



Grade 6 Summer Reading Assignment

Now more than ever, it is important for students to keep reading and writing over the summer! Please use the assignments below to give your student continued practice and to prepare them for new learning in the fall.

Assignment:

- Your student received a copy of *The Skin I'm In* at the end of the school year. They should read this text over the summer and complete the attached packet.
- Students are expected to return their copy of *The Skin I'm In* and their packet at their starting strong conference.
- **Lost or damaged copies will need to be replaced.** You can find *The Skin I'm In* on Amazon and at most local bookstores.
- If you are unable to replace a lost or damaged copy, please reach out to lpolite@wissahickoncharter.org over the summer and to your student's teacher starting August 21st.
- The work can be completed on Google Classroom or in this packet.
- All work should be turned in at the beginning of the year, **WILL be graded for completion and students will have a quiz on the book on the first day of school.**

The Skin I'm In

Vocabulary List # 1

Name _____

Read through this list and take notes or doodle what you already know.
How many new words can you learn? How long will it take?

SET A GOAL: _____

New Word	Dictionary Definition	Anchoring New Words to Past Knowledge Synonyms/ Images/ Phrases / Sentences / Doodles Part of Speech/ Examples ...	I Got This!
accuse	To say someone is guilty of doing something wrong		
chronicle	To record or document in fact and with detail		
competitive	Wanting to be better than others and win		
descent	To go backwards or downward		
designer	Made by a unique creator and fashionable		
disrupt	To cause a problem or stop normal operations		

New Word	Dictionary Definition	Anchoring New Words to Past Knowledge Synonyms/ Images/ Phrases / Sentences / Doodles Part of Speech/ Examples ...	I Got This!
indescribable	Unable to explain because its too unusual or bad		
institution	Official custom or organization w/ a common goal		
meditate	To bring about an agreement between 2 parties		
negative	Refusing to accept Focus on the bad no		
ooze	Slow flow of something thick and slimy		
potential	Having the ability, being possible to happen in future		
resent	Feel upset or bitter about some thing or someone		
ricochet	Bounce one or more times off a solid surface		
summon	To call people to come to you or come together		

The Skin I'm In

Vocabulary List # 1

Name _____

Read through this list and take notes or doodle what you already know.
Write a definition. How many new words can you learn?

SET A GOAL: _____

New Word	Dictionary Definition	Anchoring New Words to Past Knowledge Synonyms/ Images/ Phrases / Sentences / Doodles Part of Speech/ Examples ...	I Got This!
accuse			
chronicle			
competitive			
decent			
designer			
disrupt			

New Word	Dictionary Definition	Anchoring New Words to Past Knowledge Synonyms/ Images/ Phrases / Sentences / Doodles Part of Speech/ Examples ...	I Got This!
indescribable			
institution			
meditate			
negative			
ooze			
potential			
resent			
ricochet			
summon			

The Skin I'm In

An Introduction

Name _____

Chapter # 1

In Chapter # 1, Maleeka seems very focused on exterior qualities when describing others. Miss Saunders is an amazon, 'tall and fat' with the 'smallest feet' and that obvious birth mark. John-John is 'the smallest seventh grader in the world'.

This is what she has to say about herself: Highlight the descriptive words / phrases.

It's bad enough that I'm the darkest, worst-dressed thing in school. I'm also the tallest, skinniest thing you ever seen. And people like John-John remind me of it every chance they get. They don't say nothing about the fact that I'm a math whiz, and can outdo ninth graders when it comes to figuring numbers. Or that I got a good memory and never forget one single, solitary thing I read. They only see what they see, and they don't seem to like what they see much.

What does this passage tell us about how Maleeka views herself? _____

Think of how Maleeka would like others to view her. Now think of how she seems to view others. Are these points consistent? _____

Sometimes authors use details early in the book to foreshadow what might happen later. What ideas does this chapter give you about what might happen in this novel?

The Skin I'm In

Building Character Name _____

Keep this page handy as you read. As you learn more about each character, what they look like, how they act, what they say who they are... add those details to their profile.

