

Semester 2 Independent Reading Project "Transformations" & "Coming of Age"

Learning Targets:

1. I will explore additional fiction and nonfiction novels reflecting the themes we've discussed in second semester in order to complement class readings, while gaining exposure to new authors and texts.
2. I will compare and contrast novels with similar themes, structure, tone, purpose, and style.
3. I will strengthen my reading, discussion, and communication skills by participating in a "group interview" experience demonstrating my ability to negotiate rapid fire questions.

Steps: During this project, we will read books that represent the themes of third and fourth quarter: "Transformations" and "Coming of Age" – both reflective of our yearly exploration of "Who Am I?"

1. Select TWO books in which you have interest from the attached list, or suggest books of your own. You must have any selections that are not on the list approved by Dr. Hollingsworth within the next week in order to qualify. Any deviations from this selection must be re-approved. You may email for permission as well; print the email and attach to this sheet.

Proposed book title: _____ Teacher approval: _____

(Remember – book selection is a decision governed by you and your parents – make sure you are in agreement regarding content, language, level of difficulty, etc. Many of these books suggest emotionally challenging ideas and imagery, so please be in communication with parents/teachers about your specific family-oriented needs and values).

2. Come to class prepared for your "group interview" which will be held on _____. During this interview, you will be located in a large room with approximately 15 other students and two adult moderators. Standing before your audience, you will be "interviewed" for 4-6 minutes regarding your book and asked multiple questions by both adult moderators and by a student interviewer. You will be graded on your ability to answer questions in a thorough and eloquent manner, and by the evidence you provide demonstrating that you read both books.

This is an assessment grade for Quarter 4, and you will not have time/opportunity to redo, as the quarter will end, so be prepared and on time! 😊

Book Interviews

Similar to an oral book report, you will participate in a “large group interview” with two adult moderators to help demonstrate the completion & understanding of your texts. This is your chance to show what you know through your oral communication skills. There is no way to know what your questions will be in advance, so the best way to prepare is to simply...read your books and thoughtfully evaluate some of the following questions. Some sample questions might include:

- Summarize the plot/events of the novel(s), citing general textual evidence where appropriate.
- What is one predominant theme? - Characterize a main character.
- What is the most important climactic moment of the text(s)?
- What clues in the story did you use to determine the place (setting) and the time the story took place?
- What did the author want you to think about the main character?
- Who are the protagonists and the antagonists?
- What is your favorite passage/section (etc.) Why? -Who is your favorite character and why?
- What is the significance of the title(s)? -Did the author achieve his or her purpose in writing this text?
- Is the writing effective, powerful, difficult, beautiful etc.? – How are these texts similar or different?
- Describe the writing style used by the author. Did you like it? Why/why not?
- What are the strengths and weakness of the book? -For whom is this book appropriate?
- For non-fiction texts, what are the author's qualifications to write about the subject? Do you agree with the author's arguments and conclusions?
- What is your overall response to the book? Did you find it interesting, moving, dull etc.?
- Would you recommend it to others? Why or why not?
- What genre is the text and why do you classify it as such?
- Compare the book to a TV program, movie, or another text that is similar.
- Compare and contrast this book's main character with a real person you know or with similar character in another book or compare and contrast the main conflict of this text with another text/event you know.
- What similarities and differences exist between this text and _____?

Semester 2 Book Project

Common Core State Standards for Speaking and Listening, Grade 8:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.C

Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.4

Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.6

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

	Advanced – 4	Proficient – 3	Partially Proficient – 2	Unsatisfactory - 1
Presenting findings	Reader communicates clear, detailed examples and answers that reflect thoughtful and thorough completion of texts	Reader communicates basic answers that reflect an average understanding and analysis of texts	Reader struggled to answer some questions and may not have completed the texts thoroughly or fully, or did not articulate in a way that made completion evident	There is not enough evidence to suggest the reader completed the books or analyzed important aspects of texts
Command of language	Answers were articulate, exhibiting advanced vocabulary and fluent, practiced communication	Answers were adequate, exhibiting basic vocabulary and generally fluent communication	Answers were somewhat incomplete, lacking in detail, and/or not fluently communicated	Lack of clear communication made answers difficult to understand or interpret
Communication Skills	Eye contact was consistent; Vocal quality was energized and appropriate; Reader appeared and acted with the utmost of professionalism as a speaker and audience member	Eye contact and vocal quality were appropriate, though not necessarily engaging; Reader was adequately professional as a speaker and audience member	Eye contact was limited and sporadic; Volume may have been minimal and/or pronunciation inaccurate; Reader lacked professionalism as a speaker and/or audience member	The reader did not engage formal communication techniques and/or was silly, disengaged, or unprofessional as a speaker and/or audience member

Feedback from interviewers:

BOOK CHOICES

There are literally hundreds of possible books that could qualify for this project. The titles included below are based on recommended texts from the PSD reading list for 7-9th graders, as well as from the public library, Webber Media staff, and Scholastic Books. Remember – book selection is a decision governed by you and your parents – make sure you are in agreement regarding content, language, level of difficulty, etc.

(*) denotes limited number of books that Dr. Hollingsworth has available for check out

Fiction Texts: “Transformation”

Wonder, by Palacio

**Flowers for Algernon*, by Keys

The Joy Luck Club, by Tan

Autobiography of a Face, by Grealy

Flygirl, by Smith

Monster, by Myers

Under the Mesquite, by McCall

Under a War Torn Sky, by Elliott

The Clockwork Scarab, by Gleason

Stupidfast, by Herbach

Pegasus, by McKinley

The Scorpio Races, by Stiefvater

The Running Dream, by Draanen

All the Pretty Horses, by McCarthy

The Bean Trees, by Kingsolver

A Lesson Before Dying, by Gaines

Copper Sun, by Draper

Jay’s Journal, by anonymous

The Color of Water, by McBride

Restoring Harmony, by Anthony

Wolves, Boys, and Other Things that Might Kill Me, by Chandler

The Spiritglass Charade, by Gleason

Cinder, by Meyer

Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind, by Staples

Flipped, by Draanen

“Classic,” Historical Fiction, and Non-Fiction Texts: “Transformation”

Pygmalion, by Shaw

**Jane Eyre*, by Bronte

Jason’s Gold, by Hobbs

**The Pearl*, by Steinbeck

**Johnny Tremain*, by Forbes

Fiction Texts: “Coming of Age”

A World Away, by Grossman

The Big Field, by Lupica

Kiki Strike: Inside the Shadow City, by Miller

Queen of Water, by Resau

Endangered, by Schrefer

Ghost Medicine, by Smith

Wednesday Wars, by Schmidt

Perks of Being a Wallflower, by Chbosky

Paper Towns, by Green

Kaffir Boy, by Mathabane

A Mango-Shaped Space, by Mass

Far North, by Hobbs

Under the Mesquite, by McCall

Airborn, by Opper

Okay for Now, by Schmidt

Threatened, by Schreder

Will Grayson, by Grayson

Red Scarf Girl, by Lang

Peak, by Smoth

New Boy, by Houston

I Hadn’t Seen Castles, by Rylant

An Abundance of Katherine, by Green

Classic,” Historical Fiction, and Non-Fiction Texts: “Coming of Age”

True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle, by Avi

Captain’s Courageous, by Kipling

Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Twain

Mrs. Mike, by Freedman

A Light in the Forest, by Richter

Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, by Alexie