

To my bright and **resilient** scholars,

Hello, and welcome to 8th grade! My name is Ms. Super, and I am your English teacher this year. I am so impressed by you all, and so very excited to meet and get to know each of you. What I know about you already is that you are **resilient**, because even though this has been a seriously hard year you all are here now getting your education. That isn't easy, but you did it anyway. My goal is that together we can stay resilient through this very unusual school year.

Like I said, my name is Ms. Super and I will be your English teacher this year. This is my second year teaching, and I've been at Westview both of those years. I am a teacher because I am **passionate** about education. I believe very strongly that there is nothing more valuable and important than learning. Outside of work, I am also a big nerd. I love listening to audiobooks, playing video games, and taking my two big dogs (Steve and Elton) for walks to the park.

We will be working very hard in English class this year to make sure we are prepared for high school, and beyond. There are some expectations I have for all of us to make sure this becomes a reality. First we will need to continue to be **resilient**! This year is going to have difficulties we will need to power through. I also want us to find something to be **passionate** about, and believe in! Whether that is a job you want to have one day, a scholarship to your dream college, or something else you believe in – I want you to have something to think about that makes you want to fight. We will also be **thoughtful** learners, who are skeptical, thorough, and always seeking deeper understanding. In our world today, it is important that we are able to think deeply about the information we are consuming. Finally, I ask that we all be **flexible**. School is going to be different, and not familiar to us this year. That is hard for everyone, including me! So I hope that we can give each other grace, and be open to trying new things with our whole hearts.

I know this is a lot to ask, but I also know that you all can handle it because you already are practicing all of these words just by showing up for class. Plus, my job is supporting you. I want you all to expect me to always give you the support you need to keep living into these words. Together we are going to have a great year. I can't wait!

Sincerely yours,

Ms. Super

INTRO - WEEK 1
WORK BOARD:

← Your "WORK BOARD" is a checklist of assignments you need to complete. Every week, you will get a new "WORK BOARD" to help you organize your learning!

DAILY:

← These are to be completed every school day.

- Do Now
- Read daily LETTER from Ms. Super
- Complete daily ASSIGNMENT

WEEKLY:

← These are assignments to complete once a week during class time, when you have completed your DAILY work. I will help guide you on when to complete this work

- "Leaders are Readers" Reading Log
- Writer's Workshop Choice Board
- "Face-our-fears" Test Practice
- Check-in

(Don't worry about this on Thurs, Aug 27 or Fri, Aug 28. We will dive into this beginning Mon, Aug 31.)

CURRENT OBJECTIVE:

I will understand and begin to internalize the class expectations.

Thursday, August 27

We will complete DO NOW at the beginning of class every day, as a way to get our minds working and our pencils moving!

DAY 1

DO NOW: What is something you have done recently that made you feel proud of yourself?

(Write two or three COMPLETE sentences. Make sure to use proper punctuation and capitalization!)

EXAMPLE: *This summer, I was very proud of myself because I started to go to therapy! This made me proud because I think that caring for mental health is very important, but I was scared to do the work to actually find a therapist and go. I am proud that I was brave, and therapy has helped me handle my anxious thoughts in healthier ways.*

TIP:

sentences

1. Are a complete thought.

Who? What?
We went to the park to fly kites.

2. Start with a capital letter.

we went to the park to fly kites.

DAILY ASSIGNMENT: (Thursday, August 27)

To my bright and resilient scholars -

There are 4 words in my letter that highlight my expectations for you this year. The words are resilient, passionate, thoughtful, and flexible.

You might know what these words mean, or you might not. Today, I want you to spend some time with them.

Ms. Super

- 1) Reread the letter on the first page of the packet. When you come across an expectation word, use a pencil to underline context clues around the word that could help you understand its meaning.

EXAMPLE: What I know about you already is that you are **resilient**, because even though this has been a seriously hard year you all are here now getting your education. That isn't easy, but you did it anyway.

TIP: A CONTEXT CLUE is when you use clues around a word to understand the meaning of a word.

- 2) Now that you have highlighted context clues for all 4 words, complete the graphic organizer below to understand the meaning of all 4 of our expectations. When you have finished this graphic organizer, your DAILY ASSIGNMENT for the day is complete.