Maleeka

Charlese

Miss Saunders

Momma

John - John

Caleb

Describe Charlese using Maleeka's words: _____

Describe Charlese using your own words: _____

Read this passage from page 9:

Tai teaches math. She is weird, too. She stands at the blackboard with one leg leaning on the other like a flamingo. She does yoga and hums like a heater on the blink. Tai is a strange chick, I'm telling you.

What position does Maleeka take in this paragraph? _____

What evidence does she offer to support her point? _____

Is the evidence effective? Did she prove her point? _____

Can you identify a simile in this paragraph? Highlight it. Does it make sense to you?

Maleeka uses similes often. On page 17 she uses one to describe the gum blobs hanging from the ceiling. She says they are like: _____

Can you find any other similes on this page or in these chapters? Copy one or write one of your own: _____

Miss Saunders says liking herself was not something that came overnight, that it took some wrong turns and time to accept herself and 'see the poetry' in her walk. She asks her students what their face says to the world. Do you think she just meant physical characteristics? Or did she mean behavior and attitude as well? How would you answer this question? _____

Miss Saunder's assigns writing because she wants her students to live in someone else's skin. Have you ever read a book or watched a movie that helped you to see life through someone else's eyes? _____

What kind of character did Maleeka invent? _____

Who would you choose to be if you could be from any age of history? _____

Read this passage from page 29 as Daphne accuses Maleeka of kissing her boyfriend.

I keep stepping, and tell Daphne she's got the wrong girl. But I ain't as cool as I seem. My fingers are starting to shake and my throat is as dry as toast.

Highlight the simile. How is Maleeka feeling in this passage? How can you tell? _____

Meanwhile, Char is **just standing there eating a candy bar like she's at the movies**. What does this say about Char? _____

Maleeka doesn't think a person with money and a good job would want to teach at McClenton Middle School. Why do YOU think Miss Saunders made this choice? _____

Some of the other teachers are upset because Miss Saunders wants to change things at the school, but Mr. Pajolli says there is nothing wrong with a little change. What would you change about your school if you could? _____

Why might Maleeka have frozen when she went to interview at the special school Sweets goes to? Why do you think Sweets didn't have the same problem? _____

Describe how Maleeka felt about her hair at the salon.

Describe how Maleeka felt about her hair at school.

What caused this change?

Have you every had an experience like this one? What happened?

Describe Maleeka and Momma's financial situation. What evidence can you use from the text to support your conclusions?

In Chapter 11, Char makes Maleeka take her food back to the cafeteria. Read this passage:

Char starts yelling at me from way back in the lunchroom.

Everybody can hear her. A teacher tells her to shut up, but the teacher can't make Char's eyes stop digging into me.

What do you think Maleeka means when she says Char's eyes are digging into her?

In Chapter 12, Maleeka is struggling to understand John–John's thinking about and actions towards her. At certain points in this chapter she thinks he hates her, or maybe is jealous of her. He says he doesn't 'think nothing' about her. What do you think? Use evidence from the text to support your conclusion.

Read this passage from pg. 64:

Miss Saunders is a motion machine this morning. She sets down her briefcase, throws her black bag into the closet up front, slaps her hands together like giant paddles, and tells everybody to get quiet.

Highlight the metaphor. Underline the Simile. What information do these phrases give us about Miss Saunders at the moment? _____

Maleeka uses similes often. On pg #70 she said the bell rang, 'busting up the silence like a fist through the glass.' How did her language make you feel? Was it effective? _____

Can you find any other similes in these chapters? Copy one or write one of your own: _____

Miss Saunders said, "People who love who they are ain't gonna make unnecessary trouble for themselves. Get it?" What does she mean by this? Do you agree? _____

Maleeka says that "nothing good come from loving somebody so much you can't live without 'em. No good at all.." Why does MALEEKA think this? Is her reasoning justified? _____

Do YOU feel the same way? Why or why not? _____

In what ways does Miss Saunders treat her teaching job like her business job? Use examples from the text. _____

