

2005 Sequoyah Young Adult Book Award Masterlist
Oklahoma Library Association

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Alvarez, Julia. *Before We Were Free*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Long Booktalk

"One day, in a time not too far in the future," Papi begins, as if he's telling me a bedtime story, "you're going to look back on all this and think, I really was a strong and brave girl."

I shake my head. I'm not so strong or brave, I want to say.

"Oh yes, you are. I know you are," he insists, reading my thoughts. He tips my face up by the chin so I'm looking straight at him. I feel as if he's hypnotizing me. "I want my children to be free, no matter what. Promise me you'll spread your wings and fly."

Anita de la Torre is not sure this is a promise she can make. Anita's family lives in the Dominican Republic during the rein of dictator General Trujillo in 1960. General Trujillo rules with an iron fist. There is no freedom for anyone during this time. Anita's father and uncle are working with an underground movement to rid their country of this evil dictator. Papi wants his family to be free and is willing to do anything, even risking his own life.

During this frightening time, twelve year-old Anita will learn how brave and strong she can be. After the dictator is assassinated, Anita and her mother must go into hiding when her father and uncle are arrested for participating in the assassination of General Trujillo.

While in hiding, Anita writes in her diary about their hiding place at the Mancinis' and what is happening all around her.

"June 6, 1961, Tuesday, early---or so it seems from the light streaming in the bathroom window

Mrs. Mancini says it's a good thing she has always been in the habit of locking their bedroom door in order to get some privacy. Also, she has always cleaned the master bedroom herself, as the help have enough to do what with five kids. Besides, she doesn't trust anyone since she learned of the undercover training at the Domestic Academy. So the Mancinis' habits make their bedroom as safe a hiding place as any private residence can be right now.

The Mancinis have this kind of strange house like an apartment. The first floor is basically a large garage and laundry room and kitchen. They live on the second floor, since it's cooler up here with a gallery running all along the back and stairs going down to the garden.

From their bathroom window, I have a bird's-eye view of the grounds of the embassy. But unlike a bird, I can't fly free . . . except in my imagination.”

Will Anita see freedom and be able to spread her wings and fly like her Papi wanted? What will happen to her father and uncle? Read *Before They Were Free* to see if Anita and her family survive.

Alvarez, Julia. *Before We Were Free*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Short Booktalk

Close your eyes. Imagine your beautiful home, your familiar community, your school, and your close friends. Think of how much you enjoyed the last time you were together. Think of the way the air smells, the breezes blow, the local food tastes. This is home, and you love it!

Now imagine that it is all gone. You are in a strange land with a new language, a new environment, a new school with a new group of classmates. There is nothing familiar, nothing is as you remember it, and yet you consider yourself lucky! This is the story of a twelve year old girl's life torn asunder by corruption in the Dominican Republic's government in 1960-61, her family's involvement in the politics of change, and gut-wrenching fear for their very lives.

A dramatic path from their beautiful family compound, through a traumatic time of hiding in the Italian embassy, and a breathless escape to America is detailed in the first person account of Anita. This is a realistic and compelling account of a girl growing up too quickly while coming to terms with the cost of freedom.

Alvarez, Julia. *Before We Were Free*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 48212

Book Level: 5.6

Points: 8.0

Middle Grades

Correct Answers are "A"

1. Why did Anita celebrate Thanksgiving?
 - a. She attended the American school.
 - b. Christopher Columbus was a local hero.
 - c. Her family used any excuse for a party.
 - d. Christopher Columbus was her relative.

2. Who moved into one of the houses in the Garcia compound after the cousins left?
 - a. Mr. Washburn, from the American Embassy, and his family.
 - b. Members of the secret police.
 - c. Some of the Torres' cousins from the country.
 - d. Anita's school teacher and her family

3. Who was elected President of the United States in 1960?
 - a. John F. Kennedy.
 - b. Richard Nixon.
 - c. Herbert Hoover.
 - d. Bill Clinton.

4. Why is Lucinda sent to the United States to work as a maid and Spanish tutor?
 - a. El Jefe (Trujillo) sent her flowers and is trying to flirt with her.
 - b. She wants to attend Business College.
 - c. She won a free trip to Disney World.
 - d. Her cousins invited her to visit for the summer.

5. What is hidden in the trunk of the Washburn's car?
 - a. Guns to help the rebels overthrow the government
 - b. Christmas presents for the children
 - c. Illegal drugs
 - d. Fruits and vegetables smuggled in from the countryside

6. Who was supposed to take control of the country when Trujillo was killed?
 - a. General Pupo and the army were supposed to help establish the new democratic government.
 - b. The United States would rule the Dominican Republic.
 - c. Papi planned to be the new ruler.
 - d. Mr. Washburn would run the new government.