TIP: We will use Graphic Organizers in class often. They are a great tool to help us organize our thinking!

Our Key Words	Context clues (what you underlined)	What does this word mean?
Resilient	<p>-Even though it has been a hard year, you are all here getting your education now.</p> <p>-That isn't easy, but you did it anyway.</p> <p>-This year is going to have difficulties we need to power through.</p>	<p>Based on context clues, I think that being resilient means doing my best on things that are not easy, and "powering through" difficult times.</p>
Passionate	<p>-I am passionate about education. I believe strongly that there is nothing more valuable and important than learning.</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>	<p>Based on context clues, I think that being passionate means...</p>
Thoughtful		
Flexible		

Friday, August 28

DAY 2

DO NOW: Tell me about your family. Who do you live with? What are they like?

(Write two or three COMPLETE sentences. Make sure to use proper punctuation and capitalization! This is a NORM when we complete our Do Nows, which means I expect you to always write a few, complete sentences for your Do Now.)

EXAMPLE: *I live with my grandma and two dogs, Elton and Steve, in South St. Louis City. My family also lives in St. Louis, about 30 minutes from where I live. My family is big and loud. I have two younger brothers named Jake and Max who live with my parents, and their 2 dogs. They live next door to my aunt, uncle, cousin, and cousin-in-law! They also have a dog. That means when we all get together, there are 5 dogs and lots of chaos!*

TIP: Sentence starters

-I live with x, y, and z members of my family. At our house, someone is always ____.

-My favorite thing about my family is....

-Something you should know about my family is...

DAILY ASSIGNMENT: (Friday, August 28)

To my bright and resilient scholars -

I expect you all to always be **thoughtful** learners, which means being critical of and questioning everything. That includes being critical of and questioning the things which I tell you! I am only a person like everyone else, and I make mistakes and am incorrect sometimes.


Today, I want you to *live into* being **thoughtful** scholars by digging deeply into our expectations.

Read the definitions (from [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com)) for each of our expectations. Then answer the following questions in complete sentences.

Ms. Super

EXAMPLE:

resilient

 [ri-zil-yuhnt, -zil-ee-uhnt] [SHOW IPA](#) 

[SEE SYNONYMS FOR resilient ON THESAURUS.COM](#)

adjective

- 1 springing back; rebounding.
- 2 returning to the original form or position after being bent, compressed, or stretched.
- 3 recovering readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like; buoyant.

1. Reflect back on the definition you came up with yesterday, and compare it to this definition. What is the same? What is different?

In my definition, I said that being resilient means doing my best on things that are not easy, and powering through difficult times. This is a little different from the dictionary.com definition, which mostly says that being resilient means bouncing back from hard things. They are similar, because both say that being resilient has to do with how a person deals with something that is hard.

2. What do you like about the dictionary.com definition? What do you dislike? Why?

I like that the dictionary.com definition says that being resilient is bouncing back, because that tells me that I can still be resilient, even if I fall down – as long as I get back up. That is reassuring to me. I dislike that it says “returning to original form”, because I think that sometimes when we are resilient we are changing and growing. If we are changing and growing we don’t always come back the same, and I think that is okay.

passionate [pash-uh-nit] [SHOW IPA](#)

SEE SYNONYMS FOR *passionate* ON [THESAURUS.COM](#)

adjective


- 1 having, compelled by, or ruled by intense emotion or strong feeling; fervid:
a passionate advocate of socialism.

1. Reflect back on the definition you came up with yesterday, and compare it to this definition. What is the same? What is different?

In my definition, I said that being passionate means... _____

2. What do you like about the [dictionary.com](#) definition? What do you dislike? Why?

thoughtful

[thawt-fuhl] [SHOW IPA](#) 

[SEE SYNONYMS FOR thoughtful ON THESAURUS.COM](#)

adjective

- 1 showing consideration for others; considerate.
- 2 characterized by or manifesting careful **thought**:
a thoughtful essay.

1. Reflect back on the definition you came up with yesterday, and compare it to this definition. What is the same? What is different?

