

SENIOR Hon. ELA IV- SUMMER READING PROJECT

***HONORS** students must read both non-fiction books listed below and complete all assignments provided.

-*The World Without Us* by Alan Weisman (non-fiction)

-*The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown (non-fiction)

Assignment: READ the stories all the way through.

Book Selection #1: [The World Without Us, Alan Weisman](#)

According to the book's website: "Alan Weisman offers an utterly original approach to questions of humanity's impact on the planet: he asks us to envision our Earth, without us.

In this far-reaching narrative, Weisman explains how our massive infrastructure would collapse and finally vanish without human presence; what of our everyday stuff may become immortalized as fossils; how copper pipes and wiring would be crushed into mere seams of reddish rock; why some of our earliest buildings might be the last architecture left; and how plastic, bronze sculpture, radio waves, and some man-made molecules may be our most lasting gifts to the universe."

Your Task: Create a Reader Response Journal to document your takeaways from the book. You will bring that book with you to the first week of class, where we will discuss, chapter by chapter, what you found, how you liked the book, and what your experiences were as you learned things as Weisman gets deeper into the question at the center of the title: what happens to the world after we leave/disappear?

Reader's Response Journal – 100 Pts.

Directions: Using the Reading Response Journal guideline sheet provided, complete a Journal of nineteen (19) Reader's Response journal pages one for each chapter of *The World Without Us*. Your Journal can be typed, or neatly handwritten and must demonstrate comprehension of the Beginning, the Middle, and the End of the narrative set forth by Weisman. You can include pictures or drawings if you would like to enhance interest for yourself as the creator, and for me as the grader of said project. The Journal can be original and creative. The only requirement is that each of the 19 pages in your Mini Journal should answer the questions from the Reading Response Journal guideline sheet.

Example: Reader's Response Journal Guidelines

I would encourage you to format answers the following ways.

- Some interesting words/phrases I found were...
- I liked the sentence... because...
- When... It reminded me of when...
- I thought it was interesting/exciting/boring when...
- I predict that...
- Write about the features of the text that you are reading: characterization, plot, themes, setting... How has the author used these effectively?
- The author wants us to think/feel... when...
- This is challenging the way I think/feel about...

- I agree/disagree with the author's view on....

Assessment Checklist:	
Journal has minimum of nineteen (19) pages that follow format of the Reading Response Journal guidelines sheet	___/60
Responses clearly indicate comprehension of Beginning, Middle, and End of story.	___/20
G.U.M.S. (Grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling /5 Project shows evidence of thoughtfulness and creativity	___/20
Project shows evidence of thoughtfulness and creativity	___/20
TOTAL	___/12

Book Selection #2: [*The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown](#)

The Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown celebrates the 1936 U.S. Men's Olympic eight-oar rowing team—nine working class boys who stormed the rowing world, transformed the sport, and galvanized the attention of millions of Americans. Against the grim backdrop of the Great Depression, they reaffirmed the American notion that merit, in the end, outweighs birthright. They reminded the country of what can be done when everyone quite literally pulls together. And they provided hope that the ruthless might of the Nazis would not prevail over American grit, determination, and optimism.

Instructions: After you have finished reading, answer **ALL** of the following short essay questions. Each answer should be recorded as a well-developed paragraph, with a minimum of five sentences. Each paragraph should be at least 250 words in length.

- Your responses should be typed, and double spaced, using Times New Roman, 12 font.
- Your reflections should show thoughtful reflection on the text, and adhere to the standard usage of grammar.
- You should reference specific examples from the book in order to support and develop your answers.
- Your completed assignment will be turned in the first week of school.

1. In this novel, Brown chooses to not only tell the story of the Washington crew team, but also to devote narrative space to Hitler, Germany, and the actions of the Nazi government before, during, and after the 1936 Olympics. What kind of context or deeper understanding does this provide to the reader?
2. Each boy in the boat thought of himself as the weakest member of the team. Who would you categorize as the weakest and who do you consider the strongest? Why?
3. Consider Brown's extensive use of detail in the novel. What kinds of things does he describe in detail? What role do these details play in the novel?
4. Though all the members of the team are important characters, Joe Rantz is undoubtedly the novel's protagonist. Trace Joe's character development from his childhood to his gold-medal finish in Berlin. How does Joe grow as a character? What does he learn about himself and the world, and in what ways does he change?
5. In what ways are the specifics of rowing—the technique, the boats, the teamwork required—metaphors for what the boys, particularly Joe, learn about life and friendship over the course of the novel?

I hope that you enjoy reading this thrilling book, and you learn lessons that can be applied to your own life!