7. Where did Anita and Mami hide from the SIM?
 - a. They moved into the walk-in closet in the Mancini's bedroom, part of the Italian embassy.
 - b. They hid in the garden shed at the back of the compound.
 - c. They ran to the American embassy.
 - d. The Catholic church offered them sanctuary.

8. How was Mundin disguised?
 - a. He looked like a young girl with blonde hair and an ill-fitting dress.
 - b. He was dressed like a peasant farmer.
 - c. He looked like a U.S. soldier.
 - d. He was disguised as a crew member from a cruise ship.

9. How did Anita and her mother escape the Italian embassy?
 - a. A helicopter plucked them from the embassy grounds and took them to a cargo plane bound for America.
 - b. They joined a religious parade and marched out of the city.
 - c. They hid under a load of bananas.
 - d. They rode in the trunk of the embassy car.

10. What good news does Mr. Washburn bring to the family?
 - a. The dictator's family agreed to leave the island country.
 - b. Disney decided to open a theme park in the Dominican Republic.
 - c. It was safe for the family to return to their island.
 - d. Their maid, Chucha, was coming to join them in New York.

Auch, Mary Jane. *Ashes of Roses*. Holt, 2002.

"My heart swelled with hope and fear at the same time. I had the feeling that I was brought to America for a purpose. I remembered the words of the poem, Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses Here we are America! We're just exactly what ye ordered." (page 9)

When sixteen-year-old Rose Nolan arrived at Ellis Island on February 18, 1911, she knew it would be the start of a new life, but she could never have imagined the extraordinary events she would be a part of in her struggle to become an American. Shortly after their arrival, the Nolan family encounters their first obstacle when baby Joseph falls ill and has to be taken back to Ireland by his father. Depressed by the circumstances that required the remainder of the family to become dependent on reluctant relatives, Rose's mother, too, gives up and returns to her home.

While Rose and her twelve-year-old sister choose to remain in America with their uncle's family, they soon find it impossible to continue living with their unwilling relatives and are relieved when Rose finds them a room with a kind Jewish family. They begin working at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory where they make friends and begin to enjoy life in New York City.

"It had the feel of a special day right from the start. I decided to wear my ashes of roses dress, since we were goin' out after work."

"Isn't that a bit fancy for work?" Gussie asked.

"I want to look nice for when we go out."

Gussie shrugged. "I just hope you don't ruin it."(page 200)

How could anyone have predicted the awful appropriateness of her dress as Rose, her sister, and her friends fight for their lives in one of the worst industrial disasters in U.S. history? To whom and to what can Rose turn when everything around her is in ashes? Read *Ashes of Roses* by Mary Jane Auch to find out!

Auch, Mary Jane. *Ashes of Roses*. Holt, 2002.

Short Booktalk

On March 25, 1911, the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City burned to the ground killing 146 of its workers. *Ashes of Roses* is a fictional account of that tragedy, told by the character Margaret Rose Nolan, one of the "Triangle Girls" who survived.

The excitement of leaving Ireland in search of a better life was dampened when the Nolan family arrived at Ellis Island. Little Joseph, the youngest, was sick and could not remain in America. It was decided that Da would take Joseph back to Ireland until he was well, and Ma, Rose, and Maureen would stay with an uncle until Da returned. A series of events sent Ma back to Ireland also, and left Rose and Maureen in New York City on their own.

After some setbacks in finding a place to live and jobs, Rose and Maureen began to work at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. Working conditions were not the best, and the girls were even locked in the factory once the workday started. However, friendships were being formed and the future was beginning to look brighter.

The fire began around four-thirty just after the quitting bell rang. Due to the poor working conditions, the locked doors, and general panic, many workers did not escape to safety. In the aftermath of this tragedy, Rose became determined to help establish better conditions for factory workers and to aid other new immigrants in their search for a better life in America.

"I'm goin' to reach out and grab this new life in America. With all of my strength, because I was brought here for a purpose! There was a lot that needed to be said about what happened at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company.

And I was goin¹ to tell everybody who would listen." (Page 246)

Auch, Mary Jane. *Ashes of Roses*. Holt, 2002.

Quiz

Reading level 4.4

Word count 58,637

Points 8.0

Upper Grades Fiction

Correct answer is A

1. What landmark greeted immigrants as they entered New York Harbor?
 - a. The Statue of Liberty.
 - b. Coney Island.
 - c. The Empire State Building.
 - d. Broadway.

2. Why did Joseph and his Dad have to travel back to Ireland?
 - a. Joseph had an eye infection.
 - b. Dad changed his mind about America.
 - c. Their grandmother asked them to return.
 - d. They enjoyed the journey on the steamship.

3. Had Uncle Patrick prepared for the arrival of his brother's family?
 - a. No, the letter telling of their arrival was never delivered.
 - b. Yes, he planned to share his apartment with them.
 - c. Yes, he had rented the apartment next door for them.
 - d. No, he was angry they were coming to America.

