

June 2018

Dear Seventh Grader,

I am looking forward to your August arrival! In the meantime, please enjoy your summer break AND your summer reading.

POSTED by John David Anderson

In middle school, words aren't just words. They can be weapons. They can be gifts. The right words can win you friends or make you enemies. They can come back to haunt you. Sometimes they can change things forever.

When cell phones are banned at Branton Middle School, Frost and his friends Deedee, Wolf, and Bench come up with a new way to communicate: leaving sticky notes for each other all around the school. It catches on, and soon all the kids in school are leaving notes—though for every kind and friendly one, there is a cutting and cruel one as well.

In the middle of this, a new girl named Rose arrives at school and sits at Frost's lunch table. Rose is not like anyone else at Branton Middle School, and it's clear that the close circle of friends Frost has made for himself won't easily hold another. As the sticky-note war escalates, and the pressure to choose sides mounts, Frost soon realizes that after this year, nothing will ever be the same (Barnes and Noble).

AR Requirements

- An AR test must be taken for *POSTED*.
- The school will be open over the summer on **THURSDAYS** from June 7th to July 26th. There will be **TWO morning sessions** on Tuesday, June 26th, and Tuesday, July 10th, from 9am to 12pm. Please enter from 5th Street at the door on the side of the school where buses drop off students in the morning (labeled D-4), and proceed to the Computer Lab from there.
- You may also take the test within the first week of school. It will count for a grade to assess your independent reading, but if you do not do well, please do not stress. It is only the start of the year and you will have plenty of opportunities to raise your average as long as you're willing to put in the effort.

Written Assignments:

- Attached you will find **three** assignments for *POSTED*. These will be due on the **second** day of school. Please read and follow the directions carefully.

Discussion Questions:

- At the very end of all of this, you will find a list of discussion questions. These will help to guide your reading and prepare you for our conversations once school starts. They are **NOT** part of the written assignments. You do **NOT** have to type out responses. Refer to them as you read and organize your thoughts for some small and large group exchanges so that you can WOW and IMPRESS your classmates and new literature teacher!!

I will check my email throughout the summer – thomasn@stsusanna.org – so don't hesitate to send me your questions or concerns. I will also be working at Summer AR, so feel free to speak to me there too. I am looking forward to meeting you!

Miss Thomas

Complete these assignments for **POSTED**.

Assignment #1: Create this on paper - any color. If you need a larger piece of paper or small poster board, that is fine too. Please do not use a really large piece of poster board. You may do it all by computer, all by hand (if you are a neat, legible writer and careful worker), or cut and paste technologically or with actual scissors and a glue stick! Include the following info in an engaging way that incorporates ideas from the book (lockers, cell phones, cafeteria tables, bikes etc.) and catches the eye using decoration, color, and neatness:

1. Author
2. Title of book (underline or italicize)
3. Illustration/printed image (use color) of your favorite scene from the book and detailed explanation of why.
4. Brief summary of the plot in your own words. (3-5 sentences)
5. If this book was a color, what would it be and why?
6. Provide two vivid (look this word up) adjectives to describe your novel's main character or topic. Provide text evidence of each by providing the page number AND the excerpt straight from the story (put it in italics to show these are not your words) to prove your point.
7. Who (person or group) would you recommend this novel to and why? Explain your reasoning clearly and completely.

******Presentation counts – use color, decoration, and neatness******

Example (excluding illustrations and presentation) from a former student's work:

