

Dear Parents and Incoming 5th graders,

A belated welcome to Fifth Grade! I am so excited to teach your lively and inquisitive children come August! Last year, Paige and I had a number of collaborative 4th/5th activities, so I feel lucky to already have a sense of who they are. I hope you have had a wonderful start to your summer with plenty of time to relax, adventure, and spend time together as a family! I have been on two glorious California backpacking trips and attended an inspiring week long workshop on teaching writing at Columbia in NYC. I can't wait to use what I learned and write with this class next year! I'm back at school now moving into a new classroom (5th grade will be in the old 3rd grade room next year).

I apologize for sending this email so late. I intended to send it sooner and thought I had but realized embarrassingly late that it did not reach you. Please do understand that I know we have a month under our belt already so I understand if your child/family is not able to attend to all these items but hope that you will still be able to strive to achieve as much as possible given travel and family plans. In terms of summer work, I'm not big on assigning loads of it. I would like students to read at least two books and write me a letter (details below) and I've included some other resources in case you're interested.

WRITING

I hope students have ample opportunities to write this summer! Whether it's grocery lists or choose your own adventures or letters to each other, I want writing to be part of their everyday routines. I would love for students to keep a summer journal in which they record their stories, musings, and secrets. This is entirely optional, but for those that do choose to partake, I will take them to Palega park to play ping pong for an extended recess within the first couple weeks of school if they bring in their summer journal for me to see. ;-)

Letter to me

I LOVE getting mail, so please write me a letter telling me about yourself! This is your chance to tell me anything you want about yourself before the school year begins.

Make sure to include your return address so that I can write you back!

If you want some suggestions of things to talk about, you can answer the following questions:

- *What's your family like?*
- *What are you up to this summer?*
- *If you could be any animal, what would you be and why?*
- *What's your favorite book? favorite movie? favorite place outdoors? favorite food? favorite ice cream flavor?*
- *What are you really, really good at?*
- *Who is someone you look up to and why?*
- *What did you write your 4th grade Perspectives piece about? What did you choose to investigate for independent study?*
- *What's something that you love about nature?*

My address is: Talia Goodkin
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94122

Summer photo essay:

When we start up in August, one of our first writing assignments will be a photo essay about our summers. Students will select 3-5 photos and write short vignettes about each. We will do this **in class**, but would be great for kids to have in mind what they want to share beforehand. I have attached a photo essay I made from my summer last year as an example, in case they'd like to read it through for inspiration and start thinking about photos they might want to take/use.

READING

Summer is for reading! I would like students to read at least two chapter books over the summer. I recommend they One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams-Garcia if they haven't already as we will be reading the sequel next year and I Lived on Butterfly Hill by Marjorie Agosin, as it sets the stage for some of the work we will do around refugees in Fifth grade. I will be asking them on the first week back to write me a short summary of the books they chose.

MATH

While there is no required math work over the summer, Emma and I do hope that students keep their math skills sharp! I would like students to enter 5th fluent with their times tables up to 12x12. There are lots of fun practice websites, such as www.aplusmath.com, and www.funbrain.com (which also has reading and spelling games). If you use an iPad, the app Rocket Math is a great way to practice. Xtramath.com and mathfactspro.com are both free and trackable practice sites as well. If you are going for a screen-free summer, good old flashcards are also an excellent choice!

For additional math support or extension (for students looking for math challenge work), there are two more options which might be worth considering. One is The 5th Grade Summer Math Skills Sharpener workbook. The workbook costs \$20 and can be ordered online at http://www.summerskills.com/summer_skills_books. The second is ALEKS, an online math program. We recommend breaking it down by working 30 minutes per day, 3 days a week for 1 month, though it can be done at your own pace. Students who want to review and reinforce 5th grade topics should sign up for the LV-5 course. Students who want more of a challenge can try the LV-6. A membership can be purchased for \$20 at: http://www.aleks.com/homeschool/buy_aleks_now

JUST FOR FUN

In case boredom strikes.....[Summer fun checklist](#)

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Enjoy the rest of your summers and I look forward to meeting everyone at the end of August!

Best,
Talia