2. What do you like about the [dictionary.com](#) definition? What do you dislike? Why?

flexible

 [flek-suh-buhl] [SHOW IPA](#) 

SEE SYNONYMS FOR *flexible* ON [THESAURUS.COM](#)

adjective

- 1 capable of being bent, usually without breaking; easily bent:
a flexible ruler.
- 2 susceptible of modification or adaptation; adaptable:
a flexible schedule.
- 3 willing or disposed to yield; pliable:
a flexible personality.

1. Reflect back on the definition you came up with yesterday, and compare it to this definition. What is the same? What is different?

2. What do you like about the [dictionary.com](#) definition? What do you dislike? Why?

INTRO WEEK COMPLETE! GREAT WORK! :)

WEEK 1

Monday, August 31

DAY 1

DO NOW: What are some of the worries you have about at-home learning? What are some ways Ms. Super can help you with these worries?

(Write two or three COMPLETE sentences. Make sure to use proper punctuation and capitalization! This is a NORM when we complete our Do Nows, which means I expect you to always write a few, complete sentences for your Do Now.)

DAILY ASSIGNMENT:

To my bright and resilient scholars -

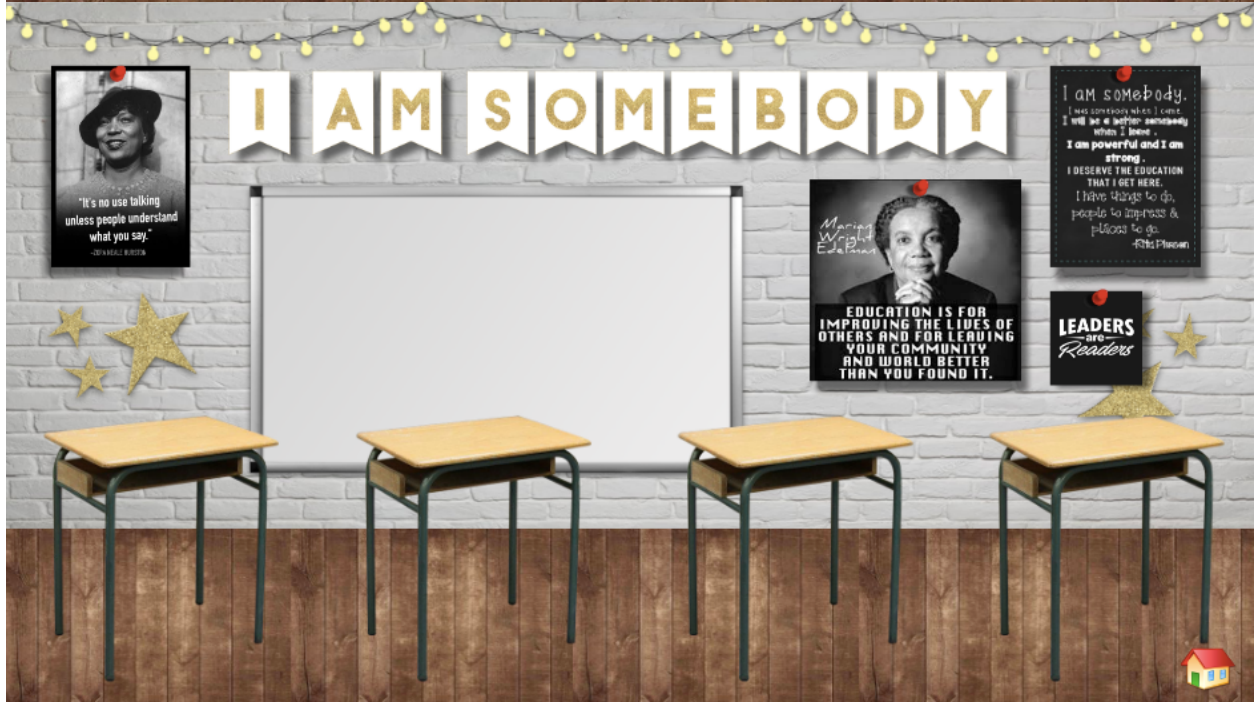
Happy Monday. I hope you had a relaxing and safe weekend!