4. What was Rose's first job?
 - a. Rose made paper roses for Mr. Moscovitz.
 - b. Rose worked in a bakery.
 - c. Rose cleaned house for a rich family.
 - d. Rose taught school in an orphanage.

5. After the big fight in the apartment what did Ma plan to do?
 - a. She decided to take the girls back to Ireland.
 - b. She planned to move into a bigger apartment.
 - c. She planned to make the girls go to college.
 - d. She planned to get a new husband.

6. What did Rose insist that Maureen continue to do?
 - a. Attend school.
 - b. Make paper roses.
 - c. Learn to drink coffee.
 - d. Clean house for the neighbors.

7. What organization were Gussie and her friends organizing?
 - a. A labor union.
 - b. A social committee.
 - c. A volunteer fire fighting crew.
 - d. A rose parade.

8. Why did Rose agree to let Maureen quit school and go to work at the factory?
 - a. They planned to use Maureen's salary to bring the whole family back to America.
 - b. They planned to buy new clothes for themselves.
 - c. They wanted to rent an apartment of their own.
 - d. School was not important to them.

9. What disaster happened in the factory?
 - a. A fire broke out.
 - b. The workers declared a strike.
 - c. The sewing machines broke.
 - d. The manager had a heart attack.

10. Why couldn't the girls get out of the factory quickly?
 - a. All but one of the doors were locked.
 - b. The lights had gone out.
 - c. They got lost in the hallway.
 - d. They were blinded by the smoke.

Bauer, Joan. *Stand Tall*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2002.

Long Booktalk

"And where is home this week?" asked, Mrs. Pierce, the school administrative assistant.

His brain blistered.

"Your parents didn't fill out the multiple-residence sheet that we sent to them in the fall. We need to know where you are, and when, for emergencies."

She handed him a form with multiple boxes for two home addresses, two business addresses, faxes, e-mails, cell phones, beepers.

He handed her the month-long schedule his mother had given him color-coordinated for each week (yellow for when he would be living with her, blue for when he would be living with his father). When life got tough, his mother got organized.

"And we need to know who is the custodial parent-your mother or father."

"They're doing it together even though they've divorced." He said this quietly. "If your parents are co-custodians, then that's a different form." (p. 1-2).

There it was in black and white, just how complicated his life had become. He was the tallest twelve-year-old boy anyone in Ripley had ever known. That's why everyone called him "Tree." Super athletic Jeremy Liggins had given him this nickname in 4th grade. Jeremy's friends got the cool names. When it came to the nonathlete nobodies, the names were not as great--Tree, Mole, and Snot. He figured if he was going to be called a tree, he should at least know how they worked. So he studied the root systems of trees. His grandfather had told him, "You've got to take a thing apart to see what it's made of."

Because of this advice, Tree is able to take apart a lot of bad situations and make the most of them. When his grandfather has his leg amputated, Tree comes up with some ideas for making things convenient for him when he comes home and works hard helping him learn to walk again. He's able to look at the various people in his life and tries to understand them. When a big flood hits his town and devastates his home, he gains strength from his grandfather, family and friends.

Read Joan Bauer's *Stand Tall* to see how everything has a purpose and a tall-twelve-year-old boy can make a difference.

Bauer, Joan. *Stand Tall*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2002.

Short Booktalk

Tree is twelve-years-old and the tallest kid in middle school. No, really, the TALLEST! At six-foot-three and quite possibly still growing, Tree is a rotten basketball player even though he looks like he ought to be the star of the team. He carries his birth certificate around with him to prove he is only a kid.

Tree is having a rough time lately. His parents have just divorced, and Tree lives half the time with his mom and half the time with his dad and grandfather. Both of his older brothers are away at college, and it's up to Tree to try to cope with all these new changes, as well as his usual struggle with his unusual height.

Bauer, Joan. *Stand Tall*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count 34766

Book Level 3.9

Points 5.0

Middle Grades

Correct Answers are "A"

1. Tree got his nickname because:
 - a. He is really tall.
 - b. His last name is Hickory.
 - c. He likes to climb trees.
 - d. He hangs out with a guy called Shrub.

2. Tree's parents are divorced. His mom keeps in touch with her sons on her website:
 - a. Heymom.com.
 - b. Mythree sons.com.
 - c. Laterguys.com.
 - d. Talktome.com.

3. Tree's grandfather was injured in which war?
 - a. Vietnam War.
 - b. Civil War.
 - c. War of 1812.
 - d. War of the Worlds.

4. Tree lives half of the time with his mom and the other half with:
 - a. His grandfather and father.
 - b. His grandmother.
 - c. His brothers.
 - d. A family friend.

