

## SUMMER READING 2024

### 8th Grade

If there is one thing that all stories have in common, it is change. Worlds can change, relationships can change, and characters can change. This is the beauty of YA literature.

In the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, you will be participating in book clubs focused on discussing character change in your summer reading novel. Character change in novels enhances the richness and effectiveness of the narrative, pulls in the reader on an emotional level, and allows for the exploration of human experiences.

In order to come prepared to discuss, collect information about the protagonist of your book and how he/she grows or changes throughout the novel.

Bring **four** responses that illustrate your thinking about character change. Each response should refer directly to the text (either through paraphrasing or direct quotes) and should clearly express your thinking. These jots can be written in a Writer's Notebook or on a Google Doc. Your responses should be about your THINKING, not plot summary. The responses should be about a paragraph in length. Please see the sample below to help guide your work.

Please bring your responses to class on the first day of school.

As you think about your character's growth or transformation, consider the following:

- What is your character like at the beginning of the book?
- How does the time, place, or environment that the character is living in affect the way the character views themselves or the world?
- What conflicts arise and how does your character respond to these conflicts?
- How do the secondary characters influence the thinking and actions of your character?
- What is one moment that feels particularly important or meaningful to the growth of your character?
- How is the character a conduit of change for other characters?
- What are the major realizations or understandings of your character and how do these shape him/her?
- Is the development of your character believable? Is their change earned? Relatable? Surprising?

- What does your character's growth communicate about the human experience? What can we discover about ourselves through this change?

### **Sample Responses:**

#### **Jasmine Warga's *Other Words for Home***

#### **RESPONSE #1**

Direct quote:

"...and I imagine it again:

Me, walking on that stage.

My footsteps echoing.

My voice radiating through the room...

But at the last minute,

I grab a tryout packet too" (155).

Jude was interested in being a part of the play, just like Layla, a fellow Arab-American. But Layla wants to be behind the scenes designing sets. Initially, this is what Jude thought she wanted for herself as well. But as she is daydreaming during Mrs. Bloom's speech, Jude sees herself out front, in full view. She imagines herself in a space unlike the one designated for "students like her" - a space that is public, and visible, and "American." Jude changes her mind and takes a tryout packet, showing that she is not going to let her school- and the students at her school- control the way she thinks and acts.

#### **RESPONSE #2**

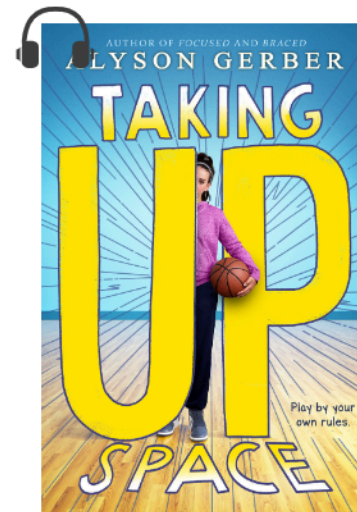
Paraphrase:

The last page of the book when Jude thinks about being a part of something bigger than herself.

Jude realizes at the end that there are spaces in this world for her. She began the book as an innocent girl witnessing war come to her town in Syria. She had to leave everything- her country, her friends, half of her family- to move to her uncle's house in Cincinnati. She was alone and had to rebuild everything she lost. Through a want and a need to feel connected, Jude opens herself up to her new reality and fills the emptiness of Syria with new friends and experiences: Layla, the Middle Eastern restaurant, the play, Miles, and Sarah. She starts to make herself visible and connected. She changes her idea of home and gains the wisdom that home is not a singular place, but a feeling of connection and belonging.

# 8TH GRADE SUMMER READING

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Want to learn more about Sora? Watch [this](#) quick video:



Participate in SMS Library's Summer Reading Bingo Here:



Questions on how to access? Contact Mrs. D'Onofrio - [hdonofrio@greatneck.k12.ny.us](mailto:hdonofrio@greatneck.k12.ny.us)