



PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE 

Superintendent's Update

January 9, 2025



In Remembrance

Our hearts go out to the family, friends and colleagues of PSB teacher **Matt Goldstein**, his wife **Lyla**, and his two daughters **Valerie** and **Violet**, who passed away at their home in Wakefield, New Hampshire.

An 8th grade Math teacher at the Baker School, Mr. Goldstein was an exceptional educator who brought passion, kindness, and excellence to his classroom. His dedication to inspiring students and shaping young minds has left an indelible mark on all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Mrs. Goldstein was a proud graduate of Brookline High School, class of 1988. She was a beloved and respected member of her high school class, and is remembered as a smart, kind and admired classmate.





Spotlight on Excellence

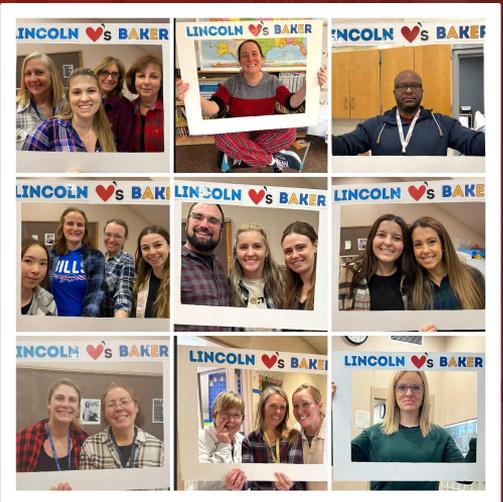
Runkle School



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“Flannel Friday” in Matt Goldstein’s Memory

On Friday, January 3rd, PSB staff honored Matt Goldstein’s memory with “Flannel Friday”. Staff from other PSB schools supported their Baker colleagues by sending lunch for them.



“Flannel Friday” in Matt Goldstein’s Memory



...and unveils new building

...a whole team, the more is much bigger.

The old building had different feel and the building has more stories. But we have to

...required

...er for those who and elevator passes to

...cards function like which in the sense that placed on or near or inside the elevator to move the elevator to move between floors. One can still enter an elevator without a card, but a card is required for the elevator to move. The tap card function is already built into staff IDs and will be built into select student IDs when they are issued later this year.

The LGBTQ Task Force was created by two queer teachers in 2021.

LGBTQ Task Force

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE



English Language Arts - Grade 6

Deep Study of Characters

Ms. Dailey & Ms. Murphy



Book Clubs

Students have been reading various books in book clubs since December. Students read approximately 1-4 books throughout this time in the following areas:

Racial Diversity

Disabilities

Historical Fiction

Fantasy

Mystery

Multiple Narrator

Bullying

LGBTQ+

Some Titles We've Read

Front Desk

Rain Reign

Uprising

The War That Saved My Life

The Serpent's Secret

New Kid

Framed!

The Westing Game

Because of Mr. Terupt

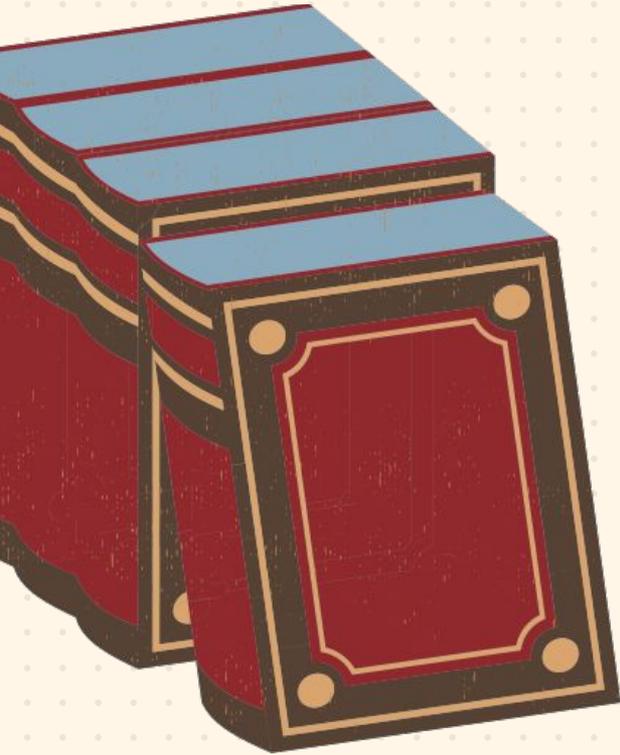
The Book Thief

Wonder

Salt to the Sea



Project Highlights



This project highlights what students are learning about thinking deeply about characters. Students choose key takeaways from their readers notebooks to include in their showcase project that they work on in their Book Club group using Book Creator. Students produce a collaborative book that includes their writing reflections, images, and audio recordings.