Today, I want you to explore our virtual classroom a little bit and get a feel for the space. Then, I have a few questions for you to answer.

Afterwards, we are going to dive into our Weekly Work - "Face our Fears Test Practice". For this week and next week, I will guide you on when to complete this work. But after that, you will be taking control!

Here we go!

Ms. Super



What are 3 things that you notice about our classroom? What do you like and dislike, and why? What questions do you have?

“Face-our-Fears” Test Practice (Weekly)

DIRECTIONS: Every week I will assign a few MAP-test style questions so that we can practice responding to them. Often, tests are especially hard because the language test writers use is tricky. If we practice getting familiar with that language, it will make test taking easier!

For this practice, please read the following text, and respond to the multiple choice question. Annotate while you read today by placing a QUESTION MARK (?) next to any words or ideas that do not make sense to you.

Wanted: Volunteer Experience

Heather roughly closed the laptop computer and stood up in a huff. She grumbled to her mother, "The school advisor said I need volunteer experience this summer to be a new-student orientation leader in the fall, and you say that anything I do has to be close enough for me to bike or walk. But there is nothing available nearby!"

"I know it's frustrating, Heather," said Mom. "I'm working this summer, and I can't be home to drive you places. Keep looking; I know that something is bound to come up."

Heather sighed and opened the local newspaper, scanning each page for opportunities she hadn't already read online. After careful examination, she noticed an article about a summer project in the city park near her house. Volunteers were working in the evening to clean up areas that would display new sculptures made by local artists. "Mom, will you help me check this out?" Heather asked. "I think I could be a great worker on this one, and I could get there on my own."

Mom quickly agreed. "Why don't we walk there and check it out for ourselves after dinner?"

The city park was bustling with activity when Heather and Mom arrived. Community members were working all around the park. "Over there," a man said, gesturing in Heather and Mom's direction, "put those trash bags in the bed of the truck; then come help lift this fork-and-spoon sculpture and set it next to the oak tree."

"You mean us?" Heather and Mom pointed to themselves.

"If you're here to work, yes; we need all the assistance we can get. Tomorrow is our deadline, and if we don't finish tonight, we won't be able to show off this spectacular art at the reception tomorrow night," the man explained.

Heather and Mom put on work gloves and dived into the tasks. Soon the evening air cooled, and the sky turned dusky blue. "Did I hear you correctly when you said that the project will be over tomorrow?" Heather asked the man in charge.

"Yes, you really helped us out tonight; your extra hands were just what we needed to finish," said the man thankfully.

Heather and Mom said they would return as reception guests, but Heather's shoulders slumped as she and Mom walked home. "How can I report only one night of volunteer experience to my school advisor? More bad luck," Heather moaned.

"You never know what's going to happen, sweetie. You found this opportunity, and I'm sure there will be another one coming your way. Let's go to the reception and see who we meet," Mom said.

At the moonlight reception, Mom and Heather joined Heather's friend Ken and his mom, Ms. Lee, who, it turned out, knew about another volunteer project. "The plan was to build an outdoor structure near the lake out of sticks, but the woman who proposed it has given up and quit, leaving a partially finished project that has brought many complaints. Maybe we could help out," said Ms. Lee. "Tomorrow I'm free to walk Heather and Ken to the lake to check out the details."

"That sounds wonderful," said Mom.

The next day at the lake, Heather, Ken, and Ms. Lee met a couple of dedicated folks ready to finish the project to help beautify the community. "Hi. I'm Carrie, and you're all just in time to begin today's work," said a young woman with a big smile.

"We're going to need three hundred to four hundred more sticks; I'll show you where to start," said Cal, another volunteer carrying a load of sticks as big as a suitcase. All afternoon the group gathered and positioned larger sticks along the foundation, weaving them in and out and around the base. It became a giant jigsaw puzzle as each person selected and placed sticks to fit and complete each section.

Three days later the volunteer squad had grown to fifteen people of all ages from all across the area, and news of the unusual stick fort traveled quickly with many curious community members stopping by to chat about it. Heather and Ken cheerfully answered questions and guided the newcomers in the building process. By the end of the day, the fort was complete, and the local newspaper crew arrived to photograph the incredible stick fort and the volunteers who had so graciously built it.

