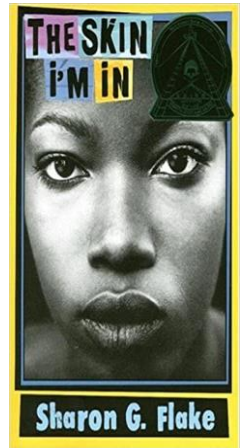




Stephenson Middle School  
Rising 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students  
2023 Summer Reading Packet



Dear S.M.S. Students and Parents/Guardians,

Happy Summer Break! Welcome Back 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Jaguars! It is time to complete your enrichment novels. We are certainly sure that you are basking in the sun in the ambience of your peace, and it is truly well deserved. Yet, we must stay on track. This summer all rising 7<sup>th</sup> graders must read at least three books. Students must complete the **Summer Reading log** and are strongly encouraged to complete the guided reading questions for *The Skin I'm In* as they will be given graded assignments using the novel at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year.

Required Reading *The Skin I'm In* by Sharon Flake it is a realistic fiction novel. It depicts the story of a seventh grader who struggles with her body image due to both society and her classmates' colorist bullying. Throughout the novel, Maleeka struggles and ultimately succeeds in standing up for herself and coming to love the skin she's in.

Please complete the guided reading questions and vocabulary activity in this packet for the novel *The Skin I'm In*. Additional reading titles are listed in this packet as well. Please read **two** additional novels of your choice. Remember to log all novels read this summer including *The Skin I'm In*. Let's get Jaguar ready for the Fall!

Enjoy your Jag reading time,

S.M.S. 7<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Teachers and Supporting Staff





7<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Novel Study  
***The Skin I'm In by Sharon G. Flake***

You may print this page and write on it or write the questions and your answers in complete sentences on notebook paper neatly.

**Guided Reading Questions**

Chapters 1 & 2

What is Chapter 1 mostly about? Summarize with key details and support with textual evidence.

What is Maleeka's tone toward her life in the first chapter? How would you describe her attitude? Support with textual evidence.

What conflicts does Maleeka face? Explain at least two and support your answer with textual evidence.

Where does the story take place? What mood does the setting create? Support with textual evidence.

Characterize Charlese. What type of person is she? Why do you think she is like this? Support with textual evidence.

What is the point of view of the novel? Who is the narrator? What is one disadvantage of this point of view? Explain and support with textual evidence.

### Chapters 3&4

What is Chapter 3 mostly about? Summarize with key details and support with textual evidence.

Summarize Maleeka's flashback. How is it effective in the story? What does it reveal? Support your answer with textual evidence.

What does Maleeka do to try to stop the bullying? Do you agree with her decisions? Why or why not? Support with textual evidence.

What do you think Maleeka means when she narrates, "I guess there ain't no accounting for what folks see in their own mirrors"? Support with evidence from the text.

Characterize Miss Saunders. What kind of person is she? What kind of teacher is she? Support with evidence from the text.

### Chapters 5&6

What is Chapter 5 mostly about? Summarize with key details and support with textual evidence.

In what ways do we see that Maleeka is judgmental? Why do you think she is this way? Find at least two examples from the text and explain.

How does Maleeka's diary assignment connect with her real life? Think of at least two ways and support with textual evidence.

What is Maleeka's main conflict in the story so far? What kind of conflict is it? Support with evidence from the text.

### Chapters 7 & 8

What is Chapter 7 mostly about? Summarize with key details and support with textual evidence.

What is Maleeka's punishment for the fight at school? Do you believe the punishment is fair? Why or why not? Support with textual evidence.

What does the conversation between the teachers reveal about their attitudes toward school and toward Miss Saunders? What do they hope to see happen? Support with textual evidence.

Make a prediction. What is school going to be like for Maleeka on Monday? Why? Support with evidence from the text.

Compare and contrast Sweets' and Maleeka's attitude? What may allow Sweets to be so confident? Support with textual evidence.

### Chapters 9&10

How does Maleeka's dad's words connect to her thoughts in this chapter? How has Maleeka been seeing herself? Support with textual evidence.

Why does Maleeka not tell her mother that she doesn't want to wear the clothes she makes? What does the reveal about Maleeka's character? Support with textual evidence.

Clothes continue to be a common thread throughout the novel. What do clothes symbolize? What do they represent? Support with evidence from the text.

### Chapters 11-12

What is Chapter 11 mostly about? Summarize with key details and support with textual evidence.