Some key takeaways students write about include:

- Looking at the character's less likable sides
- Knowing that some traits matter more than others because they affect the rest of the story
- Reflecting on the characters and the story again after you read the ending





Sample Student Work

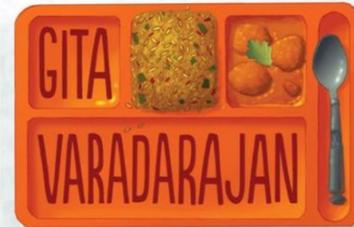
Expect characters to be complicated and show more than one trait.

Save Me a Seat by Gita Varadarajan and Sarah Weeks
Theory chart for Ravi

Lofty ↳ He compares other kids to him, the "star student" at his old school ↳ Thinks he shouldn't be taken for an idiot (yes, right though)	Confident ↳ Thinks Dillon wants to be his friend ↳ Calls Dillon ABCD and (F) thinks he's better than him
Nervous ↳ pushes glasses up nose and rubs nose a lot ↳ Doesn't say what he thinks ↳ Says himself he's nervous	QR ↳ Misses old home a lot a lot Vidya (his old school) ↳ Talks abt being "star student" by maybe misses being treated as smart



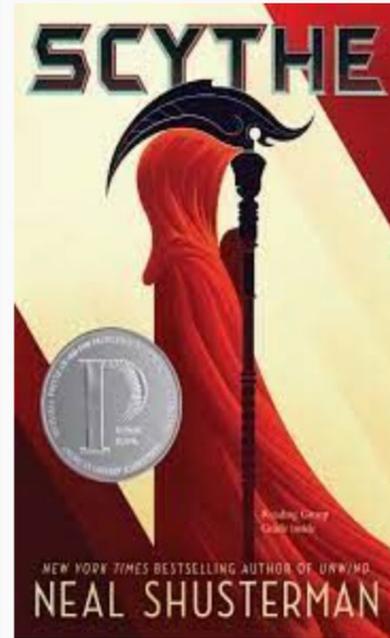
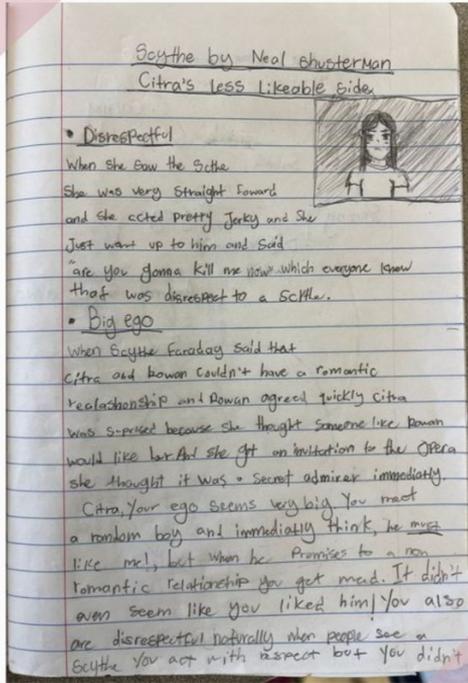
SAVE ME A SEAT



I read *Save Me Seat* by Gita Varadarajan and Sarah Weeks. In this page of my Reader's Notebook, I included different character traits of Ravi: Lofty, confident, nervous, and wistful. As you can see, I found multiple instances in which Ravi's various traits showed clearly. Looking back on my work, I found one trait but also a trait alternative to that that may either replace the first trait or be kept as another trait of Ravi's. Later in the story, I think that lofty and wistful (misses old home) were coexisting as major parts of his personality. Now, I realize that characters are complicated and can have multiple personality traits at the same time.

-Rui

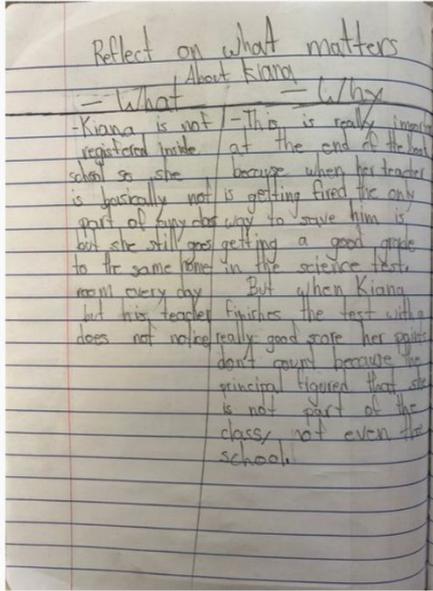
Look at characters less likable sides



I read the book *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman. One main character is Citra. There is a lot to like about Citra, like how confident she is. However, in this page from my readers notebook I wrote about Citra's less likeable side. On the page you can see there are multiple traits that are less likable about Citra. For example, Disrespectful and Big ego. This is important to notice as readers because showing less likable sides of a character shows the depth of a character.