5. Sophie wants to know if Tree has a motto. His motto is:
 - a. Treat people the way you want to be treated.
 - b. Buy low, sell high.
 - c. Stay on the sunny side.
 - d. You've got to laugh. If you don't, you'll cry.

6. What is the name of Trees basketball team?
 - a. Pit Bulls.
 - b. Vipers.
 - c. Dolphins.
 - d. Geckos.

7. Tree is babysitting his friend Eli's parrot for a while. The parrot can only say:
 - a. Back off buster.
 - b. You're a genius.
 - c. Reach for the sky.
 - d. You got that right.

8. At the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington D.C., Tree's grandfather:
 - a. Leaves gifts for his dead friends.
 - b. Sings songs for his dead friends.
 - c. Takes off his leg and sets fire to it.
 - d. Cries.

9. During a visit to the vet, Tree's dog Bradley:
 - a. Chased a cat out of the room.
 - b. Died on the table.
 - c. Ran away.
 - d. Bit the doctor.

10. How does Tree express his feelings for his brothers after the flood?
 - a. He saves and cleans their sports awards.
 - b. He lets them sleep in his room.
 - c. He takes them out to dinner.
 - d. He washes their cars.

Cooney, Caroline B. *Goddess of Yesterday*. Delacorte Press, 2002.

Long Booktalk

I was so excited! King Nicander was going to take me for a sailboat ride. My brothers usually got to have all of the adventures, and I usually had to stay at home. Not that day! I didn't know that I was being taken hostage so my father would double the amount of tribute he paid to King Nicander. I was never to see my home or my family again.

Looking back, it is hard to believe that I was only six-years old and for a time cried myself to sleep. I was treated very well, and soon I became the companion to King Nicander's daughter, Callisto. We became good friends and worked together spinning and weaving. Sometimes we played with dolls.

When I was twelve, King Nicander's island was attacked. As the pirates advanced, I started to run, and ran until I was at the edge of a cliff overlooking the sea. When three attackers came close, I jumped off the cliff into the water. I came up from the water between two rocks, and I could see that the castle was burning. No one was left to fight. I was all alone.

On the fifth day after the attack, I ran out of food. Time passed slowly. I prayed to my goddess Medusa. When I finished praying, I looked toward the sea and saw sails coming closer and closer. What should I do? Are these the same attackers as before? If I ran away, I would still be alone on this island. So, I put Medusa in my pocket and walked toward the shore and toward the ships with black sails on which there white horses. I did not know that these were the ships of King Menelaus of Sparta.

King Menelaus came ashore. He asked me to tell him what had happened at this place. I started to cry, and he put his arms around me and kissed my hair. King Menelaus assumed that I was King Nicander's daughter, Princess Callisto. I did not tell him that I was not the princess. He said he would take me home with him to be a companion to his daughter, Hermoine. So, once again, I went with a king to a new land to be a companion to a princess. Except now, I, too, was a princess even though it was all pretend.

Soon after our arrival at the palace of King Menelaus, I was introduced to Hermoine as a new sister. Hermoine was very excited. Then I was introduced as Princess Callisto to the wife of King Menelaus, the beautiful Helen, who was part goddess and part human. She watched me and asked me questions. She did not quite believe that I was Princess Callisto, mostly because of my red hair. She could not remember anyone in "my" family having red hair.

As the Trojan War began, I became an observer when Helen ran off to Troy with her lover Paris, and a participant when I pretended to be yet another princess to save myself and the life of Helen's son. Dear reader, you will find the rest of my story in the book *Goddess of Yesterday*. Please join me there.

Cooney, Caroline B. *Goddess of Yesterday*. Delacorte Press, 2002.

Short Booktalk

"I was six years old when King Nicander came to the island of my birth, demanding tribute and a hostage." (page 1).

Little Anaxandra is the "tribute" taken by King Nicander and brought to his home to be a playmate for his own daughter, Callisto. Anaxandra leaves her former life behind and, taking only the statue of her patron goddess, Medusa, begins a new life on a new island. When she's thirteen, marauding pirates attack and Anaxandra is left as the only survivor.

When she is rescued by King Menelaus of Sparta, Anaxandra boldly assumes the identity of Princess Callisto and once again begins a new life. Unfortunately the king's wife, Helen, does not believe the rescued girl is really Callisto and Anaxandra must take care to stay out of the queen's sight lest she be revealed as an imposter.

When Paris, handsome Prince of Troy, arrives to steal Helen away for himself, Anaxandra finds she must take on a third identity, that of Hermione, Helen's daughter.

Can Anaxandra find the courage to maintain yet another image, appease the gods, and save herself? Read this exciting re-telling of the dramatic and bloody siege of Troy, *Goddess of Yesterday* by Caroline Cooney.