How does the author create a frustrated mood for the reader in Chapter 11? Provide at least two examples and support your answer with textual evidence.

Summarize John-John's mini-flashback. What does it reveal? What does it help explain? Support with evidence from the text

### Chapters 13-14

How does Miss Saunders react to the chalk drawing on the board? What do you think she is thinking in that moment? Support with textual evidence.

The class discusses death and love. Which argument do you support? Why? Support your answer with textual evidence.

How does the author build suspense when Maleeka is revealing intimate details about her home life with her mother? Explain two ways and support with evidence from the text.

### Chapters 15-16

Describe Charlese's life at home with JuJu. What does she do? How is she treated? Support with evidence from the text.

What does Char's home life explain about her? What does it help you understand that you might not have before? Support with textual evidence.

What is Char's main conflict? How does this conflict affect her? Explain and support with textual evidence.

### Chapters 17&18

What is Chapter 17 mostly about? Summarize with key details and support with textual evidence.

What conflict does Maleeka face walking home? What does she do? Support with evidence from the text.

How does the author build suspense during the conflict in Chapter 17? Explain at least two ways and support your answer with textual evidence.

### Chapters 19&20

What does Caleb mean when he states, "He's doing his job...It's the rest of us that aren't doing ours"? Support your answer with textual evidence.

Should Maleeka forgive Caleb? Why or why not? Would you? Why or why not? Support with evidence from the text.

According to Caleb, why did he move away that day on the bus? Do you believe him? Why or why not? Support with evidence from the text.

### Chapter 21&22

What is Chapter 21 mostly about? Summarize with key details and support with textual evidence.



What internal conflict do Miss Saunders and Maleeka share? How does it affect them differently? Support with textual evidence.

Why is Miss Saunders so concerned about what Maleeka overheard? What does she really hope to protect? Why? Support your answer with textual evidence.

#### Chapter 23&24

What is the theme of the poem "Midnight?" How does Maleeka use the poem for strength? Support with evidence from the text.

Compare and contrast Char's plan with Caleb's. Which one should Maleeka follow? Why? Support with textual evidence.

What does Maleeka think is going to happen to her if she doesn't go along with Char? Do you agree with her assessment? Why or why not? Explain and support with textual evidence.

#### Chapter 25&26

What is Chapter 25 mostly about? Summarize with key details and support with textual evidence.

What do the girls do to Miss Saunders' room? What do their actions say about their character? Support with textual evidence.

How does the author build suspense in these chapters? How is it effective in the text? Support your answer with textual evidence.

### Chapter 27&28

What do you think Maleeka should do about Char and the twins? Should she tell on them or not? Why do you think that? Support with evidence from the text.

Now, put yourself in Maleeka's shoes. Would you keep quiet like her or tell? Why? Explain and support with evidence.

What is ironic about John-John's comments to Maleeka in the beginning of Chapter 28? Explain and support with textual evidence.

What motivates Maleeka to defend John-John? What does that say about her character? Support with evidence from the text.

### Chapters 29 & 30

What is Chapter 29 mostly about? Summarize with key details and support with textual evidence.

Maleeka tries to stand up to Char, but what has Char done to protect herself? Why does she do this? What might this mean for Maleeka? Support with textual evidence.

What does Maleeka mean when she narrates: "She standing over me, getting louder and louder"? How is it effective in the novel? Support your answer with textual evidence.

### April 31 & 32

What gives Maleeka the strength to stand up to Char? What motivates her to finally take a stance? Support with textual evidence.

What happens to Char? How might the setting of school change without her there? Support your answer with textual evidence.

Do you think Maleeka's conflict with low self-esteem is over? Why or why not? Support with textual evidence.

Why is the novel called "The Skin I'm In"? What does that phrase mean to Maleeka? What does it mean to you? Support with evidence from the text.

What have you learned about bullying and peer pressure through Maleeka and her story? Support with evidence from the text.

What is the climax of the novel? How do you know? Support with textual evidence.

Do you like the ending of the novel? Why or why not? What else do you want to know? Explain and support with textual evidence.

**"The Skin I'm In" Vocabulary from Novel**

<b>Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Sentence</b>
1. ricochet		
2. unraveling		
3. solitary		
4. steady		
5. account		
6. concoction		
7. stunt		
8. chronicle		
9. potential		
10. crouching		
11. lame		
12. decent		

13. expectations		
14. snicker		
15. recent		
16. hassling		
17. vacant		
18. gutted		
19. enthused		
20. fragile		

## Suggested Summer Reading Novels

These books may be available in the public library system, Barnes and Noble, and Amazon.com.

