

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors ELA Summer Reading and Assignments

Welcome to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors ELA. We hope you have a great summer and we would also like to introduce your first requirements, which consist of reading a novel and completing two assignments related to the reading that will be turned in the **first week of school**. In addition to having completed both reading and writing assignments, you will also have a test over the required reading during the first two weeks of school.

### Required Reading:

You will be reading *Restart* by Gordon Korman. Novels may be obtained through libraries, used or local bookstores, or online. (\$6.29 on Amazon)

### Reading Purpose

Depending on online reviews will not help you pass the test or allow you the first-hand experience of reading the book. The best way to read a book is to do exactly that. Read the book.

### Project Requirements:

#### **Assignment One: RTW (Read, Think, Write) Journal**

*What is a RTW Journal?* Think of your RTW journal as a series of conversations with you and the text.

**You need one entry for each of the following categories:**

<b>Conflict:</b> Find quotes that support/explain a significant conflict in the book. Include page numbers.
<b>Characterization:</b> Find quotes that best support/explain traits of characters. Include page numbers.
<b>Theme:</b> Find quotes that support/explain a theme of the book. Include page numbers. ***Themes are MORE THAN ONE WORD; write them as a sentence/lesson.
<b>Literary Device:</b> Find examples of literary devices within the text and explain the purpose of these devices. There are many types of literary devices. While you need two entries for this category, each entry may be a different device. Some examples are: symbols, allusions, foreshadowing, flashback, etc. Include page numbers.
<b>Reader Reaction:</b> For these entries, you may choose quotes that illustrate ideas, concepts, or issues that interest you. They do not have to fit any category or criteria. Choose quotes/ideas you especially like, dislike, relate to, or find interesting. You may even pose a question regarding an idea that you don't understand. You can also share a connection you have found with another book or something that also happened to you. Include page numbers.

#### *How Do I Keep A RTW Journal?*

Your journal will use a two-entry chart: in the LEFT COLUMN, write down quotes from your book that you feel best illustrate the category under analysis. In the MIDDLE COLUMN, document the chapter and page numbers. In the RIGHT COLUMN, write down YOUR OWN ANALYSIS (thoughts, commentary, and questions) about the information from the left column.

Please see the following examples that were created from *The Outsiders*. **This assignment is my first impression of you; make it a good one! Choose your excerpts carefully; these should be meaningful, and your analysis should be insightful.** Your journals should be typed through *Google Docs*, using a table as shown. If for some unforeseen reason this is not possible, the journals can be written **neatly in pen**. You must include all information as exemplified on the next pages. The following is an example of my expectations. *Your entries should contain as much detail as mine to exemplify your knowledge on the literary device. \*\*\*For characterization use the S.T.E.A.L. strategy to gather your evidence from the text to make the most logical inference. The strategy is as follows: S-What does the character say? T-What does the character think? E-How does the character affect other characters in the story? A-What are the character's actions? L-What does the character look like. For this strategy, use exact evidence from the text - do not infer during the evidence collection with S.T.E.A.L.\*\*\**

**RTW (Read, Think, Write) Journal Example from *The Outsiders***

Quotes from the Novel/Text	Chapter, Page	Analysis (Your thoughts, comments, questions)
<p><b>CONFLICT</b></p> <p><u>Ponyboy</u> "I ran home, trembling at the thought of facing Darry."</p> <p><u>Darry</u> "Where the heck have you been? Do you know what time it is?" He was madder than I'd seen him in a long time."</p> <p>"I reckon it never occurred to you that your brothers might be worrying their head off and afraid to call the police because something like that could get you two thrown in a boys' home so quick it'd make your head spin...You haven't even got a coat on."</p>	<p>Chapter 3</p> <p>Pages 49-50</p>	<p><u>Conflict</u> Ponyboy vs. Darry</p> <p><u>Explanation and Analysis</u> Ponyboy resents Darry's reactions to him. He sees Darry's mannerisms and actions as bullying and overbearing.</p> <p><u>Question</u> Why might Darry react this way to his little brother?</p> <p><u>My Inference/Response</u> Darry is so upset in this scene is because, like any parent, Darry acts the way he does because he loves Ponyboy, worries about him, and wants what is best for him.</p>
<p><b>CHARACTERIZATION</b></p> <p>Chapter 1 Page 9 "Two-Bit Matthews was the oldest of the gang and the wise cracker of the bunch. He was about six feet tall, stocky in build, and very proud of his long rusty-colored sideburns."</p> <p>Page 10 "Everything he said was so irresistibly funny that he just had to let the police in on it to brighten up their full lives. He liked fights, blondes, and for some unfathomable reason, school. He was still a junior at eighteen and a half and he never learned anything. He just went for kicks."</p>	<p>Chapter 1</p> <p>Pages 9-10</p>	<p><u>Character Two-bit Matthews</u></p> <p><u>What the text says</u> S. – (doesn't speak in this section of the text) T. – (no thoughts are revealed) E. – others, including the police, laugh at his jokes/shenanigans A. – likes to fight, rarely serious L. – stocky, stocky, 6 ft., long, rusty sideburns, oldest of the Greasers</p> <p><u>Connections I can make to the evidence</u> The oldest members of groups tend to be more responsible as they feel they must take care of the younger members. Kids that have a good sense of humor usually have a fairly positive outlook on life and tend to be easy-going. Kids that like to fight have often grown up in a somewhat unstable environment and see this as the only way to settle disputes; they don't talk through problems – just fight them out.</p> <p><u>Character Inferences</u> Two-bit Matthews is a responsible member of the Greasers and often makes wise decisions – although not when it comes to shoplifting, but this is more for the thrill than necessity. Two-bit probably comes from a troubled home where the main forms of communication and disagreements are through physical altercations. Even though Two-bit enjoys a good fight, he often thinks positively and makes others feel better in his company – he is the kind of guys I</p>

