8th Grade Summer Reading

Mrs. Vigen

Students entering eighth grade will need to read *Night* and *Scythe* before school resumes in August. I have included a description of the project due for *Night.* Students do not need to do a project for *Scythe.* AR is mandatory for 8th grade. Students will need to earn at least 30 points in the first quarter. They are welcome to take tests on *Night* and *Scythe*; however, they will still need to read a novel of their choice to be able to earn the 30 points. Students who double their goal will be rewarded with mega-bonus points and a trip to Baskin Robbins during school. I strongly recommend that they either have a novel picked out that they will begin reading at the beginning of the year or that they read another book or part of a book over the summer. The book must have an AR test. You can use AR bookfinder to help with this. I will include some recommendations of favorite 8th grade reads below.

For this particular unit, we will explore the effects of indifference in different situations. Students should annotate both *Night* and *Scythe* for examples of indifference.

Dialectical Journal Project on *Night* by Elie Wiesel

The term dialectic means "using the process of question and answer to investigate the truth of a theory or opinion." Dialectic is the method Socrates used to teach his students how to be involved actively in the struggle to obtain meaning from an unfamiliar and challenging work. A dialectical journal is a written conversation with yourself that encourages the habit of reflective questioning about a piece of literature. You will use a double-entry format to examine details of a passage and synthesize your understanding of the text. This is required for *Night* only. *Night* is a nonfiction work of literature written by a World War II Holocaust survivor.
If you have any problems the project format, please contact me at evigen@smc.school. This project is due on the first day of school.

Instructions:

1. Type your project in a two-column format on printer paper using 12 point/Times New Roman font or write in a composition book.
2. Draw a vertical line down the middle of the page.
3. Label the left column TEXT and the right column RESPONSE.
4. In the TEXT column, copy passages word for word from the novel, including quotation marks and page numbers.
5. Choose at least one passage from every chapter that you read. You must have a minimum of ten passages and no more than fifteen.
6. How do you choose what passages to write down? Passages become important if you notice the following:
    a. You notice a detail that seems important.
    b. You learn something significant about a character.
    c. You recognize a pattern (recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols, descriptions, details, etc.).
    d. You agree or disagree with something a character says or does.
    e. You find an interesting or potentially significant quotation.

f. You notice something important or relevant about the author's writing style.
g. You notice effective use of literary devices (listed on the back of the other project)
h. You think that the passage contributes to or reveals a theme in the novel.

7. In the RESPONSE column, reflect upon the passages.
    a. DO NOT MERELY SUMMARIZE THE PLOT OR RESTATE THE PASSAGE IN YOUR OWN WORDS.
    b. (R) Reaction—Describe what the passage makes you think or how it makes you feel and why.
    c. (C) Characterization—Analyze details or dialogue to show aspects of the identities of the characters.
    d. (P) Prediction—Anticipate what will occur based on what is in the passage.
    e. (LD) Literary Device—Analyze the author's writing using literary devices.
    f. (RE) Reflect—Think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense—not just to the characters in the story. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or about the way things are?
    g. (T) Theme—Determine if the passage contributes to the author's overall message or messages about some aspect or aspects of life. What lesson can you learn about life?
    h. (M) Mood—Determine the way the passage establishes the mood or tone of a scene and explain how that is important.
    i. (Q) Question—Ask questions about what is happening, what a detail means,or elements that spark your curiosity.
8. Each TEXT entry must be at least 20 words. Each RESPONSE must be at least 75 words (include word count in parenthesis at the end of each response).
9. Write down your thoughts, questions, insights, and ideas while you read or immediately after reading a section of the book so the information is fresh.
10. First person writing (using the pronoun "I") is acceptable in the RESPONSE column.
11. Remember the quotations in the TEXT column do not have to be dialogue!

EXAMPLE:

TEXT	RESPONSE
1. “The house on Mango Street was ours, and we don’t have to pay rent to anybody, or share the yard with the people downstairs, or be careful not to make too much noise, and there isn’t a landlord on the ceiling with a broom” (Cisneros 3).	1. I noticed that she is listing experiences that people who rent homes and apartments might have experienced as well.This might pull those readers closer to her through common experience. It also serves to pull the reader who has never rented into her narrative. She lists multiple inconveniences and negative aspects of this lifestyle (paying rent, sharing yard, having to be quiet) and this begins to create an image. While Esperanza’s family no longer has to deal with these problems, their neighbors on Mango Street do. It provides a window into lifestyle. (92)
2. “But my mother’s hair, my mother’s hair, like little rosettes, like little candy circles all curly and pretty because she pinned it in pincurls all day, sweet to put your nose into when she is holding you, holding you and you feel safe, is the warm smell of bread before you bake it, is the smell when she makes room for you on her side of the bed.” (Cisneros 6)	2. Something that I concluded here is that the long list of similes and metaphors describing her mother’s hair must be important. She describes her father’s hair in one sentence—as well as the hair of the other family members. The repetition of “holding you” is a clue, as well. She obviously has a strong connection to her mother and it must be the most important relationship in her life—at least in her family. Other evidence of this closeness is the association of smell—the smell of bread—with her mother. Olfactory memories are some of the strongest. It reminds me of smell associations that I have, like Johnson’s baby lotion and washing my children when they were babies. Every time I smell it I am transported back to those days. Warm bread connotes comfort and care. It takes time and patience to bake bread—just like being a mom.

Book Recommendations

For boys and girls

- *The Inheritance Games*
- *An Abundance of Katherines* (all the John Green books are appealing to students at this age—note that they are YA—my particular favorite is *Looking for Alaska,* but it does have some content of which you may not approve)
- *Ender's Game*
- *Scythe series (Thunderhead, etc)*
- *The Maze Runner* series
- *Sunrise on the Reaping,* Suzanne Collins
- *Divergent* series
- *Hunger Game* series
- *The Bletchley Riddle*

For girls

- *The Nightingale,* Kristin Hannah (also, *The Great Alone*)
- *American Royals,* Katharine McGee
- *This Lullaby,* Sarah Dessen
- *The Agathas,* Kathleen Glasgow
- *The Summer I Turned Pretty* series
- *The Selection* series
- *Twilight* series

For boys

- *Aisle Nine*, Ian X. Cho
- *That's Not My Name,* Megan Lally
- *The Field Guide to the North American Teenager*
- *Tell No One,* Harlan Coben
- *Dry,* Neal Shusterman
- *This is Our Story*, Ashley Elston
- *Otherworld,* Jason Segold
- *Unbroken, The Young Adult Version*
- *Devotion, Young Readers Edition*