

*Frances C. Richmond Middle School
63 Lyme Road * Hanover, NH * 03755*

June 20, 2011

Dear Rising 6th Graders,

Greetings! I really enjoyed seeing all of you during your visit to the school. I can't wait to get to know you, so I need your help. There are two things I'd like you to do over the summer. First, I'd like you to read at least two books between now and the start of school next year. Secondly, I'd like you to write me a letter about yourself. I have included the directions and guidelines for both tasks in this letter, so read on.

Sixth Grade Summer Reading Assignment

Your first task over the summer is to read at least **2** books and record them on the sheet attached. Don't stop at two books if you love to read! I encourage you to read to your heart's content, which is why I have left extra spaces on the sheet. Then, below your book list, there is a place for you and your parents to sign it (this is so that I know your parents are aware of what you have read over the summer). The full, annotated book lists are on the Richmond School website, under 6TH GRADE READING: www.richmondmiddleschool.org, along with this letter. The lists I have chosen for you are the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award and the Great Stone Face Award lists, but you can choose your own books instead, if you prefer.

It is difficult to enjoy a book that is much too hard or much too easy to read. Therefore, look carefully at a number of books before you choose one. If you are a slow reader, it's a good idea to plan ahead. You should feel free to drop a book that you do not enjoy and find a better one. Please do not pick a book you have already read.

If you have trouble finding a "good" book, I have attached two lists to help you. You can find the list at the Howe Library and on the Richmond School Web page <www.richmondmiddleschool.org>. One is the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Children's Book Award list and the other is the Great Stone Face Book Award list. Reading is an excellent way to give your mental muscles a work-out and a terrific way to relax! So enjoy your books.

Letter to Ms. Sylvester

Your second task is to write me a letter about yourself. I want to know as much as I can about you as a learner/student and how you see yourself in school. I'd also like to know about the things you are interested in outside of school. This will help me get to know you more quickly.

Your letter should be about 4 paragraphs long, although some of you may want to tell me even more, and that's fine. Please write a paragraph (about 4 sentences in length) about each of the following topics:

Start with a catchy opening sentence about yourself (in my letter to you I start with “I confess. I think cats are the coolest pets in the world.”). Then tell me about what you really enjoy doing in your free time. This can include things like: being outdoors or indoors, playing specific sports, taking care of animals, hanging out with friends, being with your family, cooking, camping, skate boarding, kite-flying, etc. Or this can include your hobbies, such as making model airplanes, making jewelry or collecting something special like minerals or stuffed animals. If you have pets of your own, I’d love to hear about them.

What is *easiest* for you in school? This can include subjects you enjoy (like reading, writing, science, math, history, art, music, sports, or drama) or, it can include things like being really good at class discussions, memorizing things, using computers, problem solving, working in groups, doing school projects, following directions, meeting due dates, taking tests or quizzes, or other things like that.

What is *hardest* for you in school? Include specific subjects (math, writing, reading, history, etc.). Or, tell me about things like: listening in class, following directions, meeting due dates, sitting still for 40 minutes, staying organized, taking tests or quizzes, or working in groups, for example. Tell me how teachers or your parents have helped you in the past solve some of these problems. Or, tell me things you wish your teachers or your parents would do to help you solve these kinds of problems.

What do you *imagine* yourself doing when you grow up? What kind of job (or jobs) would you like to try? (When I was in eighth grade I imagined myself becoming a marine biologist, but instead I became a jeweler and then a teacher.) Where do you imagine yourself living - - somewhere warm year-round? near the mountains? in the city? in the country? in a foreign country?

OPTIONAL PARAGRAPH - What kinds of things do you wish your teachers knew about you as a person? Maybe you have had a piece of your writing published or you have won a special award. Maybe you have traveled across the U.S. or have lived in a foreign country. Maybe you have some very special family traditions that mean a lot to you. Tell me anything else you really want me to know about you.

TWO DRAFTS: Begin the letter with “Dear Ms. Sylvester,” and the date (like I did on mine to you) and then sign it with your name at the end (like I have signed my letter to you). Please write at least two drafts of your letter. The first draft is to get your ideas down on paper; some of your teachers may call this the “sloppy copy.” The second one is revised and “cleaned up” for the reader. ***Please write the second draft on the computer so we can have an electronic copy for your 6th grade electronic portfolio. Save it to a flashdrive, which you will bring to school.*** Have your parents contact me if this presents a problem for you.

Print out the second draft and staple the two drafts together with the “final” draft on top and bring it and your reading list for the first day of school.

Ciao,

Ms. Sylvester
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