		would want to hang out with at a party.
<p><b>THEME</b></p> <p>“It’s okay... We aren’t in the same class. Just don’t forget that some of us watch the sunset too.”</p>	<p>Chapter 3</p> <p>Page 46</p>	<p><u>Theme</u></p> <p>People separated themselves by their differences, but in the end they are all the same.</p> <p><u>Explanation</u></p> <p>Ponyboy says these words to Cherry Valance after he, Two-Bit, and Johnny spend time with Cherry and Marcia at the drive-in.</p> <p>Ponyboy shares with Cherry that, even though the two groups have many differences – lifestyles, attitudes, and financial situations – they all live beneath the same sun. He points out that although some Greasers live up to the stereotype, others, “some of us”, appreciate beauty and knowledge just like a Soc.</p>
<p><b>LITERARY DEVICE</b></p> <p><b>ANALOGY</b></p> <p>“We killed time by reading Gone with the Wind and playing poker. Johnny sure did like that book, although he didn’t know anything about the Civil War and even less about plantations, and I had to explain a lot of it to him. It amazed me how Johnny could get more meaning out of some of the stuff in there than I could--- I was supposed to be the deep one...He was especially stuck on the Southern gentlemen--- impressed with their manners and charm.</p> <p>"I bet they were cool ol' guys," he said, his eyes glowing, after I had read the part about them riding into sure death because they were gallant. "They remind me of Dally."</p> <p>"Dally?" I said, startled. "Shoot, he ain't got any more manners than I do. And you saw how he treated those girls the other night. Soda's more like them Southern boys."</p> <p>"Yeah... in the manners bit, and the charm, too, I guess," Johnny said slowly, "but one night I saw Dally gettin' picked up by the fuzz, and he kept real cool and calm the whole time. They was gettin' him for breakin' out the windows in the school building, and it was Two-Bit who did that. And Dally knew it. But he just took the sentence without battin' an eye or even denyin' it. That's gallant."</p>	<p>Chapter 5</p> <p>Pages 75-76</p>	<p><u>What was the purpose of this device?</u></p> <p>The author, S.E. Hinton, uses this analogy comparing Dally Winston to a gallant Southern gentleman from the Civil War era to show another perspective of Dally. Through the novel, the reader learns about Dally's tough and intimidating exterior. With this comparison, the reader begins to see that Dally is loyal to his friends as Johnny reveals the incident of the windows to Ponyboy.</p> <p>Another reason Hinton chooses this comparison may also be to show how naïve Ponyboy truly is. Ponyboy prefers his fictional characters in his books; he isn't ready to face to harsh realism of people's inner characteristics. Whereas Johnny has been living in the real world longer than Ponyboy and therefore, has a more realistic perspective on who people truly are and not what they appear to be.</p>

READER'S REACTION	Chapters	<i>My thoughts...</i>
<p>Page 10 “(Dally’s) didn’t like haircuts, or hair oil either....His eyes were blue, blazing ice, cold with a hatred of the whole world.”</p> <p>Page 20 “We all had the money to get in (the movies) ... but Dally hated to do things the legal way.”</p> <p>“He started talking, loud enough for the two girls to hear. He started out bad and got worse. Dallas could talk awful dirty if he wanted to and I guess he wanted to then.”</p> <p>Page 24 “Dally came striding back with an armful of Cokes. He handed one to each of the girls and sat down beside Cherry. ‘This might cool you off, too.’</p> <p>She gave him an incredulous look; and then she threw her Coke in his face. ‘That might cool you off, greaser/ After you wash your mouth and learn to talk and act decent, I might cool off, too.’”</p> <p>Page 27 “I kind of admire him,” cherry said softly so only I heard...”</p> <p>Page 30 “Cherry had said she wouldn’t drink Dally’s Coke if she was starving, and she meant it. It was the principle of the thing.”</p> <p>Page 46 “She looked at me quickly. ‘I could fall in love with Dallas Winston,’ she said. ‘I hope I never see him again, or I will.’”</p>	<p>1-3</p> <p>Pages (noted above quotations)</p>	<p>Cherry Valance acts like she hates Dallas Winston. Why would she say that she could fall in love with him?</p> <p>There is an old saying that goes “opposites attract” and while I know that is true scientifically when using magnets, I’ve always wondered if it was true in relationships. Here we have a boy who is as rebellious as they come. He doesn’t like to conform – not even with the choices of the Greasers – he doesn’t want to conform to the rules of society, and he doesn’t want to conform to the rules of chivalry.</p> <p>Then, we have Cherry Valance – your typical rule-following, respectful and responsible preppy girl. She seems to be one that would never break the rules. She seems to like Ponyboy, but because he is a Greaser, she won’t even talk to him at school. She cares a lot about others’ perceptions of her.</p> <p>So how could she fall in love with Dally???</p> <p>He is everything she is not, but wishes she had the courage to be – a nonconformist, <i>don’t tell me how to live my life, I’ll do it my own way</i> kind of person. Cherry follows the rules but probably gets tired of pleasing others and living up to others’ expectations and sometimes she would just like to make her own decisions about what would make her happy. This is why she could fall in love with Dally – for his wild, untamed spirit.</p>