### **Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Fever, 1793***

It is August 1793, and in Philadelphia, the capital of the new United States, fourteen-year-old Mattie Cook wants to turn the family coffeehouse into the finest business in the city. Meanwhile, fever is spreading quickly up from the docks and into the city's neighborhoods. Suddenly, Mattie's struggle to build a better life becomes a struggle to stay alive!

### **Bailey, Linda. *Seven Dead Pirates***

After his Great-Granddad dies, "terminally shy" Lewis Dearborn and his parents move into his dilapidated seaside mansion, where Lewis claims as his bedroom a cool tower overlooking the Atlantic. It isn't long before the ghosts of seven pirates, who had been living in that same room, make themselves known to Lewis. They want his help to retake their ancient ship, now restored in a museum. If he does, Lewis will get the room all to himself.

### **Baskin, Nora Raleigh. *Nine, ten: a September 11 Story***

A few days before September 11, 2001, four middle schoolers in different parts of the country are going about their lives. Sergio, in Brooklyn, struggles with his hatred for his often-absent father while living with his beloved grandmother. Will, meanwhile, cannot come to terms with the car accident that took his father's life. Naheed begins to feel uncomfortable about being Muslim, especially when she approaches the age of wearing a head scarf. Aimee, who has just started going to a new school, misses her mom, who is on a business flight to New York. Then, on 9/11, the lives of the four children intersect and are affected by the terrorist attacks.

### **Blankman, Anna. *The Blackbird Girls***

On a spring morning in 1986, neighbors Valentina Kaplan and Oksana Savchenko wake up to an angry red sky. A reactor at the nuclear power plant where their fathers work--Chernobyl--has exploded. Before they know it, the two girls, who've always been enemies, find themselves on a train bound for Leningrad to stay with Valentina's estranged grandmother, Rita Grigorievna.

In 1941 Rifka must flee Kiev before the Germans arrive. Her journey is harrowing and fraught with danger because Germans and Russians alike will revile her for her Jewish blood.

In both time periods, the girls must learn who to trust and how to have hope amid horrible events.

**Broach, Elise. *The Wolf Keepers***

Twelve-year-old Lizzie Durango lives in a zoo, spending her days taking note of the animals' behaviors, then she meets runaway Tyler Briggs and together they investigate the wolves who are suddenly dying.

**Carr, Cathy. *365 Days to Alaska***

Eleven-year-old Rigel Harman's life changed forever when her parents got divorced. She's grown up in the Alaskan wilderness, and now she must move to the suburbs of Connecticut with her mother. But her father promises her that if she can stick it out for a year, she can go back to Alaska. But surviving middle school proves to be harder than living off the grid.

**Choldenko, Gennifer. *Al Capone Does My Shirts***

A twelve-year-old boy named Moose moves to Alcatraz Island in 1935 when guards' families were housed there and has to contend with his extraordinary new environment in addition to life with his autistic sister.

**Choldenko, Gennifer. *Chasing Secrets***

Thirteen-year-old Lizzie Kennedy has a passion for science, but there's not much opportunity for her to pursue it at the exclusive girls' school she is forced to attend in San Francisco in 1900. While on a trip to a patient's house with her physician father, Lizzie observes evidence that the much-feared plague has made its way to their beloved city—even though everyone, even her own father, denies its arrival. With the help of Noah, the son of their Chinese cook, Lizzie investigates this disturbing discovery that could spell death for many.

**Connor, Leslie. *Waiting for Normal***

Twelve-year-old Addie tries to cope with her mother's erratic behavior and being separated from her beloved stepfather and half-sisters when she and her mother go to live in a small trailer by the railroad tracks on the outskirts of Schenectady, New York.

**Delany, Rachelle. *Clara Voyant***

Clara can't believe her no-nonsense grandmother has just up and moved to Florida, leaving Clara and her mother on their own for the first time. This means her mother can finally "follow her bliss," which involves moving to a tiny apartment in Kensington Market, working at a herbal remedy shop and trying to develop her so-called mystical powers. But when a mystery unfolds at school, she finds herself in a strange situation: having an opportunity to prove herself as an investigative journalist . . . with the help of her own mystical powers.

**Frederick, Heather Vogel. *Absolutely Truly***

Unusually tall twelve-year-old Truly Lovejoy moves with her family to the tiny town of Pumpkin Falls, New Hampshire, and uncovers a mysterious letter in an old book at her family's bookstore that leads her and her friends on a dangerous treasure hunt around town.