The Skin I'm In

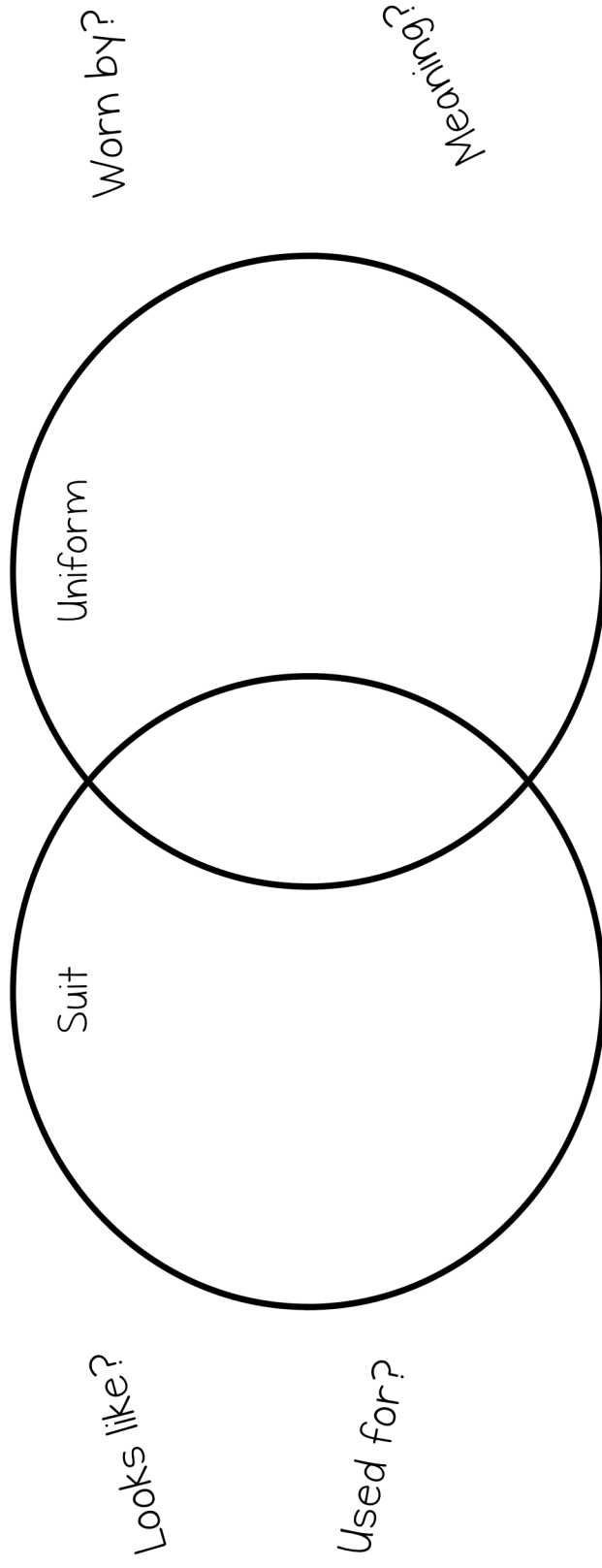
Chapter # 14

Name _____

In Chapter # 14, Miss Saunders & Maleeka discuss clothes.

Compare and contrast a **suit** and a **uniform**.

Which of these differences and similarities are LITERAL and which are FIGURATIVE ?



In what profession do people usually wear a SUIT. _____

In what professions do people usually wear a UNIFORM. _____

Do you think you'd rather wear a suit or a uniform in the future?

The Skin I'm In

Chapter # 15-16

Name _____

Read the following Akeelma entry from pg 81.

Dear Diary,

The sea is wild and mean. Water is crashing against the house like a hundred angry lions. My body is wet with sweat and throw-up from the others pressing close around me like sticks of firewood.

They chain us together like thieves and beat us till we bleed. I have made up my mind, though, I will show no weakness. I will be strong. Strong like the sea and the wind. ~ Akeelma

Highlight all of the figurative language. Are there metaphors? Similes? Both? How does Maleeka's writing make you feel? Can you imagine what Akeelma is going through? Is Maleeka a good writer? Support your answers.