By: Ava

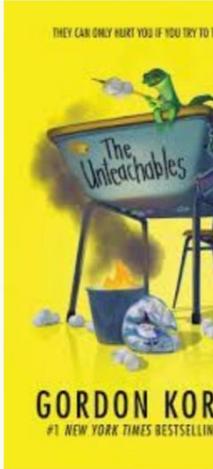
Reflect on the characters and the story again after you read the ending



I read the Unteachables and when I looked back at my notes I thought that this page was important because at the beginning of the book, there was this girl called Kiana that had just moved into this new school called Greenwich Middle School but her step mother had to leave because her brother got sick so she did not get register. When I read that part I did not think that it was that important but near the end of the book her teacher Mr. Kermit was going to get fired if his students did not get good scores on the science test, and when Kiana finished the test her score did not count because the principal did not find any name to match the score to. This made me realize how important it was that Kiana did not get registered when she joined the school.

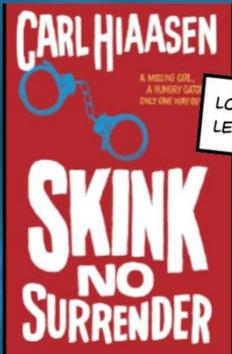
By: Joaquin

Joaquin

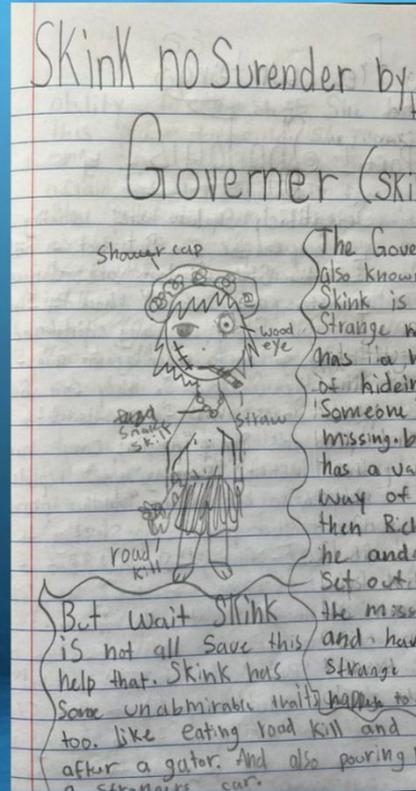
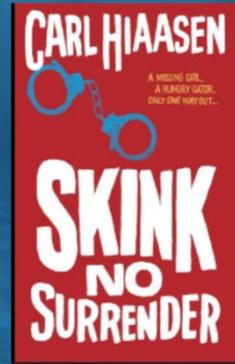
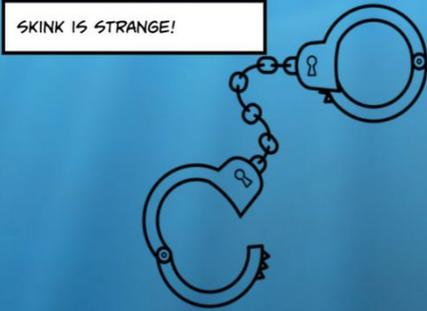


In *Skink No Surrender* by Carl Hiaasen the character Skink also known as the governor has many less likable traits than noticed. For example Skink was a former governor, but assumed dead, because he asked a friend to hide him because he was a coward. This shows a less likeable side of Skink because he ran away from responsibility. Another less likable trait to the governor was that he ate roadkill. This shows a less likable trait to him because he was too narrow minded to eat something... better. One more less likable side to Skink is that when a gator stole Richard and Skink's boat he left Richard alone without a word to go find Malley on his own. This was another example of irresponsibility.

