you get angry at yourself because you didn't eat a healthy lunch or dinner, give yourself a break. Research shows there is a more effective way to improve your habits. Practicing self-compassion leads to more positive results. It also helps us live healthier, happier lives.

Self-compassion means being kind and supportive to ourselves. It includes learning to let go of harsh self-criticism. Many studies have shown that self-compassion improves our **mental** and emotional well-being. Newer research also finds that it plays a key role in physical health.

# Be Patient With Yourself

Kristin Neff is a self-compassion researcher and the **author** of the book "Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself." According to Neff, there are three elements to self-compassion.

The first is mindfulness, which is being aware of thoughts, feelings and experiences. When you practice mindfulness, you experience your feelings and thoughts without judging or obsessing about them.

The second element is a sense of common humanity. That is the understanding that no one is perfect. We all experience personal struggles.

The third element is self-kindness. That includes being understanding and patient with ourselves when we make mistakes.

The opposite of self-compassion is being self-critical and mean to ourselves when we make a mistake. But this approach does not make us feel or perform better. These negative reactions can even make us sick; they are linked to depression and other health problems.

A study from 2017 found positive outcomes for people who practice self-compassion. These people tend to handle stress better. Their bodies have less of a stress response when, for example, they get into an argument with someone, or make a mistake at work or school.

Constantly feeling stress is unpleasant. Studies show it also directly harms our health. Stress contributes to high blood pressure and weakens the immune system. This is the system that helps our bodies fight off illness and disease. When we cope well with stress, we're also less **likely** to form other unhealthy habits, like smoking or overeating.



Image 2. A good rule of thumb when practicing self-compassion is to treat yourself with the same kindness and respect you show your friends. Photo: Photo By Joe Amon/The Denver Post via Getty Images.

# Self-Compassion Leads To Generosity

Some people may assume that self-compassion is selfish or lazy. The truth is quite the opposite.

Self-compassion allows people to be more honest and caring. We are less likely to overreact and be mean to others if we are caring and supportive toward ourselves. It allows people to be more generous and more active in the long run.

Are you a perfectionist? If so, you may think you have to be hard on yourself to perform up to your abilities. Research shows that the opposite is true. Self-compassion leads to more long-term success. We're less likely to give up if we treat ourselves with kindness. Self-compassion is a form of self-support that helps us to keep trying and even try harder.

Self-compassion can also give us confidence to look for areas where we can improve. It is easier to make changes when we are not weighed down by self-criticism. Lets say you do poorly on a geometry test.

Self-compassion can help you use that experience to make a change, like **seeking** out a math tutor. In contrast, self-criticism can paralyze you. If you are very critical of yourself, you may end up feeling so bad that all you are able to do is ignore the problem. Meanwhile, you keep falling behind in class. This makes you feel worse, and the cycle continues.

## Do Things That Make You Happy

How do we practice self-compassion, instead? We can start with mindfulness. Being mindful means paying attention to what is going on with our thoughts and feelings, as well as what's happening around us. First, we can practice **observing** our thoughts. We can decide whether they are compassionate or critical. Next, we can make an effort not to judge ourselves harshly. Criticizing ourselves only makes us feel worse.

It is helpful to be patient and forgiving toward ourselves when we are trying to improve a habit or behavior. Try treating yourself as you would treat a good friend. This will allow you to be honest and clear about what you want to change, while remaining respectful, supportive and kind to yourself.



Finally, we can show kindness to ourselves in ways that help nurture the mind, body and spirit, too. Make time for something that makes you happy, whether it is going for a walk or playing a game. Doing activities that bring us joy is a way of showing respect and caring for ourselves. These activities might include reading a good book, playing a musical instrument or getting together with friends to kick around a soccer ball. Such enjoyable activities strengthen our connections with the people we love. They also contribute to positive feelings about ourselves. This leaves us feeling stronger and braver. With practice, we can learn to treat ourselves with kindness and unconditional love — not tough love.

1. Which of the following answer choices describes two MAIN ideas in the article?

1. Mindfulness is paying attention to our thoughts and feelings and being curious about whether they are compassionate or critical.
2. Being hard on yourself may not get the results you want.
3. Being kind to yourself can be challenging but will lead to long-term benefits.
4. To be self-compassionate you should become aware of how you treat yourself and take steps to treat yourself well.