**Gemeinhart, Dan. *The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise***

Five years. That's how long Coyote and her dad, Rodeo, have lived on the road in an old school bus, crisscrossing the nation. It's also how long-ago Coyote lost her mom and two sisters in a car crash. Over the course of thousands of miles, Coyote will learn that going home can sometimes be the hardest journey of all...but that with friends by her side, she just might be able to turn her "once upon a time" into a "happily ever after".

**Gratz, Alan. *The Brooklyn Nine***

Follows the fortunes of a German immigrant family through nine generations, beginning in 1845, as they experience American life and play baseball.

**Gratz, Alan. *Code of Honor***

Acclaimed author Alan Gratz (Prisoner B-3087) takes readers on a heart-pounding, nonstop adventure through underground intelligence bunkers and dangerous terrorist cells, weaving a gripping tale about the War on Terror—and the bond between brothers.

**Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Found (The Missing, Book 1)***

Thirteen-year-old Johan and Chip, who are both adopted, learn they were discovered in a plane that appeared out of nowhere, full of babies with no adults on board. They realize they are in the middle of a mystery involving time travel and two opposing forces that are trying to repair the fabric of time.

**Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *The Strangers (The Greystone Secrets, Book 1)***

What makes you *you*?

The Greystone kids thought they knew. Chess has always been the protector over his younger siblings, Emma loves math, and Finn does what Finn does best—acting silly and being adored. They've been a happy family, just the three of them and their mom. But everything changes when reports of three kidnapped children—who share the same first and middle names, ages, and exact birth dates as the Greystone kids—reach the Greystone family. This bizarre coincidence makes them wonder: Who exactly are these strangers? Before Chess, Emma, and Finn can question their mom about it, she takes off on a mysterious work trip. But puzzling clues left behind lead to complex codes, hidden rooms, and a dangerous secret that will turn their world upside down.

**Hayles, Marsha. *Breathing Room***

In 1940, thirteen-year-old Evvy Hoffmeister and her newfound friends struggle to get well at Loon Lake Sanatorium, where they are being treated for tuberculosis.

**Holm, Jennifer L. *The Lion of Mars***

Eleven-year-old Mars colonist Bell, lives with his American family in a self-sustaining, but isolated community. Warned numerous times by the adults not to interact with colonies from other countries, Bell has obeyed, content with caring for his cat and eating cake. When the adults suddenly get sickened with an unknown ailment, Bell and the other kids living in the community must decide how important breaking the rules are in order to survive.

**Kadohata, Cynthia. *Checked***

To help his dog through cancer treatment, Conor gives up hockey and finds himself considering who he is without the sport that has defined him and connecting more with his family and best friend.

**Korman, Gordon. *Restart***

Chase does not remember falling off the roof, in fact, he does not remember anything about himself, and when he gets back to middle school, he begins to learn who he was through the reactions of the other kids--trouble is, he really is not sure he likes the Chase that is being revealed, but can he take the opportunity amnesia has provided and restart his life?

**Lupica, Mike. *Heat***

Pitching prodigy Michael Arroyo is on the run from social services after being banned from playing Little League baseball because rival coaches doubt, he is only twelve years old, and he has no parents to offer them proof.

**Mass, Wendy. *Every Soul a Star***

Ally, Bree, and Jack meet at Moon Shadow, an isolated campground, to watch a total eclipse of the sun. Soon they begin to learn a great deal about themselves, each other, and the universe.

**McAnulty, Stacy. *Millionaires for a Month***

Seventh graders Benji and Felix learn life lessons about money after they "borrow" twenty dollars from a wallet they find while on a field trip, as the billionaire owner challenges them to spend over five million dollars in thirty days.

**McAnulty, Stacy. *The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl***

A lightning strike made twelve-year-old Lucy a math genius, but after years of homeschooling, her grandmother enrolls her in middle school, and she learns that life is more than numbers.

**Park, Linda Sue. *Forest of Wonders (Wing & Claw Book 1)***

When Raffa makes a cure from a rare crimson vine he finds deep in the forbidden forest, the bat he saves transforms into something much more.

**Peck, Richard. *The Best Man***

All through elementary school, Archer Magill has looked for role models and found three of them in his grandpa, dad, and Uncle Paul, but now a fourth has joined their ranks--Mr. McLeod, who along with his army dog, Argus, becomes a bit of a celebrity. However, now middle school has started, and the changes are not for the better. Archer is then surprised by being named best man in two of his role models' weddings, which means he will have to figure out how to become the best Archer he can be.