Cooney, Caroline B. *Goddess of Yesterday*. Delacorte Press, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count 71123
Book Level 5.1
Points 11.0
Interest Level Middle Grades
"A" is the Answer

1. At age six, Anaxandra was taken as a tribute and hostage by:
 - a) King Nicander.
 - b) King Menelaus.
 - c) Paris of Troy.
 - d) None of the above.

2. Anaxandra's patron goddess statue is named:
 - a) Medusa.
 - b) Helen.
 - c) Callisto.
 - d) Hermione.

- 3) Helen did not believe Anaxandra was Princess Callisto because:
 - a) She had red hair.
 - b) She had blue eyes.
 - c) She had an extraordinary ability to dance.
 - d) None of the above.

4. Paris and his brother Aeneas came before King Menelaus to request:
 - a) The release of their father's sister, Hesione.
 - b) The return of their father's stolen ring.
 - c) The release of their sister, Callisto.
 - d) All of the above.

5. Helen left Sparta because:
 - a) She fell in love with Paris.
 - b) King Menelaus didn't want her anymore.
 - c) She hated the island of Sparta.
 - d) None of the above.

6. Anaxandra, posing as Callisto, took on the third identity of:
 - a) Hermione.
 - b) Bia.
 - c) Zanthus.
 - d) Medusa.

7. Whom did the crew of the Ophion blame for the storm that blew them off course on their way back to Troy?

- a) Rhodea.
- b) Helen.
- c) Pleis.
- d) Paris.

8. Who did Paris order to die at sea?

- a) Pleis.
- b) Hermione.
- c) Helen.
- d) Zanthus.

9. Why did Helen order that Anaxandra's head be shaved?

- a) Because her red hair reminded Helen of King Menelaus.
- b) Because she had more beautiful hair than Helen.
- c) Because she did not keep little Pleis safe.
- d) All of the above.

10. When did Anaxandra realize she was no longer neutral in the battle for Troy?

- a) When Paris attempted to poison Pleis.
- b) When her hair refused to grow back.
- c) When Cassandra gave her a warning.
- d) When she met King Menelaus.

Farmer, Nancy. *The House of the Scorpion*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2002.

Long Booktalk

Once upon a time there was a small country called Opium. It lay between the giant countries of the United States and Mexico. In this country lived a rich and powerful plantation owner, Matteo Alacran. His house was large and beautiful and dazzling white. His fields were full of pure white flowers that danced in the heat of the sun. The fields were full of slaves (called ejitts) who worked without any will of their own. Their brains had been destroyed by drugs and replaced with computer chips. In this country, on this plantation, we find the House of the Scorpion.

Six year old Matt had always been safe and warm and well cared for in the small house at the edge of the poppy field. He had a nice cozy bed, fresh and delicious well-prepared food. He had the television and toys for company during the day. He had Cecilia to care for him at night. Celia said she loved him, but she wouldn't let him call her Mama. She said he was on loan to her. Now what did that mean? Why was the door padlocked and why was the window nailed shut? Was it to keep something out, or to keep something in? Matt had never been outside of the small house. But things were about to change.

Matt did get out of the cottage. And, he did travel to the other side of the poppy field. Matt did meet the people who lived in the big house. But, Matt did not find the big world to be a better place than the small house at the edge of the poppy field. Matt learned the truth about himself.

Matt was a clone, a living organ donor factory, a perfect copy of 142 year-old Matteo Alacran. He was conceived in a Petri dish and incubated inside of a cow. He was the perfect reproduction of his owner, El Patron. The entire reason for Matt's existence was to prolong the life of his parent.

To the residents of the plantation house, and the servants who worked there, Matt was no better than an animal. He was considered filthy, inhuman, ignorant, and a contaminant to everything with which he came into contact. They were mean and cruel to the clone, as long as they believed El Patron wouldn't find out.

To Matteo Alacran, Matt was beautiful. He was youth and hope and the promise of the future. Matt was his favorite possession, to be pampered and played with. El Patron would not tolerate the abuse or misuse of this copy of himself. Matt was the last of the 10 clones born in staggered sequence that had prolonged his life for more than 140 years. El Patron was getting tired, now. Old friends were gone. The world was changing. He was not ready to harvest from Matt, yet. Matt was safe for now. He had the attention of El Patron.

Matt and Celia moved into a nice apartment in the big house. He took lessons from a tutor and was allowed to play on the piano in the music room. El Patron ordered that he was to be treated as a regular person, a member of the family. But how long would the protection last?

The power of love and the strength of decency enter the story at this point. El Patron becomes gravely ill. The transplants are scheduled, but not performed. Matt is saved from the tragic harvest through the courage and quick thinking of his beloved Celia and the loyal bodyguard Tam Lin. One thing, now, is for certain, he can no longer stay in The House of the Scorpion. He must escape!