- (A) 1 and 2  
(B) 3 and 4  
(C) 2 and 3  
(D) 1 and 4

2. Read the sentence from the section "Don't Be Too Critical Of Yourself."  
When we cope well with stress, we're also less likely to reach for unhealthy short-term coping mechanisms.

HOW does this detail develop the author's central idea?

- (A) Because stress can be relieved by mindfulness, it provides a reason to practice it.  
(B) It supports the idea that stress is really unhealthy by explaining some of its negative aspects.  
(C) It complements the idea that self-compassion is good for you by providing a positive aspect of it.  
(D) By explaining a negative affect of not being self-compassionate, the author supports the idea that being kind to yourself is healthy.

3. Read the introduction [paragraphs 1-2].  
How does the introduction introduce the main idea?

- (A) The introduction goes into extreme detail about all of the elements of self-compassion.
- (B) The introduction provides an overview of the elements of self-compassion and previews how it can be helpful.
- (C) The introduction gives credibility to the article by introducing an important researcher about self compassion, Kristin Neff.
- (D) By emphasizing the importance of mindfulness, the introduction sets the reader up to understand this key topic in detail.

4. Why does the author include the information about mindfulness?

- (A) The topic of mindfulness is one of the central ideas of the article.
- (B) As a detail, mindfulness represents a shift in tone of the article.
- (C) It is a detail included with other strategies to develop self-compassion.
- (D) Because it is a synonym for self-compassion, adding it as a detail builds understanding of the topic.

Why is it important for people to treat themselves with kindness?

State your answer as a claim. Support your claim with evidence from the article. Think about what you read about self-compassion, then explain how the evidence supports your claim.