Describe Char's life at home using phrases from the book:

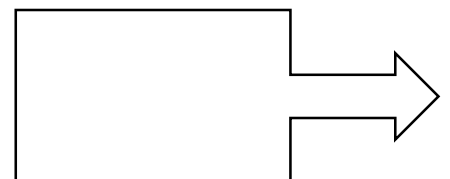
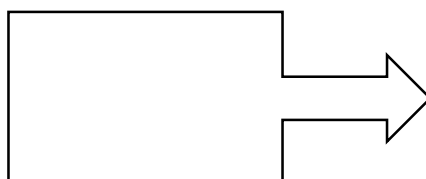
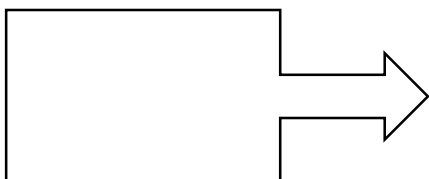
Describe Char's life at home in your own words:

Does knowing about Char's life with JuJu help you to understand her? Does it justify Char's behavior? _____

Describe how JuJu treats Char

Describe how Char treats Maleeka

Describe how Maleeka treats Desda



Is there a cycle here? Can a cycle be broken?

Vocabulary List # 2 Name _____

Read through this list and take notes or doodle what you already know.
How many new words can you learn? How long will it take?

SET A GOAL: _____

New Word	Dictionary Definition	Anchoring New Words to Past Knowledge Synonyms/ Images/ Phrases / Sentences / Doodles Part of Speech/ Examples ...	I Got This!
damages	Harm or injury, or the money paid to fix harm or injury		
enthused	Being very eager, excited and motivated about		
expel	To kick out, deny someone access or membership		
faze	To upset or confuse someone		
fragile	Easy to break or damage		
fumble	Be clumsy with your hands		

New Word	Dictionary Definition	Anchoring New Words to Past Knowledge Synonyms/ Images/ Phrases / Sentences / Doodles Part of Speech/ Examples ...	I Got This!
gavel	Small hammer used by a judge to call to order		
gut	To take the insides out of a body or a house		
incident	Something that happens, with a cause and effect		
persistent	Continuing to exist and try even through challenges		
portable	Able to be moved		
representative	One chosen to speak for others		
restriction	A limit or control		
smirk	Smile with too much pride and vanity		
vacant	Nothing inside		

Vocabulary List # 2 Name _____

Read through this list and take notes or doodle what you already know.
Write a definition. How many new words can you learn?

SET A GOAL: _____

New Word	Dictionary Definition	Anchoring New Words to Past Knowledge Synonyms/ Images/ Phrases / Sentences / Doodles Part of Speech/ Examples ...	I Got This!
damages			
enthused			
expel			
faze			
fragile			
fumble			

New Word	Dictionary Definition	Anchoring New Words to Past Knowledge Synonyms/ Images/ Phrases / Sentences / Doodles Part of Speech/ Examples ...	I Got This!
gavel			
gut			
incident			
persistent			
portable			
representative			
restriction			
smirk			
vacant			

In Chapter 17 Maleeka is attacked by men on her way home from Char's house. This is a very difficult chapter to read, in part because Sharon Flake does such a good job writing this scene so that we can feel Maleeka's terror. Read pages 87-89 again. What words and phrases impact you the most, invoke the most emotion. Write them here.

Maleeka is afraid to tell her mother about the attack? Why? Do you agree with her choice to keep quiet about what happened? _____

How does writing a similar story for Akeelma help Maleeka? _____

Mamma has a saying, "Don't go getting full of yourself 'cause soon as you do, somebody's gonna come and let the wind out of your sails." What does this mean? _____

Do you agree with Mamma? Why or Why not? _____

Char think's Maleeka is Miss Saunder's pet. Maleeka thinks Miss Saunders is harder on her than on anybody else. Which one is true? Can they both be true? What do you think? _____

Maleeka isn't sure if she should trust Caleb again? Do you think she should? Why or Why not? _____

Making Predictions ~ Uh Oh! Maleeka got caught. What do you think will happen next? _____

Read this passage from pg. 113:

Miss Saunders gives me a hard look and goes on about how important it is for a teacher to not have her personal business out among students, how it can undermine her credibility.