1. **Author:** Rodman Philbrick
2. **Title:** *Zane and the Hurricane* (underline or italicize)
3. **Illustration or image (use color) and detailed explanation like the following:** My favorite scene from the book was when they lost their canoe, and Malvina was telling jokes. I like this part because I like telling jokes. Her jokes were actually pretty bad. They were not really funny because they did not make a lot of sense. I really liked this part because for most of the book, it was pretty sad, and they faced a lot of difficulties. Malvina tried to make everyone happier by telling jokes. She can be funny without even trying because of the way she talks. It was nice that she tried to make things better, so they didn't get so down that they didn't want to do anything. They had to keep trying to find a safe place, and they couldn't do that if they all gave up.
4. **Summary:** Zane went to visit his grandmother in New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina hit. He got separated from his grandmother because he was chasing his dog, Bandy. He met up with Mr. Tru and Malvina. This man and young girl traveled with Zane and Bandy in a canoe. They tried to find shelter, food, and other people. They ran into many problems along the way. In the end, they made it to safety, and Zane was able to contact his mother. He safely returned to New Hampshire with his mom and grandmother. Mr. Tru and Malvina were also safe, and they remained friends with Zane.
5. **Color:** If this book was a color, it would be black because there was no power during the hurricane. The wind took out the power, and there was no light.
6. **Vivid Adjectives:** Zane is clever and passionate. Zane is trapped in Miss Trissy's attic. The water is rising fast, and it is really hot. He knows he has to do something fast. He says to himself, *"My mom is always saying don't be mad, be smart. What is the strongest part of the human body? Legs, Zane, legs. You know that. Use your brain. And your feet"* (50-51). He broke the attic vent slats by kicking with both feet over and over again until they were broken, and they could breathe air. Also, Zane cares very much for his dog, Bandy. He jumps out of the church van on his way out of danger to chase after Bandy who jumped out of the vehicle into traffic. Zane says, *"I know in my heart why Bandy jumped out of the van. I can feel what he is feeling. He's running away from what frightens him, trying to get to a place that's safe. And now he's all alone in traffic, with a million cars"* (27).

7. **Recommendation:** I would recommend this book to my cousin, Wyatt. He is a year older than me and enjoys learning about the weather. He likes to read books about natural disasters. Usually he likes non-fiction, but I think this would be a good fiction book for him. Reading this book would tell him a story about people that lived through a hurricane and what it was like. He also loves dogs, so I think he would really like Bandy.

Assignment #2: Read the short biography of Robert Frost along with his poem The Road Not Taken and answer the questions that follow. Print off the questions, circle your answers directly on the paper, and turn that in with the other assignments.

Robert Frost was a four time Pulitzer Prize winning poet and playwright known for his depiction of rural New England life in his work. He was born Robert Lee Frost on March 26th, 1874, in San Francisco, California to William Prescott Frost, Jr., a journalist, and Isabelle Moodie, a Scotswoman. Robert Frost's first 11 years were spent in San Francisco. His father then died of tuberculosis, and the family moved to Lawrence, Massachusetts to live with his grandparents. Robert attended high school in Lawrence and met his future wife, Elinor White, a young woman with whom he shared the title of valedictorian upon graduation. Life was difficult for Robert and his wife, and he remained unknown for the first 40 years of his life. He finally found fame in 1913 while living in England. He returned to the US with invitations to lecture and read his poetry throughout the country. In 1960 Robert Frost was awarded the United States Congressional Gold Medal for his work. It was the highest civilian award possible. He was also asked in 1960 to read at the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy – the first time such an invitation had been extended to a poet. Robert Frost died on January 29th, 1963, at the age of 88, in Boston, Massachusetts. Frost's work is still extremely popular today. His poems deal with simple events and rural settings, but they contain insight into human nature and life.

http://www.softschools.com/facts/authors/robert_frost_facts/2298/

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Name: _____

HR: _____

- 1 Read these lines from the poem.

**“Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both”**

Now study this dictionary entry.

diverge <i>verb</i>	1	To differ from each other in terms of appearance
	2	to extend in different directions
	3	the condition of being mathematically divergent
	4	to differ in a matter of opinion

Which is the correct definition of “diverge” as it is used in the lines above?

- F** definition 1
- G** definition 2
- H** definition 3
- J** definition 4

- 2 What is the speaker’s **problem** in the first stanza of the poem?