---

---

---

---

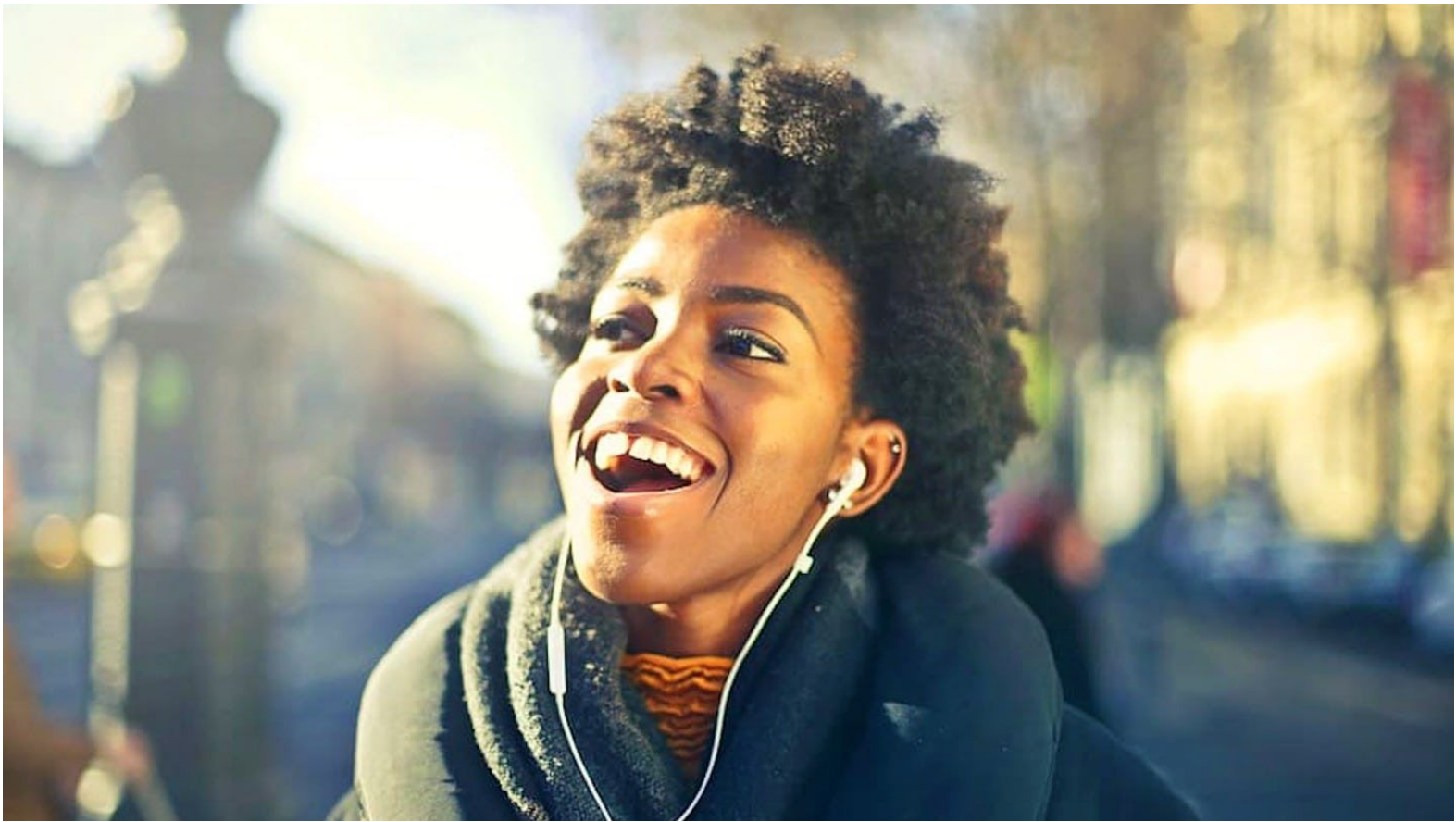
---

---

---

---

# How music helps us get in touch with emotion



Pretty much everyone has the same emotional response to music. Musical emotions can help us understand other people's feelings, as well as our own. Photo: Pxfuel

By Washington Post, adapted by  
Newsela staff Published:04/07/2020

Think about your favorite song. Now think about the way it makes you feel. You probably didn't have to think too hard to identify that feeling. If you asked a friend from your neighborhood how that same song makes them feel, they would likely have the same response.

What if you asked someone who grew up in a different place, though -- like a different country? Would they also have the same feelings when they listened to your favorite song?

Alan Cowen wanted to find out. He is a scientist at the University of California at Berkeley. He studies how people **express** emotions with their face and voice.

# Language And Culture

Emotions are shaped by language and culture, Cowen says. So he thought it was possible people from different cultures might interpret music differently. Music that Americans consider angry, for example, might be considered scary by non-Americans.

Cowen organized a study of more than 2,500 people in the United States and China. He and his fellow **researchers** played the 2,500 people many kinds of music. These included heavy metal, rock, jazz and classical.

The researchers found that pretty much everyone had about the same emotional response to the music. "The Star-Spangled Banner" made most people feel pride. Ed Sheeran's "Shape of You" made them feel joyful.

## Different Opinions About Music

Not all responses were shared across the two groups, however. People in China and the United States felt angry after listening to a certain song. They had that in common. However, they had different opinions about whether feeling angry after listening was a good or bad experience.

Studies have shown that people across cultures share as many as six basic emotions: fear, anger, surprise, disgust, sadness and happiness.

Cowen's study identified 13 emotional responses or feelings "through the language of music": amusement, joy, desire, beauty, relaxation, sadness, dreaminess, **triumph**, anxiety, scariness, annoyance, defiance and feeling pumped up.

Cowen's team created an interactive map of those musical emotions. Today, teachers around the world are using this map in their classrooms. It's helping students find new words to describe their emotions.

"They're going from saying, 'This is good music' to 'This is defiant music,'" Cowen says.



## Expanded Emotional Vocabulary

This **expanded** emotional vocabulary can help people better control their own emotions. It could also help them understand other people's feelings. Cowen says people who are depressed often see negativity in many facial expressions. Having different words to describe emotions could be a useful tool. These extra words may help them reconsider what they think they see.

Humans aren't the only animals that respond to music. Music lessens anxiety in shelter dogs and helps cows produce more milk. So why are humans the only ones who make it?

Cowen says that animal noises have some similarities to music. For example, tigers use a low growl to show their size and strength.

Still, Cowen says music is like "cheesecake" for the human brain. It's something nice that we have, but we didn't need it for evolution. Still, music "completely **transforms** how we experience life."

1. Read the following paragraph from the section "Different Opinions About Music." Not all responses were shared across the two groups, however. People in China and the United States felt angry after listening to a certain song. They had that in common. However, they had different opinions about whether feeling angry after listening was a good or bad experience.

Which of the following is an accurate explanation of what this selection means?

