*September 2015*

*Dear Sixth Graders,*

*Your reading notebook is a place for you to react to and reflect upon the books you have read. It is also a place for you to share these reactions with me! One way you will do this is by writing* ***letter-essays each marking period.***

*Each letter essay should be one to two pages long and should analyze one book. Choose a book that you truly enjoyed and would like to examine. After choosing your book, skim through it to locate a passage that demonstrates the book’s theme, conflict, characters or plot. Include this passage in your letter-essay. Please remember to quote the passage, as you will be taking it word for word from the book. In addition, explain why you chose the passage and why it is meaningful to you and the book.*

*Begin your letter with the title and author of the book you read. Book titles should include proper capitalization and underlining - for example, The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins. As you write your letter, please focus on what you liked and disliked about the theme, character development, plot development or conflicts. If you are looking for ideas, refer to the “Writing About Reading: Some Openers” worksheet to help you begin your paragraphs. Your letter should be written in friendly letter form – I am demonstrating it here. Please include the date in the top right-hand corner as well as a proper greeting (Dear \_\_\_\_\_,) and closing (Sincerely,).*

***\*This is NOT a summary of the plot, but a Literary ANALYSIS***

*I am looking forward to reading your first letter-essays! Good luck and have fun writing about reading.*

*Happy Reading,*

*Mrs. Heffler*

*Adapted from Nancie Atwell’s letter- essay in The Reading Zone (2007)*

***Rubric for Grading the Letter-Essay***

***Organization***

*\_\_ Friendly letter form including 12 pt. font Times New Roman (4 points)*

*\_\_ Includes the date (1 point)*

*\_\_ Includes a proper greeting and closing (2 points)*

***Content***

*\_\_ Includes the title and author (2 points)*

*\_\_ Includes a relevant passage from the story, indented and placed appropriately (5 points)*

*\_\_\_Cites author and page of quote*

*\_\_ Explains why the passage was chosen (5 points)*

*\_\_ Analyzes the book in terms of plot, character, theme, and conflict (10 points)\*\**

*\_\_Strong word choice, there are NO BANNED WORDS (5 points)*

***\*\*In order to receive 10 points, the writer must demonstrate an understanding of these elements and a thoughtful analysis of how they are used in the book.***

***Grammar, Spelling, Mechanics***

*­­\_\_ The title of the book is capitalized and underlined. (2 points)*

*\_\_ The passage is quoted appropriately. (2 points)*

*\_\_ Proper grammar, spelling, and mechanics (2 points)*

*\_\_The structure of sentences is varied, and includes compound and complex sentences with proper use of commas and semicolons (5 points)*

***Total Points \_\_\_\_\_/45***