

Summer Literature and Writing 2020

2 quality books and 7 writing-about-reading activities for each book:

- Choose at least one book from the Level 3 Book List or website listed below, and choose one from the short list (on the right). Choose one that is appropriate for your reading level.
- Complete the reading activities for Book #2 (short list on right) for in your Writer's Notebook as you read. You will divide the total numbers of pages of the book in sevenths, and for each one you will do a response. DO NOT wait to do all of them after you have finished reading. Write the title and author of the book at the top of each entry.
- Be prepared to have your entries assessed for **insightfulness** of content.

Book #1:

Choose and read any book that you have not previously read from any of the booklists on the YALSA website:

www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists
yalsa book lists. (please copy and paste this link in your browser)

OR

Choose a novel from the Level 3 Reading List

Book #2: Choose One of These-

The Whale Rider by: Witi Ihimaera

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by: Mark Haddon

The Five People You Meet in Heaven
By: Mitch Albom

About the Books:

- *The Whale Rider* is the story of eight-year-old Kahu, a member of the Maori tribe of Whangara, New Zealand, who fights to prove her destiny, but does she have the special power to communicate with whales, a gift which the future leader-known as The Whale Rider- must have? This book is the classic heroic journey.
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* is written from the perspective of 15 year old Christopher. a boy who is mildly autistic. Christopher finds the neighbor's dog murdered with a pitchfork, and is accused of the crime. As a lover of puzzles, Christopher decides to solve the mystery himself.
- *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* begins with Eddie, our protagonist's, death, as he selflessly gives his own life in an attempt to save the life of a small child. Eddie spends time with five different people who lives he impacted or who impacted his, in surprising and not so surprising ways. This powerful book is the shortest of the three books, but it will touch your heart, and make you wonder, "Who would my five people be?"

WRITING-ABOUT-READING ACTIVITIES for *The Whale Rider*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, or *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*.

Do each of the responses. DO NOT wait to do all of them after you have finished reading. You may do them in any order, EXCEPT the last one, which you must do last.

1. ___ ___ Retell:
 - Who is this story mostly about?
 - What are the relationships?
 - What do the characters want/desire?
 - Names matter. What are the characters' names?
 - How does the story begin? What happens?
 - What happens? What are the (2-3) incidents that show what kind of person the main character is?
 - How does it end? What happens?

2. ___ Transcribe important quotes and write about them
 - find one quote (1-3 sentences)
 - Write what you think it means, how it makes you feel, or any symbols or theories related to that quote.
 - Then, write about why you chose it or why you think it's important.

3. ___ Write a poem about the text
 - You may take on the perspective of any character in the text, not just the main character.
 - A good place to start in writing your poem is to write about the image that really stuck with you the most.

4. ___ Write a letter to one of the characters
 - You can write as yourself to one of the characters or imagine that you are one of the characters in the story writing to another character in the story

5. ___ Free-write
 - how the text makes you feel
 - what it makes you think
 - how it reminds you of something in your life
 - how your life might be different after reading this text
 - what you liked or disliked about the text and why
 - why you think this text is good or bad
 - strong ideas or symbols in this text

6. ___ Make a character timeline
 - on top of the timeline, write the events
 - below, write how the main character feels (ashamed, hopeful, discouraged, etc.) during that event

7. ___ Writing about the Ending
 - Describe the ending of the book.
 - What was left unfinished or unresolved?
 - How did the ending meet your expectations?

Your CHOICE BOOK: Write a book review for your second book:

Paragraph 1 - What is your overall reaction to the book? (Please state its name in the first sentence.) What type of reader are you? (an avid reader? a reluctant reader?) What type of novels are you usually drawn toward? (action, horror, romance, humorous, historical etc.) Is this typical of the kind of book you read, or were you trying a new genre (type of fiction)?

Paragraph 2 - Introduce us to the book: Explain briefly (in one or two sentences) what it is about. Tell when and where the novel is set.

Paragraph 3 - Describe the main character or characters. What are their names and ages? What are their personalities like? What quirks and faults do they have? What fears? What are their strengths?

Paragraph 4 - Describe how the novel begins and develops. Describe the character's greatest dilemma or crisis, but don't give away the ending! You may hint at it however.

Paragraph 5 - What were the strengths of this book? (see the list below for help). Explain how these are strengths in your particular novel.

Paragraph 6 - What were the weaknesses of the book (again, see the list below) Explain how these are weaknesses in your particular novel.

Paragraph 7 - Overall, would you recommend this book? Why or why not? What, personally, did you get from the book? (a great story? a beautiful but sad lesson about life? a special moral? etc.) In your opinion, what type of person would most like it?

Criteria to consider when evaluating your novel:

- fast moving plot / slow moving or boring plot
- complex, intricate plot / plot is too simplistic or unrealistic
- well developed characters / characters feel shallow or undeveloped characters you care about / you never feel any strong emotions for the characters
- the author engages you from the beginning / it takes a while to get involved in the story, if you ever get involved at all
- the author has an elegant writing style / the author's writing feels stiff or formula-like satisfying ending/ disappointing or unrealistic ending.

Summer Free Writing

(NOTE: This is an entirely different assignment from the writing-about-literature activities.)

Writer's Notebook Entries: Free Writing

- You will write 6 different entries to gather seeds for our first writing cycle in the fall. You may free-write in any manner you choose, but please spend at least 15 minutes of REAL writing time on each entry. There is no requirement for length, but remember that the point of this exercise is to improve your writing, so please do an appropriate amount.
- If you want to spread your entries out, you could do one each week for six weeks. You could do one a day for the first six days. You could do one every other day for the last 12 days. Work it out so that it works for you.
- Please *do not* wait to do all 6 entries for the last several days, and especially not for the last day. Of course, we will have no way of knowing, but if you rush, your writing will suffer.

Some Ideas: Try writing in different places (at the mall, in a tree, in a grocery store, at the beach, sitting on a bench on Main Street, etc.) Try writing with different types of music on, and try writing in total silence.

What will you write about?

It's your choice! You might write six different beginnings to six different stories, poems, descriptions of future characters, and...lists! Write lists of things that you love, lists of things that you dislike, lists of things that irritate you, lists of items in the neighbors' garbage cans, lists of things that secretly please you but you'd never admit it. Write about topics in technology, science, history, and geography that interest you. Or write your thoughts about the world, create your own comics (with dialog and description, please)...you get the idea.

Is it okay to *just* draw pictures instead of writing? No.

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