- (A) People who disagreed about liking the songs they heard became angry with one another.
- (B) People agreed about the feelings in the songs, but not about whether they liked those feelings.
- (C) People in China and the United States had exactly the same reactions to the songs they heard.
- (D) People in China said some songs felt angry, but people in the United States disagreed with this.

2. Read the section "Expanded Emotional Vocabulary."

Which sentence from the section supports the conclusion that people could play music for their pets to help them relax?

- (A) Humans aren't the only animals that respond to music.
- (B) Music lessens anxiety in shelter dogs and helps cows produce more milk.
- (C) Cowen says that animal noises have some similarities to music.
- (D) For example, tigers use a low growl to show their size and strength.

3. What caused Alan Cowen to study emotional responses to music?

- (A) He wanted to learn which kinds of songs create the strongest reaction in his students.
- (B) He wanted to know if people in different countries feel proud of their culture's music.
- (C) He wanted to learn about how music affects people's anxiety in different situations.
- (D) He wanted to know if language and culture affect the way people interpret music.

4. What is the relationship between a larger emotional vocabulary and facial expressions?

- (A) Having a larger emotional vocabulary helps people to feel happier and show less negativity in their facial expressions.
- (B) Having a larger emotional vocabulary can make it easier for people to understand and describe others' facial expressions.
- (C) A larger emotional vocabulary can help people to get along well with others, but facial expressions have no effect on how people get along.
- (D) A larger emotional vocabulary helps people share what they think about music, but facial expressions hide what they think about it.

Today, many people want to get their information in different ways, such as charts, pictures, or videos. How could you change this article from mostly written words to help more people learn about it? Use information in the article to support your answer.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# To build close friendships, be empathetic



Image 1. Students celebrate friendship day. These days, social media has allowed us to be connected with many people. Photo from Getty

By Washington Post, adapted by  
Newsela staff

These days, everyone seems to have lots of friends.

Apps such as Facebook and Instagram let us keep in contact with all kinds of people. We can check up on a pal we had back in the third grade. We can chat every day with someone we met a year ago at a soccer game. But many "friends" on social media represent surface-level connections. They are the types of relationships that are not deep and close.

You might be comfortable sharing photos of parties and vacations with such acquaintances. However, you probably would not share with them when you are going through hard times like a breakup or a death of a loved one. During times that make you sad, you might instead turn to a trusted friend.

Strong friendships are something precious we all rely on, but scientists know surprisingly little about them. What is it about a person that attracts close friends? What qualities about a person makes them someone people see as a close friend? In a new study, the question was explored. Scientists mapped the ties between people in a community and measured the types of personalities people in the community had.

Strong friendships are something precious we all rely on, but scientists know surprisingly little about them. What is it about a person that attracts close friends? What qualities about a person makes them someone people see as a close friend? In a new study, the question was explored. Scientists mapped the ties between people in a community and measured the types of personalities people in the community had.



## **Brand-New Adults In A Brand-New Setting**

In the study, college freshmen who had moved into dorms a few weeks before were interviewed. Freshmen are first-year college students. Dorms are like apartments for students. When freshmen leave their family and go away to study, the dorms become their new home. These freshmen are brand-new adults building brand-new social circles.

First, information was gathered about each dorm member's personality. They gathered information to find out how happy they were, how extroverted, how empathic, etc. Then they asked students to name other dorm members whom they liked to be around in different situations. Whom do they hang out with, ask for advice, or turn to during difficult times?

These names allowed researchers to visualize the dorms' social networks. A web of different types of relationships was mapped out. Then, they were able to test what type of person ended up in the middle of these relationships. What type of person ended up central, connected and popular?

# When Things Get Tough, Students Go To Friends They Trust

We found that different types of freshmen became popular in different ways. Whom did students like to hang out with? They were attracted to happy dorm-mates.

Who did they trust to share a personal issue with though? Students selected dorm-mates high in empathy, the ability to share and understand others' emotions. Especially when things got tough. They trusted them with intimacy and vulnerability, the ingredients of deep friendship.

Going away to school is not easy for freshmen. They face new academic and social challenges. Typically this is their first time living away from family. Freshmen can often struggle with feeling stressed and depressed. Some end up using drugs or alcohol. The study suggests that connecting with empathic friends can support these students during difficult times.

This study also offers a lesson. It shows us how we can best develop close friendships.