## **Assignment Two: Character Analysis Essay**

**AFTER** you have read your book and completed your *RTW Journal*, you will write an essay.

**PROMPT:** Select one character from the novel that is dynamic. Write an essay that explains in what ways this character is a dynamic character. Be sure to cite evidence from the text to support and develop your thesis. Follow the conventions of standard written English.

### **Planning Your Essay**

As you begin to plan your essay, here are some questions that will help you develop your thesis statement. Using these questions will help you to complete the analysis process that is essential to developing an honor’s level essay.

- What overall *changes* are the character going through and *why* does it matter?
- How do the changes enhance the theme of the novel?
- What is the *cause* of the changes and *why* does it matter?
- What *unique* and new *insight* comes from the character changes?

Again, the answer to these questions will form your thesis statement. The thesis must make a claim that is supported by evidence from the text.

## **Requirements for the Essay**

Your essay should contain an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. You should include evidence from the text to support your thesis and essential points for your body paragraphs. Your essay should be typed through *Google Docs*, using the "Report MLA" format option. The name of your Doc – not the title of your essay – should be your first and last name and the assignment name. If you are not able to type, a NEATLY handwritten copy that is double-spaced will be accepted. Please use MLA format for citing evidence from the text. Your essay will be scored using the TCAP/WA Informational/Explanatory Rubric – Grades 6-8 from the State of Tennessee.

## ***Google Docs***

It is an expectation that all assignments will be completed and shared through *Google Docs*. When you share these assignments, be sure that your first and last name, as well as the assignment name, is used as the name of your report. For your *RTW Journal*, you can choose the "Report Simple" format that is offered by Google Docs. For your essay, again, you should choose "Report MLA". You may share your reports at any time over the break – you do not have to wait until the school year begins. When you share your Doc, you'll need to click on the comment box on the right of the email address space and a drop down menu will appear. Select "**can comment**" then share your Doc.

## **All assignments must be completed and turned in the first week of school.**

Again, we welcome you to our class and are so excited to get to know each one of you as we begin the 2018-2019 school year. If you have any questions over the summer, please feel free to contact one of us.

Happy Reading!

Your 8<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Teachers

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**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors ELA  
Parent Letter**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We are writing to introduce the first requirements for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors ELA, which consist of reading a novel and completing two assignments related to the reading which **will be turned in the first week of school**. In addition to having completed both the reading and the assignments, students will also be given a test over the required reading.

Required Reading:

Your child will be reading *Restart* by Gordon Korman. Novels may be obtained through libraries, used or local bookstores, or online. (\$6.29 on Amazon)

When deciding upon the title for the summer reading, the goal was to provide a reading experience that would be challenging, interesting, and life applicable to students. Especially due to the fact that it is an honors course, the students are expected to be mature readers, sometimes being exposed to reading with mature subjects and language. Parents, we encourage you to take the time to read the book. If a book should be considered offensive in your household, please contact us immediately and we can provide an alternative book that may, in effect, change the assignments.

Your child was given a paper explaining the assignments for the novel. Please take the time to read over his/her requirements and encourage your child to complete the assignments in a reasonable amount of time. **Please be aware that all assignments are due during the first week of school.** We are excited for what the 2018-2019 school year holds and can't wait to get to know our students. If you have any questions or concerns, please e-mail one of us.

Sincerely,

8<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Teachers

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**Please sign and return by **Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>** to Mrs. Bailey in room 142**

I have read and understand the summer reading requirements for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors ELA. I also understand that all assignments are due the first week of school and my failure to complete these assignments will result in a penalty to my grade. I also understand that it is my responsibility to obtain the book for this project.

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the summer reading requirements for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors ELA. I also understand that all assignments are due the first week of school and failure to complete these assignments will result in a penalty to my child's grade. I also understand that it is my and my child's responsibility to obtain the book for this project.

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_