The following week, on a visit to the library, Heather was approached by the librarian. "Aren't you one of the people who were featured in the article about the stick fort near the lake?" he asked as he held up the newspaper. "I'm looking for a volunteer to help with our preschool story time here at the library next week. You're just the kind of experienced and responsible young person I'm looking for," he said. Heather nodded enthusiastically.

"Mom, it's even better than I expected!" Heather exclaimed when she saw her mother that evening. "Instead of one job, I can list three volunteer jobs from this summer."

"You see?" Mom replied with a smile. "I knew it all would work out."

11. How does the author's word choice in the first paragraph contribute to the tone of the passage?
- A. Sad, gloomy language shows Heather's immature attitude.
 - B. Poetic language emphasizes Heather's affection for her mother.
 - C. Strong, negative language establishes Heather's irritation about her situation.
 - D. Humorous language understates Heather's sudden nervousness about finding a project.

What questions or confusions do you have? List them in the space below.

Tuesday, September 1

DAY 2

DO NOW: How have you been keeping busy this summer? How have you been keeping safe?

(Write two or three COMPLETE sentences. Make sure to use proper punctuation and capitalization! This is a NORM when we complete our Do Nows, which means I expect you to always write a few, complete sentences for your Do Now.)

DAILY ASSIGNMENT:

To my bright and resilient scholars -

Today, we are going to read an anchor chart about what it means to find a "Just Right" book, so that this week you can spend some time choosing a perfect book to read for the next few weeks!

Afterwards, I am going to introduce you to our "Readers are Leaders: Reading Log"! Starting next week, you will be expected to log 20 minutes of reading 5 times a week. You will be able to use class time for this reading!

We are getting into the thick of things! I'm excited to get going.

Ms. Super

"Just Right Book" Anchor Charts

5 FINGER RULE

What To Do: Pick a book. Open the book to any page. Put one finger up for each word you don't know.

0-1	Too Easy
1-2	Perfect Choice
3-4	Give It A Try
5+	Too Hard



Goldilocks Picks "Just Right" Books



<h3>too Hard</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I do not know many of the words.It's hard to remember the important details.I need help reading the book.	<h3>Just Right</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I know many words, but I need help with some of the words.I understand most of what I'm reading, but I may need to look back at some details.I feel GOOD reading. It's "Just Right."	<h3>too Easy</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can read almost all of the words quickly!I can easily retell the important details.I do not need help reading this book.
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DIRECTIONS: Review the charts above. What are two tips you can use when you are picking out your Just Right Book this week? Do you think these tips will help you find a perfect book? Why or why not?

"Readers are Leaders" Reading Log (Weekly)

DIRECTIONS: Starting next week, you will be expected to read 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week. You will be given class time to read, but you probably will have to read on your own a couple times each week as well. This reading is the only homework you will ever have from me. This week, I just need you to introduce me to the book you will start reading next week!

Get To Know Your Book!

TITLE: _____

AUTHOR: _____

What "Just Right Book" tools did you use to help you pick out this book? Should it be perfect, a little hard, or a little easy, based on the tools you used? _____

What interests you about this book? Why did it catch your eye? _____

What is the genre? _____

Wednesday, September 2

DAY 3

DO NOW: What is your favorite movie? Why is it your favorite? What do you like about it?

(Write two or three COMPLETE sentences. Make sure to use proper punctuation and capitalization! This is a NORM when we complete our Do Nows, which means I expect you to always write a few, complete sentences for your Do Now.)

DAILY ASSIGNMENT:

To my bright and resilient scholars -

Today, we are starting a mini-project to help introduce ourselves to Ms. Super! I had so much fun creating my example for this project, and I hope you all will enjoy it too!

Later, we are going to explore our Writer's Workshop Choice Board!

Remember to be looking for your "Just-Right" book and finish the into form by Friday!

Ms. Super

Desk Project

DIRECTIONS: Below is my desk. I filled it with things that I love and that matter to me. I am asking you to do the same thing today!