## Show You Care In Real Life

People who use social media usually show everyone how great things are for them. They post pictures of vacations with friends or happy times with smiling family members. They do not usually share photos of long, hard days studying or working. By showing everyone what makes you happy, you might make yourself more likable. You might be more enjoyable to be around and attract lots of friends.

People who use social media usually show everyone how great things are for them. They post pictures of vacations with friends or happy times with smiling family members. They do not usually share photos of long, hard days studying or working. By showing everyone what makes you happy, you might make yourself more likable. You might be more enjoyable to be around and attract lots of friends.



Image 3. Living in dorms, college freshman meet a lot of new people they may become close friends with. Photo from Getty.



But the research suggests something different if you want to build closer friends. Empathy is a better place to start. By sharing others' feelings and showing that you care, you can connect more deeply and create a circle of close and trusted friends.

It's important to know that we can build empathy. We can learn to connect with others through practice. We can work to become the type of friend other people choose to trust. We can create networks of friends that we can trust to support us during good times and protect us during life's storms.

1 Which detail MOST CLEARLY shows that empathy helps to create stronger relationships?

- (A) However, you probably would not share with them when you are going through hard times like a breakup or a death of a loved one.
- (B) We found that different types of freshmen became popular in different ways.
- (C) By showing everyone what makes you happy, you might make yourself more likable.
- (D) By sharing others' feelings and showing that you care, you can connect more deeply and create a circle of close and trusted friends.

2 Which sentence from the article shows the author's MAIN opinion about social media friendships?

- (A) Apps such as Facebook and Instagram let us keep in contact with all kinds of people.
- (B) But many "friends" on social media represent surface-level connections.
- (C) You might be comfortable sharing photos of parties and vacations with such acquaintances.
- (D) These freshmen are brand-new adults building brand-new social circles.

3 Which sentence from the article would be MOST important to include in a summary of the article?

- (A) Strong friendships are something precious we all rely on, but scientists know surprisingly little about them.
- (B) Scientists mapped the ties between people in a community and measured the types of personalities people in the community had.
- (C) When freshmen leave their family and go away to study, the dorms become their new home.
- (D) The study suggests that connecting with empathic friends can support these students during difficult times.

4. Read the following selection from the article.

People who use social media usually show everyone how great things are for them. They post pictures of vacations with friends or happy times with smiling family members.

How does this detail develop the author’s CENTRAL idea?

- (A) It highlights the idea that social media is not the best place to make deep friendships because it only shows the happy aspects of life.
- (B) It shows that social media is an effective way for individuals to highlight positive aspects of their life to share with their friends.
- (C) It illustrates that social media is problematic for young people because they are not mature enough to use it responsibly.
- (D) It reinforces the idea that social media is an effective tool to develop a large number of friendships.

Would you prefer to have a best friend who was happier or more empathetic? Explain your rationale using two details from the article.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Interview your favorite character!

## Task

Think about your favorite character of all time. This can be a character you read in a book, saw on TV, in a movie, or even a video game. Pretend you could ask the character 3 questions, and based on what you know about the character answer the question as you feel the character would.

1. Decide what character you are going to focus on.
2. Use the **question stems** to come up with 3 higher order thinking questions you could ask the character. **(on next page)**
3. Answer the questions you have asked the way you believe the character would answer. **BE SURE TO ANSWER EACH QUESTION IN AT LEAST 5-8 COMPLETE SENTENCES.**
4. In the blank box in the top right corner include a picture of your character.

**REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN AND BE CREATIVE!!**

\*If you would like to recreate a similar template on a separate piece of paper you may.

## Applying

### Questioning prompts:

What actions would you take to perform \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you develop \_\_\_\_\_ to present \_\_\_\_\_?  
What other way would you choose to \_\_\_\_\_?  
What would the result be if \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you demonstrate \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you present \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you change \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you modify \_\_\_\_\_?  
How could you develop \_\_\_\_\_?  
Why does \_\_\_\_\_ work?  
How would you alter \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_?  
What examples can you find that \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you solve \_\_\_\_\_?

