



“How do I know what I think until I see what I say?”
— E.M. Forster

Grade 7 Summer Honors ELA Reading and Writing Assignment (50 points)

Due the first day of school, 2017.

Note to Parents: Please do not “help” your son/daughter with this assignment. I will use this piece of writing as my initial assessment of your child’s writing skills. I will expect him/her to improve substantially over the course of the year. If you assist your child with the writing part, my initial assessment may not be accurate. This could have a negative impact on your child. Also, you can be certain that the grade received on this assignment will NOT hinder your child’s ability to earn an “A” in the class. Please allow – and require – them do this assignment on their own. Thank you!

Description and Explanation

For this assignment, you will choose a book from the list shown below. Your task is to read the book over the summer and write an essay.

Choose **one** of the following novels to read over the summer:

Touching Spirit Bear, Ben Mikhaelsen

Esperanza Rising, Pam Munoz Ryan

Red Scarf Girl, Ji-li Jiang

Feynman, Jim Ottaviani (graphic novel)

Requirements: Your essay must be typed, size 12 Times New Roman, Arial, or Cambria font, double-spaced (skipped lines), and 500 – 1000 words in length. Your essay must be five paragraphs, with an introduction, body, and conclusion. Your introduction must contain a clear **thesis statement** and the conclusion must answer the question, “So what?”

Focus of the Essay: Character Development

In most books, the main character turns out different by the end of the story. He or she changes based on his or her experiences in the story. In some very clear ways, he or she is not the same person they were when the story started.

Choose a character from the story and write about **three important ways the character changes** throughout the book. In other words, explore what the character learns and how the character is different because of his or her experiences. Use text based details to support your claims.

For example, if you claim that the character learns a valuable lesson about life or is more understanding of people, be sure to provide details from the story that specifically support this claim. Also, this would be only one of the three changes you are required to write about. You would need to identify two other ways the character changes and write about those as well. In your conclusion, be sure to answer the question, "So what?" In other words, why are these changes important for readers to understand? What do we, as readers, learn from the changes we see in the character?