The United States offers the promise of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to its citizens. But is that promise extended to clones, too? To leave Opium he must survive a trek across the desert. He must elude the bounty patrols that scoop up illegal immigrants and sell them to the plantations. He must find a way to survive in the United States. The "Five Principles of Good Citizenship" and the "Four Attitudes Leading to Right-Mindedness" offer a promise. Does that land of opportunity hold any hope for a clone?

The House of the Scorpion throws open its doors and draws you inside its rooms filled with a story you won't want to end.

Farmer, Nancy. *The House of the Scorpion*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2002.

Short Booktalk

The empire of drug lord, Matteo Alacran, includes fields of white opium poppies that stretch as far as the eye can see. Uniformed workers bend over the rows, harvesting the juice. It is the future and menial tasks are performed by "eejits", humans who have had computer chips installed in their brains to make them docile. Alacran, or El Patron, as he is called has lived 140 years with the help of transplants from a series of clones. Although the intelligence of clones is usually destroyed at birth, young Matt, the latest of El Patron's doubles, has been spared and grows up in the Alacran family mansion where sometimes he is caged as an animal and sometimes he is pampered as a pet, but always he is kept apart.

"Am I a machine?" Matt blurted out.

"Machine? Oh, no."

"Then how was I made?"

Tam Lin laughed. "A long, long time ago some doctors took a piece of skin from El Patron. They froze it so it would keep. Then about eight years ago they took that bit of skin and grew it into a whole new El Patron. Only they had to start at the beginning with a baby. That was you." (page 80)

Gradually, Matt comes to realize that he is a clone for El Patron and that his fate is sealed by the old man's failing health. When El Patron suddenly dies, Matt's fears are complete.

"Have it put to sleep!"

"Yes sir."

"What do you mean?" cried Matt. "El Patron wouldn't want that! He had me educated. He wanted me to help run the country."

"You poor fool. El Patron had seven other clones exactly like you, each one educated and believing he was going to run the country." (page 238)

It is only through the kindness of two adults, Celia, the cook, and Tam Lin, the bodyguard, that Matt is able to escape and flee. His relief at leaving the country of Opium is short-lived however, when he is picked up by the Farm Patrol, detained with other "lost children," and placed in a work camp.

Can Matt escape a second time, return to Opium and try to right the wrongs of the past? What has happened to the kindly Tam Lin and the sympathetic Celia? If Matt can reach his former country, will he then be allowed to take his rightful place and transform it for good? Find the answers to these questions and more in Nancy Farmer's *The House of the Scorpion*.

Farmer, Nancy. *The House of the Scorpion*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 10214

Book Level: 5.1

Points: 15

Upper Grades

Correct Answers are "A"

1. Who is Matteo Alacran?
 - A. A clone.
 - B. A physician.
 - C. A scientist.
 - D. An eejit.
2. What typically happens to clones at birth?
 - A. Their intelligence is blunted.
 - B. They are given enzymes for fast growth.
 - C. They are given to their parents.
 - D. Their intelligence is enhanced.
3. As a baby, where does Matt live?
 - A. With Celia in a secluded shack.
 - B. With his parents in the big house.
 - C. With his family in the village.
 - D. With Celia in the city.
4. For what does Matt discover clones are used?
 - A. Harvesting of vital organs.
 - B. Entertainment.
 - C. Companionship.
 - D. Slavery.
5. Who is Tam Lin?
 - A. El Patron's bodyguard.
 - B. Matt's gardener.
 - C. Celia's cook.
 - D. El Patron's chauffer.
6. What is the name of Maria's dog?
 - A. Furball.
 - B. Fluffy.
 - C. Frankie.
 - D. Patches.

7. What happens to most people who cross the border?
 - A. They were turned into eejits.
 - B. They were sent back to their own country.
 - C. They were imprisoned.
 - D. They were killed.

8. What drug is harvested on El Patron's empire?
 - A. Opium.
 - B. Marijuana.
 - C. Tobacco.
 - D. Cocaine.

9. Who binds Matt in duct tape but saves him from the eejit pens?
 - A. Tam Lin.
 - B. El Patron.
 - C. Tom.
 - D. Donald.

10. What do the orphans harvest in the factory?
 - A. Plankton.
 - B. Clones.
 - C. Fetuses.
 - D. Organs.

Grimes, Nikki. *Bronx Masquerade*. Dial Books, 2002.

Long Booktalk

Tyrone:

“School ain’t nothin’ but a joke. My moms don’t want to hear that, but if it weren’t for Wesley and my other homeys, I wouldn’t even be here, aiight? These white folk talking ‘bout some future-like I got one! And Raynard agreeing--like he’s smart enough to know! From what I hear, that boy can’t hardly read! Anyway, it’s them white folk that get me with this future mess. Like Steve, all hopped up about working on Broadway and telling me I should think about getting with it too.