-Hannah



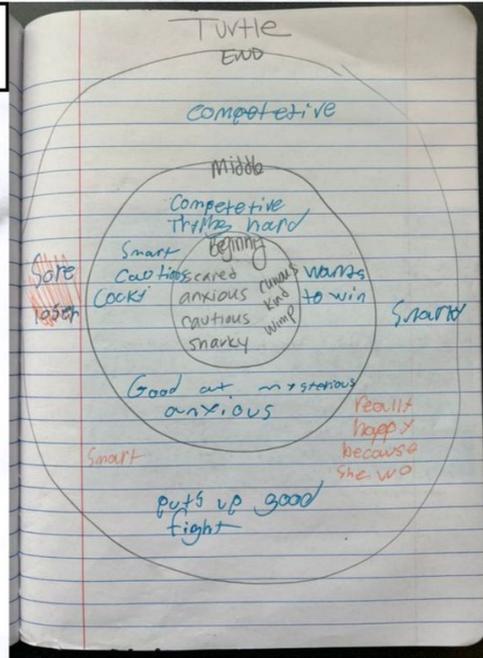
LOOK AT CHARACTERS
LESS LIKABLE SIDES



EXPECT CHARACTERS TO BE COMPLICATED AND SHOW MORE THAN ONE TRAIT

THE WESTING GAME

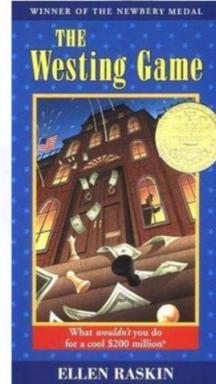
WHAT WOULDN'T YOU DO FOR A COOL \$200 MILLION



AN EXCITING STORY WITH TWISTS AND TURNS AS 16 HIERS GO ON A ADVENTURE FOR \$200 MILLION



THE



I read *The westing game* By Ellen Raskin. In this page I did a beginning, middle and end format. This page shows how Turtle Wexler changes throughout the story and how she stays the same. It also shows that she is a little bit snarky throughout the book, she is scared only in the beginning of the book, she is competitive in the middle and end but not the beginning. She has this competitive feeling because her sister is the "Golden child"

Alex

GAME!

WEST





Links to Published Books

Disability / Disorder / Illness

Racial Diversity

Students are still working.

There are more to come...





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Superintendent's Update - Continued

January 9, 2025



Acknowledgement

- Our current situation in the Office of Student Services is extremely unfortunate.
 - For impacted students and families
 - For impacted staff
 - For impacted service providers
- Our staff are working hard to address the current challenges
- Vendors who have provided services, who have not been paid, will be paid
- Goal is to have everyone paid by the end of the month

Budget Slide

	FY23 Final Expenses	FY24 Revised Budget	FY24 Final Expenses as of 9.15.24	(Over)/ Under FY24 budget	FY25 Budget	FY25 Expense and Encumbrance as of 1.9.25	(Over)/ Under FY25 budget
Administration and Finance	2,649,663	4,441,748	3,819,535	622,213	4,166,766	3,323,826	842,940
Educational Equity	14,471	36,500	10,245	26,255	152,003	7,427	144,576
Superintendent	660,814	125,650	65,593	60,057	107,650	37,638	70,012
Student Services	8,119,493	8,731,331	11,251,934	(2,520,603)	10,581,600	10,497,565	84,035
Teaching and Learning	3,198,742	3,535,282	2,291,472	1,243,810	3,405,176	2,381,571	1,023,605

Staffing and Contracts

- There are five new positions that OSS has requested that do not currently have a funding source. Only one of the five positions is for a 1:1 paraprofessional. The estimated cost to fund these positions for the remainder of the year is \$155,000.
- Unencumbered contracts as of today are estimated to be \$1,067,000. The FY25 IDEA grant was approved last week with \$450,000 for contracted services reducing the liability to \$617,000.
- Salaries no longer included in the IDEA grant need a funding source. This will increase the salary deficit in the operating budget by \$1,200,000.

Procedures for Purchasing

- The procurement practices from bidding to ordering supplies and services that PSB follows today have been in place for many years and is well documented in the procedures manual developed by the Town procurement office and the Office of Administration and Finance in 2018.
- These practices are standard operating procedures in municipalities across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and are designed to ensure fair, open, and rigorous practices in awarding contracts that involve the use of public money. They are also designed to adhere to government accounting standards, procurement laws, data privacy laws, and other legal requirements.
- The Town and School Department have offered training in procurement practices in August of 2023 and 2024 to ensure all staff are aware of the processes and procedures.

Actions

The following actions have been taken over the last year to address the financial challenges (that emerged last year), and continue this year.

- 1) Internal controls have been reinstated and ongoing support and training has been provided in the following areas
 - a) Position Control Numbers and Hiring Approval
 - b) Monthly reporting of new positions and funding source to Finance Committee
 - c) Grant application reviews by the Finance Committee
 - d) Contract Approval and Oversight
 - e) Purchase Order Management
- 2) Over-expenditure controls tightened in Munis
- 3) Budget workshops, online drop-in sessions, and one on one support provided to Budget Managers
- 4) Chart of Account consolidation

Next Steps:

- Continue working with vendors to assist them through the contracting process
- Continue leveraging the cross-departmental working group, expanding as needed
- Commissioning a firm to conduct an audit
- Present Quarterly Report - Review status of gap



THANK YOU



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