Students:
In this packet your learning will be centered around the Informational Text, The Distracted Teenage Brain by Allison Pearce Stevens.

The primary purpose of informational text is to become the reader about the natural or social order without the use of characters.

- The learning outcomes of your journey through this packet will allow you to:

  **MCCRS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1**
  Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

  **MCCRS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.2**
  Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

  **MCCRS. ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4**
  Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies

After you have a great understanding of the text, complete all the assignments. Be sure to read and follow the directions for each assignment. You will see bolded **Think about it** statements in the text. These statements are there to help you better understand the text. Think about them as times your teacher would pause to have discussion or reflect on the text. Feel free to use the space provided below each assignment or the back of the paper to complete each. Once again, if you have any questions, feel free to reach out.
Assignment 1:

- **Before You Read:** Review the vocabulary words and their meanings.
- **While Reading:** Complete the 3rd column for at least 4 of the words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>While Reading: Identify where this word is found in the text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prefrontal Cortex</td>
<td>part of the brain responsible for decision making, emotions and social behaviors.</td>
<td><em>Example response: Found in paragraph 1, sentence 2.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allure</td>
<td>to be attracted to; make you really want something.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Entice</td>
<td>to offer advantage or pleasure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Someone who takes part in an experiment or game</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase</td>
<td>a stage of an experiment or a time period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earnest</td>
<td>being passionate or heartfelt about something</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>the direction in how something goes; up, down, angled, side to side</td>
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THE DISTRACTED TEENAGE BRAIN

Scientists discover that teens are easily distracted by behaviors that were once — but are no longer — rewarding

When most people think of distraction, they think of loud music or television, but in 2014 psychologist Zachary Roper conducted a study that offered a different definition of distraction. The results show why young adults may seem impulsive and easily distracted.

1 Teens have a reputation for making some not-so-smart decisions. Researchers have blamed those poor decisions on the immaturity of a teen’s prefrontal cortex. That is the part of the brain involved in making plans and decisions. But scientists now find the answer may be simpler: the allure of rewards. Rewards, even small ones, entice teens more than they do adults.

2 And, perhaps surprisingly, teens tend to continue doing things they once found rewarding, even after the actual payoff is long gone. Both findings come from a new study by researchers at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. **Think about: Based on the studies why do teens make poor decisions?**

3 Psychologist Zachary Roper and his team worked with two groups of volunteers: 13- to 16-year olds and 20- to 35-year-old adults. Each volunteer had to play a game. During a training phase, a computer displayed six circles, each a different color. The players had to find the red or green circle. These circles had either a horizontal/across or vertical/up or down line inside. The remaining circles had lines at other angles. When the participant found the correct target, they had to press one of two keys on a keyboard. One key would report they had found the vertical line. The other reported finding a horizontal line.

4 When a volunteer hit the right key, the screen flashed the amount of the reward they had earned. For some volunteers, green circles provided a large (10-cent) reward and red circles provided a small (2-cent) reward. For other volunteers, the amounts were reversed, with red circles worth more. All other colors had no reward.
By the end of this training, volunteers had learned the value of each color. But they weren’t aware that they had, notes Iowa’s Jatin Vaidya. When the scientists asked the players about the value of red versus green circles, both teens and adults had no awareness that a circle’s color had any effect on how much they had earned during any given trial. **Think about it: What did the researchers learn during the training phase of the experiment?**

After this training ended, it was time to begin testing in earnest. The scientists informed the volunteers they had a new target. Each had to report the orientation of the line inside a blue diamond. Again, groups of six symbols appeared on a computer screen. Only one was a diamond. The other five were still circles. In some trials, one of those circles was red or green. In other trials, there were no red or green circles.

The recruits/participants were told to answer as quickly as possible. And for this phase of the experiment, no additional money would be earned.

The researchers now measured how long it took people to find the diamond and record their answers.

When no red or green circles were among the onscreen options, both adults and teens responded quickly. But when a red or green circle showed up, both groups initially took a bit longer. Adults, though, quickly stopped paying attention to the colored circles. Their response times sped up.