Given what you know and the context of the passage, what do you think the term "undermine her credibility" means? _____

Mamma tells Maleeka she is a good writer like her father. She also shares a poem that Maleeka's dad wrote for her when she was little.

What kind of poem did her father write? _____

How many times has Char been in 7th grade? _____

How does this new information help you understand Char? Does it change your thoughts about her at all? Why or why not? _____

How does Caleb feel about Char? How can you tell? What evidence can you use from the text to support your answer? _____

Maleeka seems to be giving Char a lot of power in this chapter, saying she has to go along with Char and that no one ever turns their back on Char. Why do you think Maleeka does this? How do you think this will turn out for Maleeka?

Improv Challenge

Mr. Pajolli put out his hand to introduce himself to JuJu but she just looked at his hand like dirt's on it.

What kind of look is this? Who in class can do this look the best?

JuJu's feet also sound more like bowling balls falling to the ground than feet.

Who can imitate JuJu's walk the best?

Maleeka faces some tough decisions in Chapter 25. For the most part do you think she makes good decisions? Or bad decisions? What motivates Maleeka's decisions?

Does Maleeka really want to ruin Miss Saunder's room? Use evidence from Chapter 25 to support your answer. _____

Read the following passage. Highlight the words that show personification.

**Them old wooden steps, they talk.
Every time I set foot on one, it tells on me.**

What is the literal meaning of this passage?

Mamma does something she has never done before, what is it?
Do you think Mamma was justified in her actions? Why?

At the end of Chapter 27, Maleeka writes the following in her diary:

**Dear Diary,
Remember the acorn. Even when you don't see it growing,
it's pushing past the dirt. Reaching for the sun. Growing stronger.
~ Maleeka**

Sometimes authors use foreshadowing to give us some idea of what might happen next in a story. What do you think this Diary entry means? What might happen now?

Improv Challenge

Char lets out a low, mean laugh.

What kind of laugh is this? Who in class can make this laugh the best?

The Skin I'm In

Chapter # 28–29

Name _____

A lot of action takes place in Chapter #28.

Did anything surprise you? Will anything that happened change the characters in any way? List Three thing you think are most important:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

These chapters are full of highs and lows for Maleeka.

What is the high point, the very best moment for Maleeka in these Chapters?

How is she feeling in this moment? _____

What do you think was her lowest point? Sometimes this is called the 'black moment'.

How is she feeling in this moment? _____

Making Predictions ~ What do you think will happen next? How do you think the book will end? _____

Several times Maleeka reacts to stress by rocking. At the end of the chapter she says she rocks until her insides are calm and peaceful. Have you ever tried this? If not is there something else that helps you to calm down and focus?

Miss Saunders is questioning Maleeka about the vandalism. Maleeka responded.

"Listen, Miss Saunders. Some kids dared me to do it. Said they'd pay me twenty-five dollars if I did. I needed the money. That's all, " I say, digging at the scab, drawing blood from the dry, hard shell.

What does this last phrase do in the passage? Is it necessary? Why did the author include it? _____

Who was Maleeka thinking about when she finally confronted Char? _____

Do you think this helped Maleeka to be strong? _____

Here is the passage where Maleeka defies Char from pg 159.

"Call me by my name! I am not ugly. I am not stupid. I am Maleeka Madison, and yeah, I'm black, real black and if you don't like me, too bad 'cause black is the skin I'm in!" I yell. "No matter what you think, Charlese Jones, you're ten times worse. I would never force someone to burn down a classroom, or pick on kids weaker than me, or say words so mean they make people bleed inside." I'm rocking and crying and rocking. "You the one who pushed me to mess up Miss Saunders's room and you were in on it, too- you and the twins," I say, feeling relieved.

Highlight your favorite part. Did Maleeka do a good job defending herself in the end? _____

The line that inspired the title of this book is in this passage. Underline it.

Is the phrase 'words so mean they make people bleed inside' figurative or literal? What is another way you could say this? _____

If the Theme Fits....

A theme is a big idea or message that runs through the story like a stream. It keeps coming up, with new evidence to support it. A theme is often an essential, universal truth that would apply to other stories and situations as well.