Asked me if I ever thought about writing plays. ‘Fool! What kinda question is that?’ I said.

He threw his hands up and backed off a few steps. ‘All I’m saying is, you’re a walking drama, man. You got that down pat, so maybe you should think about putting it on paper.’

When that boy dyed his hair, I b’lieve some of that bleach must’ve seeped right into his brain. I grind my teeth and lower my voice. ‘Boy, get out of my face,’ I tell him. He finally gets the message and splits.

I’m ticked off that he even got me thinking about such nonsense as Broadway.

White folk! Who they think they kidding? A Black man’s got no chance in this country. I be lucky if I make it to twenty-one with all these fools running around with AK-47s. Here I am one of the few kids I know whose daddy didn’t skip out on him, and he didn’t even make it to thirty. He was doing okay till he got blown away on a Saturday. Blam! Another statistic in a long line of drive-bys. Life is cold. Future? What I got is right now, right here, spending time with my homeys. Wish there was some future to talk about. I could use me some future.

I’m just about ready to sleep off the whole year when this teacher starts talking about poetry. And he rattles off a poem by some white guy named Dylan Thomas that sounds an awful lot like rap. Now, I know me some rap, and I start to thinking I should show Mr. Ward what rap is really all about. So I tell him I’ve got a poem I’d like to read. ‘Bring it on Friday,’ he says. ‘As a matter of fact, from now on, I’ll leave time for poetry readings at the end of every month. We’ll call them Open Mike Fridays.’

Next thing I know, I’m digging my old rap poems out of my dresser drawer and bringing them to school. I’m thinking it can’t hurt to share them, even if there’s no chance I’ll ever get to be a songwriter. After all, it’s the one thing I could see myself doing if there really was a future. And I’m thinking that maybe there could be if I wanted it bad enough. All of a sudden, I realize I do.”

Tyrone is one of eighteen students in Mr. Ward's English class. When Mr. Ward starts Open Mike Fridays, in which students can read their poetry, each student must decide whether to participate and risk the chance of letting others see behind their masquerade. Read **BRONX MASQUERADE** by Nikki Grimes to see if each student will reveal his or her true self to each other as well as to themselves.

Grimes, Nikki. *Bronx Masquerade*. Dial Books, 2002.

Short booktalk

What do poetry and high school students have in common? Ask the students in Mr. Ward's English class, or come to Open Mike Fridays where students can read their poetry aloud to the class. The eighteen students are not required to read their poetry aloud, but they can take a risk and put their innermost thoughts and feelings out there for all to hear and feel.

Tyrone: "Life is cold. Future? I could use me some future." (Page 8)

Janelle Battle: "I wish, I wish, I wish. God, I wish people could see me on the inside. I know I'm beautiful there." (Page 48)

Leslie Lucas: "Last month, Mr. Ward gave our class an assignment to write a poem about what frightens us most. The scariest thing I can think of now is being all alone in the world." (Pages 53-54)

Tanisha Scott: "I am not a skin color or a hank of wavy hair. I am a person, and if they don't get that, it's their problem." (Page 76)

Come and join Mr. Ward's English class in the book *Bronx Masquerade* and discover how most of us are more alike than different

Grimes, Nikki. *Bronx Masquerade*. Dial Books, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 24229

Book Level: 4.5

Points: 4.0

Upper Grades

Correct Answers are "A"

1. What subject inspired the poetry readings in Mr. Ward's class?
 - a. Harlem Renaissance.
 - b. Women's studies.
 - c. Vietnam War.
 - d. Shakespeare.

2. Raul Ramirez is a visual artist. His poem Zorro was written:
 - a. In the shape of a Z.
 - b. In the shower.
 - c. In paint.
 - d. On canvas.

3. Which one of the students becomes the main narrator of the story?
 - a. Tyrone Bittings.
 - b. Lupe Algarin.
 - c. Amy Moscovitz.
 - d. Mai Tren.

4. Devon Hope writes a poem called *Bronx Masquerade*. What name does he ask to be called?
 - a. Surprise
 - b. Homey
 - c. Wolfman
 - d. Poet

5. Janelle Battle says that reading poetry at Open Mike Friday is almost like:
 - a. Acting.
 - b. Sleeping.
 - c. Singing.
 - d. Dancing.

6. What is Devon reading in the cafeteria that gets him ignored?
 - a. Poetry.
 - b. History.
 - c. Psychology.

- D. math.
7. What does Diondra Jordan do in Mr. Ward's room during lunch?
- Draw.
 - Sleep.
 - Aerobics.
 - Cry.
8. What does Steve Ericson want to do as a career?
- Set designer.
 - Write poetry.
 - Teach.
 - Missionary.
9. Porscha Johnson's first Open Mike poem was:
- A letter to her mother.
 - A grocery list.
 - A love letter.
 - An essay on her name.
10. Tyrone spoke to the assembly about what Open Mike had meant to him. He said:
- "We're not as different as I thought."
 - "We argue, but it's ok."
 - "Some of the poetry stinks."
 - "We'll never do this again."