**Reynolds, Jason. *Ghost***

Ghost, a naturally talented runner and troublemaker, is recruited for an elite middle school track team. He must stay on track literally and figuratively, to reach his full potential.

**Rhodes, Jewell Parker. *Black Brother, Black Brother***

Donte, twelve, considers himself an outsider at his mostly white school, where he's regularly bullied and alienated by the other kids. Framed for an infraction at school that he did not commit, Donte is arrested and suspended. After he joins a local youth center, he meets a former Olympic fencer named Arden Jones and begins competing, hoping to take down the school's fencing captain, Alan, the boy who caused Donte to be suspended.

**Saeed, Aisha *Amal Unbound* - Lexile: 600**

Life is quiet and ordinary in Amal's Pakistani village, but she had no complaints, and besides, she's busy pursuing her dream of becoming a teacher one day. Her dreams are temporarily dashed when--as the eldest daughter--she must stay home from school to take care of her siblings. Amal is upset, but she doesn't lose hope and finds ways to continue learning. Then the unimaginable happens--after an accidental run-in with the son of her village's corrupt landlord, Amal must work as his family's servant to pay off her own family's debt.

**Schusterman, Neal. *The Shadow Club***

When a middle school boy and his friends decide to form a club of "second-bests" and play anonymous tricks on each other's archrivals, the harmless pranks escalate until they become life-threatening.

**Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *Counting by 7's***

Twelve-year-old genius and outsider Willow Chance must figure out how to connect with other people and find a surrogate family for herself after her parents are killed in a car accident.

**Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *The Elephant in the Room***

Missing her mother who has returned to Turkey to resolve an immigration problem, sixth grader Sila welcomes a very large distraction in her life when she helps a surprising new friend rescue a circus elephant.

**Sloan, Holly Goldberg and Meg Wolitzer. *To Night Owl from Dogfish***

Unhappy about being sent to the same summer camp after their fathers start dating, Bett and Avery, eleven, eventually begin scheming to get the couple back together after a break-up. Told entirely through emails.

**Townsend, Jessica. *Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow*** Morrigan Crow is cursed. Having been born on Eventide, the unluckiest day for any child to be born, she's blamed for all local misfortunes, from hailstorms to heart attacks--and, worst of all, the curse means that Morrigan is doomed to die at midnight on her eleventh birthday. To stay in the safety of Never moor for good, Morrigan will need to find a way to pass the tests--or she'll have to leave Never moor for good.

**Weeks, Sarah. *So, B It.***

After spending her young life with her mentally disabled mother and agoraphobic neighbor, twelve-year-old Heidi sets out from Reno, Nevada, to New York City, on a journey of self-discovery.

**Wolkenstein, M. Evan. *Turtle Boy Lexile***

Seventh grade is not going well for Will Levine. Kids at school bully him because of his funny-looking chin. His science teacher finds out about the turtles he spent his summer collecting from the marsh behind school and orders him to release them back into the wild. And for his bar mitzvah community service project, he must go to the hospital to visit RJ, an older boy struggling with an incurable disease. Unfortunately, Will hates hospitals.

At first, the boys don't get along, but then RJ shares his bucket list with Will. Among the things he wants to do, ride a roller coaster, go to a concert and a school dance, and swim in the ocean. To Will, happiness is hanging out in his room, alone, preferably with his turtles. But as RJ's disease worsens, Will realizes he needs to tackle the bucket list on his new friend's behalf before it's too late. It seems like an impossible mission, way outside Will's comfort zone. But as he completes each task with RJ's guidance, Will learns that life is too short to live in a shell.

**Woodson, Jacqueline. *Before the Ever After***

For as long as ZJ can remember, his dad has been everyone's hero. As a charming, talented pro football star, he's as beloved to the neighborhood kids he plays with as he is to his millions of adoring sports fans. But lately life at ZJ's house is anything but charming. His dad is having trouble remembering things and seems to be angry all the time. ZJ's mom explains it's because of all the head injuries his dad sustained during his career. ZJ can understand that--but it doesn't make the sting any less real when his own father forgets his name. As ZJ contemplates his new reality, he has to figure out how to hold on tight to family traditions and recollections of the glory days, all the while wondering what their past amounts to if his father can't remember it. And most importantly, can those happy feelings ever be reclaimed when they are all so busy aching for the past?

**Additional Novel suggestions taken from Orchard Park Middle School in New York**