A story may have more than one theme.

Do you think any of the following themes fit the story we read?

Choose one (or more!) and use facts and evidence from the story to support your conclusion.

If you don't like any of these themes, feel free to write your own and support it.

1. Be careful in how you pick your friends, choose wisely.
2. You have to like yourself and be comfortable in your own skin.
3. How you look does not determine what kind of person you will become.
4. You don't have to change yourself for other people.
5. Don't listen to what others say about you, just be yourself.

The theme I chose: _____

Evidence from the story text that supports this a theme of **The Skin I'm In** :

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Now you have all of the details you need to write a good paragraph about the theme of this book. You could even expand it to multiple paragraphs if needed.

Plot: The Skin I'm In

Climax

Height of the Action

Rising Action

Stuff is Happening!

Gaining Steam

Falling Action

Winding Down

Wrapping Things Up

Resolution

The Ending Point

The 'New Normal'

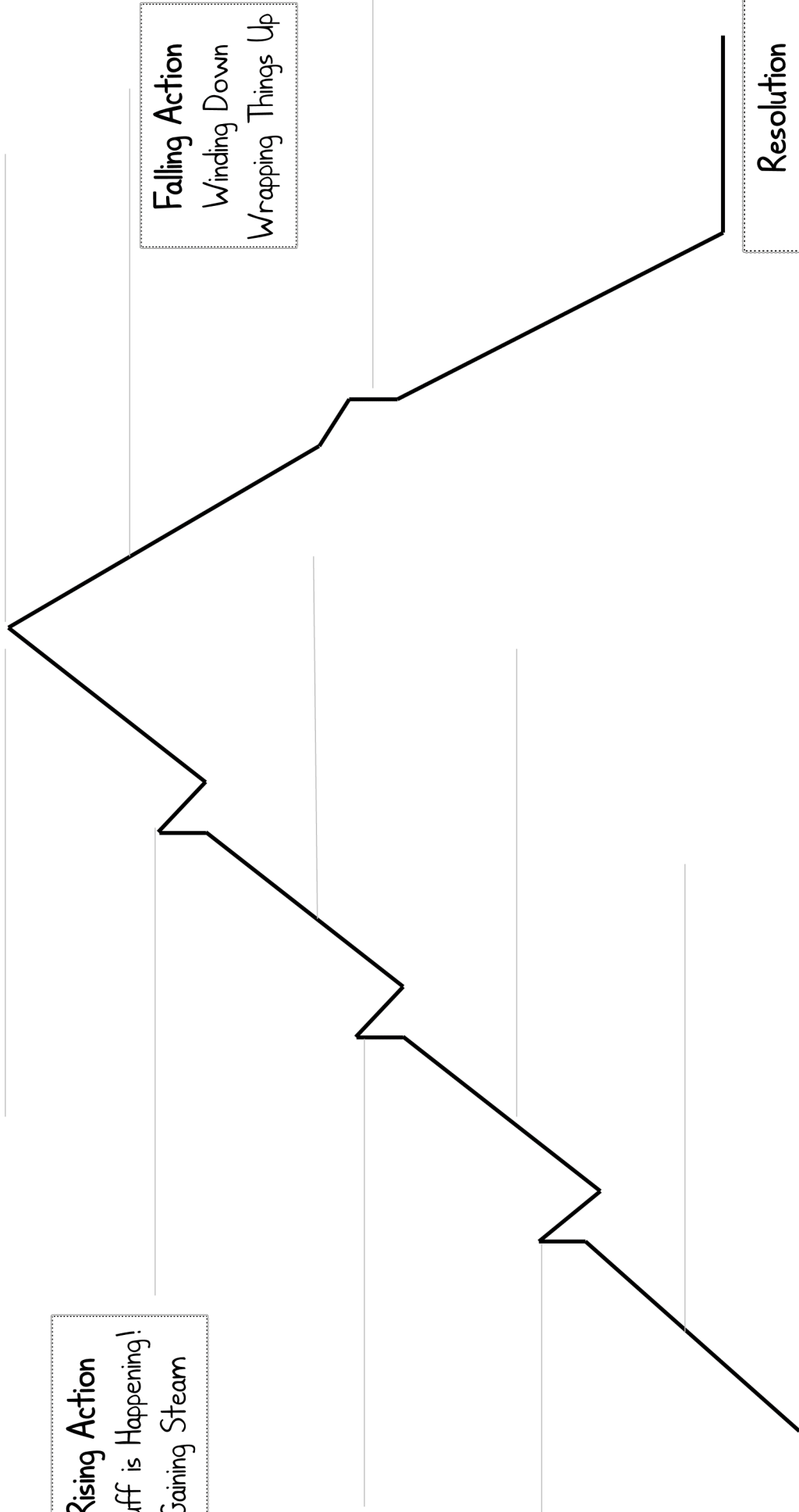
(At least for now!)