- A** He is tired of traveling and wants to rest.
- B** He’s not sure about which road to take.
- C** He cannot see the end of the road he is traveling.
- D** He fears that he may be lost in the woods.

- 3 The **mood** (overall feeling that a piece of writing generates for the reader) author Robert Frost creates in the poem is best described as

- F** playful
- G** reflective / thoughtful
- H** suspenseful / tension-filled
- J** disappointed

- 4 Which of these statements best describes the **theme** (message or lesson from the author) of the poem?

- A** Do not go into the woods alone.
- B** Honesty is always the best policy.
- C** Don’t be afraid to take a chance.
- D** It is best to always follow others.

- 5 What is the **setting** (time and place) of this poem?

- F** The afternoon, near the edge of just one well-worn path in the spring
- G** The morning, near some snow-covered paths in the winter
- H** The evening, near several clear paths in the summer
- J** The morning, near two walking paths in the fall

Assignment #3: In a typed paragraph, respond to the following: Describe a time in life (either past, present, or future) where it would be most appropriate for you to take the “less-traveled road.” In other words, when have you or when might you need to take a chance or stand and make the less popular choice or decision about something because it is the right or better option for you? Be as specific as possible.

Discussion Questions: Remember, these are NOT an assignment. Use them to guide your reading and your thoughts so that you are prepared for some conversations upon our return to school.

1. Frost's mother says, "You find your people and you protect each other from the wolves" (249). How well do Frost, Bench, Deedee, and Wolf fit this description? How does their group change in the course of the book? What other tribes exist at the school? Relate the idea of friend groups to your own experience of school life.
2. Explain the nicknames that Frost and his initial group of friends have, where they came from, and why they matter. What does each nickname tell you about the boy? Discuss the unwanted nickname Rose gets and how she reacts to it.
3. Describe Rose and her personality. How do most kids respond to her? Discuss the impact she has on Frost and his crew. Why does Wolf ask her to lunch the second time? Why do you think Rose and Wolf become friends so quickly?
4. Find examples of how Frost compares middle school to a war zone and specifically how he describes the use of sticky notes as a war. In what ways do the comparisons ring true? In what ways are the school and the sticky note exchanges different from war?
5. What effect does catching the football and making a touchdown have on Bench's life? When Bench and Frost are talking about why Bench changed lunch tables, Bench says, "It's not even *about* you!" (331). What does he mean? Discuss how Frost has misunderstood Bench.
6. First Evan Smalls rides the Gauntlet, and then Rose and Cameron do. Describe the Gauntlet and how the kids at the middle school use it, including Evan. Why does Rose ride it? What's her bet with Cameron? Relate her ride to the "trial by combat" that Deedee mentions (281).
7. Discuss the meanings of the words "I'm sorry" that Rose makes Cameron wear, checking a dictionary for definitions of "sorry." Why does Frost say the note is perfect?
8. What is the significance of the phrase "Total Roman" on Wolf's locker? Who wrote them there, and why? Talk about why Wolf, after he sees the locker, goes home and destroys his models.
9. After the bathroom bullying incident, Rose says to Frost that "telling the principal won't work" (271). Why does she believe that? After the words appear on Wolf's locker, both Bench and Frost do tell the principal. Why do you think they decided to do so? What were the consequences, and was it a good decision?
10. In the end, Wolf decides to go to another school. Why does he make that choice? How does Frost feel about it? Give reasons that it might or might not be a good move for Wolf.
11. "Words are ghosts that can haunt us forever," reads a sticky note on Jason's locker (340). Who put it there, and why? What does it mean? Do you agree? Relate the quote to the fact that Wolf's parents yell at, and verbally fight with, each other. Compare Wolf's parents and how they use words to Frost's parents. How is each boy affected by his parents' use of words?
12. The novel uses imagery and comparisons associated with heroes and knights. For example, Frost describes the sticky notes that other students put on Wolf's newly painted locker as "overlapping like links of chain-mail armor" (339). Discuss that simile and other similar references, and why the author chose them.

