

Sept. 15, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Soon our Grade 7 ELA students will be reading a book of choice for an in-class literature circle. Your child is being given the task of forming a reading group ahead of time, researching and choosing a title based on the criteria shared below, and then purchasing his/her own copy of the book to read and annotate in class. If you are unable to purchase a book, you can request a list of titles of books available through the QVMS book room.

In previous years, students were given a choice of only 4 books selected by the teacher. The books were all themed on the topic of bullying. This year, our goal is to:

- 1) allow students more choice and ownership in their selection of titles;
- 2) practice annotation for literary devices and develop literary analysis skills;
- 3) have students use their literary explorations to investigate student-formulated research questions related to a **topic of social justice** using academic databases; and
- 4) design and enact a real world plan of action to be featured in the first annual 'Be the Change' Advocacy Expo (formerly the Anti-Bullying Expo) later this semester.

Attached to this letter are copies of the forms each student and group must submit. Along with the "Basic Requirements" below, they further explain the expectations and parameters of the assignment and include a parent signature line to confirm your approval of the novel your student and his/her group have chosen.

Once the group's request has been approved by me, please purchase the title so that your child has the book in class by Friday, October 16th. Students should NOT read the novel before bringing it to class. Each group will create a reading calendar in class together.

Thank you,

Mr. Bernhart and Ms. Williams  
7th Grade GT Academy – ELA

### **BASIC REQUIREMENTS**

- 1) the novel must be 150 pages in length or more
- 2) the novel must be at or above grade level
- 3) the novel cannot be a graphic novel or picture book
- 4) the novel must be themed on an issue of social justice
- 5) the novel must be one that the group has not previously read
- 6) the group must research and choose a title and concur on the choice; we will begin this process in class, but it must be finished outside of class
- 7) the Group Novel Approval Form must be submitted on or before Friday 9/25
- 8) each individual group member must also submit a Parent & Student Acknowledgement Form on or before Friday 9/25
- 9) each student must have a physical PAPER copy of the book by Friday 10/16

**Group Novel Approval Form** (due Friday 9/25 or earlier)

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_

**Group Members**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Each group member must submit a completed and signed Parent & Student Acknowledgement Form and Contract with this form BEFORE the novel can be approved.**

Novel Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Fiction or Nonfiction? \_\_\_\_\_

Short Synopsis of Book: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Issue of Social Justice/Concern: \_\_\_\_\_

As you see things now, how do you think this issue impacts the world in which you live? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3 Web Links to Positive Reviews/Descriptions of the Book:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved**

**Denied**

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Parent & Student Acknowledgement Form and Contract

(due Friday 9/25 or earlier along with Group Approval Form)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, parent of  
(print parent's name)

\_\_\_\_\_, am aware that my child  
(print student's name)

will read the novel \_\_\_\_\_  
(print title of book)

by \_\_\_\_\_  
(print author's name)

which was selected by my student and his/her group members and given

approval by his/her ELA teacher, \_\_\_\_\_  
(print teacher's name)

based on the information provided to this teacher on the Group Novel

Approval Form.

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

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

## Student Contract

I, \_\_\_\_\_, verify that I *have not*  
(print student's name)

*previously read* this book and that I *will not read it before my group creates our reading calendar* in class. I also *commit to working* with my group *for the duration* of the assignment and **promise to participate fully and equally** in discussions, activities, and assignments related to the novel.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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