Exposition

The Starting Point

The Status Quo

The Known Normal

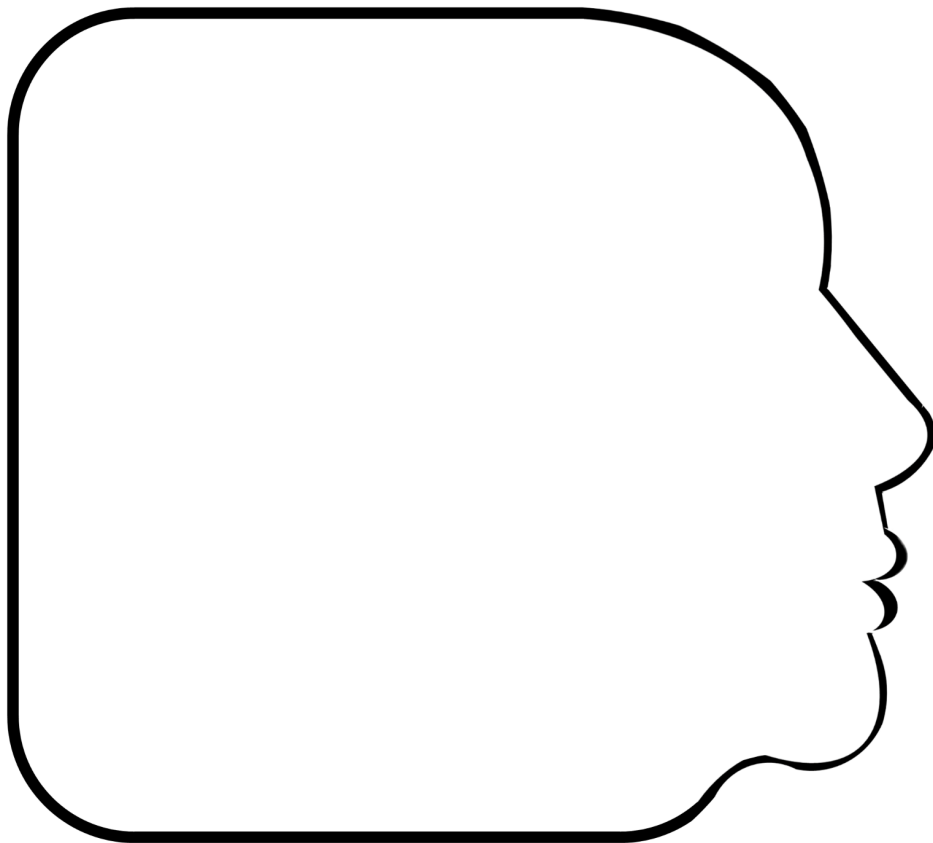


The Skin I'm In

My Own 'Skin' Name _____

Maleeka learns that she is much more than just how she looks. Yes, the characteristics of her appearance help to make her who she is, but they are just a piece. She is also what and who she loves, what she likes to do, what she feels, what she believes and how she chooses to act.

Use the following graphic to add images and words that help to describe you, and the 'Skin' you live in. Use pens, markers, color, magazine pics, whatever you like.



Title: _____

Maleeka learns to claim her name. But she also uses a variation of her name spelled backwards for the character she is writing. Use your name, a nickname you'd like, or some variation of your own name to title your image.