## Analyzing

### Questioning prompts:

How can you classify \_\_\_\_\_ according to \_\_\_\_\_?  
How can you compare the different parts \_\_\_\_\_?  
What explanation do you have for \_\_\_\_\_?  
How is \_\_\_\_\_ connected to \_\_\_\_\_?  
Discuss the pros and cons of \_\_\_\_\_.  
How can you sort the parts \_\_\_\_\_?  
What is the analysis of \_\_\_\_\_?  
What can you infer \_\_\_\_\_?  
What ideas validate \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you explain \_\_\_\_\_?  
What can you point out about \_\_\_\_\_?  
What is the problem with \_\_\_\_\_?  
Why do you think \_\_\_\_\_?

## Evaluating

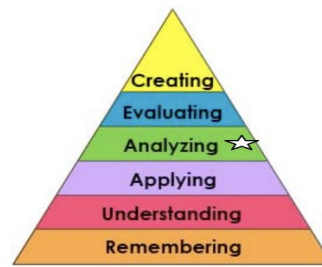
### Questioning prompts:

What criteria would you use to assess \_\_\_\_\_?  
What data was used to evaluate \_\_\_\_\_?  
What choice would you have made \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you determine the facts \_\_\_\_\_?  
What is the most important \_\_\_\_\_?  
What would you suggest \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you grade \_\_\_\_\_?  
What is your opinion of \_\_\_\_\_?  
How could you verify \_\_\_\_\_?  
What information would you use to prioritize \_\_\_\_\_?  
Rate the \_\_\_\_\_.  
Rank the importance of \_\_\_\_\_.  
Determine the value of \_\_\_\_\_.

## Creating

### Questioning prompts:

What alternative would you suggest for \_\_\_\_\_?  
What changes would you make to revise \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you explain the reason \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you generate a plan to \_\_\_\_\_?  
What could you invent \_\_\_\_\_?  
What facts can you gather \_\_\_\_\_?  
Predict the outcome if \_\_\_\_\_.  
What would happen if \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you portray \_\_\_\_\_?  
Devise a way to \_\_\_\_\_.  
How would you compile the facts for \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you elaborate on the reason \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you improve \_\_\_\_\_?



## My Questions

My favorite character of all time is

\_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_.



Question

Response

Question

Response

Question

Response

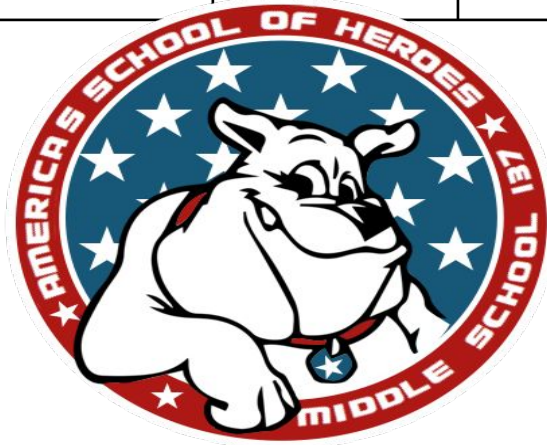


# Interview Rubric

**Think about your favorite character of all time. This can be a character you read in a book, saw on TV, in a movie, or even a video game. Pretend you could ask the character 3 questions, and based on what you know about the character answer the question as you feel the character would.**

**NGS Standards Assessed: 7R1 7W4**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>4 points</b>	<b>3 points</b>	<b>2 points</b>	<b>1 point</b>
<b>Higher Order Thinking questions</b>	Student created 3 well thought out high order opened ended questions.	Student created 2-3 opened ended questions.	Student created 1-2 closed ended questions.	Student attempted to create 1 or less closed ended questions.
<b>Content - Knowledge/Accuracy</b>	Responses to the questions shows a deep analysis and understanding of the character. Includes 6-8 sentences of detail.	Responses to the questions shows an analysis of the character. Includes 4-7 sentences of detail.	Responses to the questions shows a limited analysis of the character. Includes 3-6 sentences of detail.	The responses to the questions shows little to no analysis of the character. Includes 2 or less sentences of detail.
<b>Attractiveness/ Creativity</b>	The poster is exceptionally attractive and creative in design, layout, and neatness.	The poster is attractive and creative in design, layout, and neatness.	The poster lacks attractiveness and creativity in design, layout, and neatness.	The poster shows little effort and time in design, layout, and neatness.



**Name:**

## Summer Independent Reading Log

**Due September 2022**

Please use this page to log your independent reading time. You are expected to read independently for **at least 30 minutes three times a week**. Each log will be collected at the end of the month in addition to three independent reading responses for texts that are completed.

[illegible]