You have 3 options! In the space below, you can draw your desk for me. Include at least 5 things that matter to you. If you don't want to draw, use magazines (parent approved!) or print some photos (if you have access to a printer) to cut out items and glue them to your desk. The final option is to arrange actual items from your house on your desk, use a phone to snap a photo of it, and EMAIL it to me (gsuper@rgsd.k12.mo.us). Make sure to include your first and last name if you email me, or I cannot give you credit.



Draw or glue your desk here!

Writer's Workshop Choice Board (Weekly)

DIRECTIONS: Every week, I will supply you with a writing choice board!

Welcome to our FIRST choice board!
Please choose a prompt from the chart to the right and respond thoughtfully.

Make sure you remember our norms of writing in pencil, complete sentences, with proper capitalization and grammar!

Write a spooky story. Start with, "On a dark December night..."	Write a silly story about a talking animal. Include dialogue in your story.	Write a story that takes place on another planet. Underline the adjectives you use to describe the setting.
Describe a small moment from your best day ever. Use descriptive language!	Describe your bedroom in detail. Underline the adjectives you use in your description.	Describe a party you attended. Include dialogue in your writing.
Write a letter to a family member who is important in your life. Include two or more examples of why they are important to you.	Write a letter to a character from your favorite book. Include specific details from the story.	Write a letter to your teacher. Start with, "Something I wish you knew about me..."
If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be? Use sensory language in your description!	If you were a superhero, would you rather be super strong or invisible? Explain your reasoning.	Are video games bad for kids? Write three reasons that support your opinion.

Thursday, September 3

DAY 4

DO NOW: What is your hobby? Tell me about it imagining that I don't know anything at all about the hobby. Why do you enjoy it? Why should other people try it?

(Write two or three COMPLETE sentences. Make sure to use proper punctuation and capitalization! This is a NORM when we complete our Do Nows, which means I expect you to always write a few, complete sentences for your Do Now.)

DAILY ASSIGNMENT:

To my bright and resilient scholars -

Today, we are going to complete the second step of our Desk Projects! That is all there is on the schedule today, so I recommend using the time you have when you finish to make sure that you have found your "Just Right" book and filled out the Intro Form. This is due tomorrow!

Ms. Super

Desk Project Part 2

DIRECTIONS: Choose at least 3 of the most important items on your desk. Explain to me why you chose each of these items and what they mean to you.

EXAMPLE:

My computer: My computer is on my desk because it is something very important to me. I watch TV, listen to music, write, and work on my computer. These are some of the most important aspects of my life, so my computer really matters to me.

Photos of my friends: There is nothing more important to me than my friends! I like having photos of them around to remind me of how happy they make me. They really keep me going on hard days.

A book: I love to read. Reading helps me escape the world for a little bit, and since I was a little girl having that escape has been very important to my life. I'm always reading something!

Friday, September 4

DAY 5

DO NOW: What is your favorite school appropriate song? Why? Convince Ms. Super she should go listen to it!

(Write two or three COMPLETE sentences. Make sure to use proper punctuation and capitalization! This is a NORM when we complete our Do Nows, which means I expect you to always write a few, complete sentences for your Do Now.)

DAILY ASSIGNMENT:

To my bright and resilient scholars -

What a great first week. You all have worked so hard and I am so impressed by your resilience.

Today, I want to hear about how you think you have lived into our expectation words (Resilient, Passionate, Thoughtful, and Flexible) this week, and in your life! You will respond to the reflection questions below.

Then, we are going to do our weekly check-in, so I can hear how you are doing. Keep up the great work!

Ms. Super

Which expectation have you lived into this week? Choose one of our expectations and tell me about how you have practiced it this week. (Remember, our expectations are: resilient, passionate, thoughtful, and flexible)

EXAMPLE: I have lived into being flexible this week. To me, being flexible means being able to bend without breaking. I have been flexible this week by changing the way I teach. It hasn't been easy for me to teach so far away from my scholars, but I have worked hard to be flexible and make alterations so that we can all be successful this year.

Check-in (weekly)

DIRECTIONS: In the space below, write a letter back to Ms. Super. I want to know how you are doing! What questions do you have about school and class so far? How can I help you be successful? What is going on in your life? Was it a good week or a bad week? Why? I can't wait to hear how you are doing!