Teens reacted differently. They took longer to respond whenever a red or green circle showed up. Their response times never sped up. Their attention still was drawn to the previously valued circles — even though the shapes no longer brought any reward. Clearly, the red and green circles were distracting teens from their objective. **Think about it: Based on the experiment what did Roper find out?**
11 Roper’s team reported the findings September 10 in *Psychological Science*.

“The study demonstrates/shows that the attention of adolescents or young people is especially drawn to rewarding information,” says Brian Anderson. A psychologist at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Md., he was not involved with the study. These data may help explain why teens engage in risky behavior, he says.

12 Some behaviors, such as texting or using social media, trigger the brain’s reward system. Once the teenage brain has linked a behavior to that reward, it continues to seek the reward again and again. That’s why teens are likely to opt or choose the reward of social media when they should be studying. Or why they respond to texts while driving.

13 How can someone overcome their brain’s distraction? Vaidya suggests physically removing distractions whenever possible. Shut down the phone when driving or disconnect from Wi-Fi while doing homework. When distractions are not available, it will be easier to focus attention on the things that matter most. Like arriving home safely.**Think about it: How does Vaidya suggest that teenagers overcome their tendency to become distracted?**
Assignment 2: After reading the informational text article, The Distracted Teenage Brain, and having a good grasp of the content, use key details to summarize the central ideas of two of the indicated paragraphs (pick at least two boxes to fill out).

i.e. “In paragraph 1-3 the author stated___________________.
This adds to the central idea of the article by_________________”.

Summarize paragraphs 1-3 in the box below

Summarize paragraphs 4 and 5 in the box below

Summarize paragraphs 6-10 in the box below

Summarize paragraphs 11-13 in the box below
Assignment 3: Vocabulary

After reading the story and completing the vocabulary assignment on page 2, use the space below to create sentences using 4 of the words. (Each sentence must be a minimum of 7 words. -Remember to proofread your work.)

Example: 1. Prefrontal Cortex:

After a horrible surfing accident, the doctor told Mari she sustained injury to her prefrontal cortex.

1.

2.

3.

4.
Assignment 4:

Text-Dependent Questions Directions:

For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following statements best expresses the central idea of the article?
   
   A. Teenagers' brains are more easily distracted because they use social media and text while driving more often than adults.
   
   B. Teenagers are more prone to distraction because they are more attracted to or focused on potential rewards.
   
   C. Teenagers often do not realize why they want rewards because their brains are still developing.

2. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A?
   
   A. “‘The study demonstrates that the attention of adolescents is especially drawn to rewarding information’” (Paragraph 12)
   
   B. “These data may help explain why teens engage in risky behavior, he says.” (Paragraph 12)
   
   C. “When distractions are not readily available, it will be easier to focus attention on the things that matter most.” (Paragraph 14)

3. PART A: What does the word “entice” mean as used in paragraph 1?
   
   A. to inspire
   
   B. to challenge
   
   C. to attract

4. PART B: Which of the following phrases from paragraph 1 best supports the answer to Part A?
   
   A. “not-so-smart decisions”
   
   B. “allure of rewards”
   
   C. “more than they do adults”
Assignment 5: Grammar Practice/HOMOPHONES

Recall that homophones are words that sound the same but have different meanings. For example, a stake is a wooden post, and a steak is a piece of meat. Read each sentence. If you find a misused homophone, rewrite the sentence correctly in the space below. If there is no error, write: The sentence is correct as it is.

1. I went to bed so late that I had trouble falling asleep last knight.
2. You’re lucky that you will sail to Europe on vacation this summer.
3. Our fruit salad had apples, oranges, and pairs.
4. Don’t stare at me.
5. There are too people in line in front of us.
6. Her cousin is always hungry an our after eating lunch!
7. Eric had to read many books in college.
8. As we drove threw the countryside, we saw a heard of cattle in a field.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence number</th>
<th>Rewrite if the sentence is incorrect. Leave blank if the sentence is correct</th>
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