

## Skills and Goals Bank for Independent Reading

***Strong readers grow by constantly creating new goals and working toward achieving them.***

- **Character**

- What are the character's traits and how do they make the character complicated?
- Motivations (WHY the character is doing/acting in a certain way)
- Change (How is the character changing? WHY he/she is changing)
- Relationships (What are the dynamics? How does the relationship change or develop throughout the story? WHY is this relationship important?)
- Minor characters: What are the roles of the other characters in the story? What purpose do they play?

- **Conflict**

- What problems (internal and external) is the protagonist going through?
- How is the character reacting to or attempting to resolve the conflict? What does this reveal about him/her?
- How is the conflict building or becoming more complicated?
- How is the conflict resolved and how does the way it's resolved connect to a larger theme or issue?

- **Setting**

- How do certain settings affect or influence the characters? (How does it cause them to act differently? How is it causing the conflict for the character?)
- What is the mood or emotional setting and how is it established? How does it match (or not) with the physical setting?

- **Theme**

- How does the author show/develop the theme or themes in the story?
- What are some lessons that the character and/or reader learns at the end of the story? How does the character and/or reader learn them?

- **Work Habits / Self-Monitoring Goals**

- I will go back and re-read when I don't understand what I have read.
- I will stop to jot after approximately \_\_\_\_\_ pages.
- I will read approximately \_\_\_\_\_ per day (in class + at home).
- I will try to read and explore different genres to stretch myself as a reader.
- I will choose books that will help me grow as a reader by not choosing books that are too easy or too hard.

- **Author's Craft**

- How does the author's use of language and word choice influence the way ideas are communicated?
- What is the role of the narrator? How does the narrator's perspective influence the reader's understanding? (Do readers know more than the characters? Can readers trust what the narrator is saying? Why or why not? How does the perspective influence your experience as a reader?)
- What symbols do you see the author using and how are they used? What do they represent?
- What narrative techniques do you see the author using? (Inner thinking, flashback, dialogue, description, dialogue, etc.) What purpose does it serve? What does it reveal?

- **Signposts**

- **Contrasts and Contradictions (C&C):** When the author shows us something that doesn't fit with what we expect.
  - *Anchor Question: Why would the character act this way?*
- **Aha Moment (Aha):** When a character suddenly realizes, understands, or finally figures something out, and that realization will probably change his or her actions in some way
  - *Anchor Question: How might this change things?*
- **Tough Questions (TQ):** When the main character asks him or herself a hard question that doesn't have an easy answer
  - *Anchor Question: What does this make me wonder?*
- **Words of the Wiser (WW):** When an older, wiser, and trusted character gives advice to the main character
  - *Anchor Question: What's the life lesson and how might it affect the character?*
- **Again and Again (A&A):** When you see a word, phrase, or situation repeat again and again.
  - *Anchor Question: Why does this keep showing up again and again?*
- **Memory Moment (MM):** When the author interrupts the action to show readers a memory (flashback).
  - *Anchor Question: Why might this memory be important?*