Hiaasen, Carl. *Hoot*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Long Booktalk

"Being the new kid, Roy always sat alone, at the end of the table, whenever he was in the cafeteria. Roy was an old pro at being the new kid; Trace Middle was the sixth school he had attended since he'd started going to school. Coconut Cove was the tenth town his family had lived in since Roy could remember." (page 9)

Every new school seemed to have the same routine, bullies on the bus before school, table by himself at lunch, no real friends. If Dana Matherson hadn't mashed his face against the bus window that one day, Roy would never have met the strange, running, barefoot boy named Mullet Fingers or his tall, tough, bully-beating sister, Beatrice. He would never have discovered the burrowing owls living in the lot on the corner of East Oriole Avenue, nor would he have embarked on the most exciting adventure of his life.

"Roy stood rooted in the center of the road. He had an important decision to make, and quickly. From one direction came the police car; running in the other direction were his two friends. Well, the closest things to friends that he had in Coconut Cove. Roy drew a deep breath and dashed after them. Roy didn't think he'd done anything wrong, but he wondered if he could get in trouble for helping Mullet Fingers, a fugitive from the school system. The kid was only trying to take care of some owls. How could that possibly be a crime? (page 128)

Will Mother Paula's All-American Pancake House be built over the burrowing owls' habitat? Will anyone discover who is putting the alligators in the Porta Potties and terrorizing the guard dogs with water moccasins? For a story full of offbeat humor and intriguing characters, read Carl Hiaason's *Hoot*!

Hiaasen, Carl. *Hoot*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Short Booktalk

Yeah, I'm the new kid again. My name is Roy Eberhardt. We move a lot. We moved here to Coconut Grove, Florida, from Montana. That's why some of the kids call me "Tex". Dana Matheson, the school bully, calls me "Cowgirl." Still, if Dana hadn't been trying to squeeze the life out of me by mashing my face up against the window of the school bus that day, I never would have seen the mysterious running boy.

The kid wasn't a student at Trace Middle School with the rest of us. We'd have noticed a shoeless, ragged, wild-looking boy like that. Later, I learned the whole story. It included some ecological warfare and some minor acts of civil disobedience, as my father would say. It would all be on the behalf of a tiny-little animal called the burrowing owl. However, for today it was enough to be the new kid, the bully's new favorite and the new friend of the school's scariest girl!

Hiaasen, Carl. *Hoot*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 61113

Book Level: 5.2

Points 9.0

Middle Grades

Correct Answers are "A"

1. What is the name of the restaurant that will be built on the site that has been vandalized?
 - a. Mother Paula's All American Pancake House.
 - b. Mom's International House of Pancakes.
 - c. Mother's Good Food Café.
 - d. Last Chance Pancake House and Gas Station.

2. Where is Roy when he first sees the mysterious running boy?
 - a. School bus.
 - b. His bedroom.
 - c. The mall.
 - d. The golf course.

3. What kind of owl lives at the construction site?
 - a. Burrowing owl.
 - b. Great horned owl.
 - c. White owl.
 - d. Night owl.

4. Why was Officer Delinko sleeping at the construction site?
 - a. His windows were painted black.
 - b. He had taken some cold medicine.
 - c. It was ok for him to be sleeping there.
 - d. He had gotten locked out of his house.

5. Roy decides to stand up to the bully Dana because:
 - a. If he didn't, the bullying would never end.
 - b. He really wanted to hurt Dana.
 - c. He wanted to impress Beatrice.
 - d. He wanted to be suspended in order to have more time to look for the mysterious running boy.

6. Who is Mullet Fingers?
 - a. Beatrice's brother.
 - b. Dana's brother.
 - c. Officer Delinko's son.

- d. The Mayor's cousin.
7. Roy tells his father about the owl situation. His father:
- a. Agrees to think about it.
 - b. Wants to join in on the vandalism.
 - c. Will write letters of protest.
 - d. Will do nothing.
8. Who did Curly capture at the construction site?
- a. Dana.
 - b. Beatrice.
 - c. Roy.
 - d. Mullet Fingers.
9. What current event did Roy share with his history class?
- a. the restaurant groundbreaking.
 - b. the Olympics.
 - c. the national deficit situation.
 - d. Roy forgot to bring one.
10. What was missing from the construction permit file for the restaurant
- a. EIS.
 - b. EIEIO.
 - c. TDY.
 - d. ASAP.

Klass, David. *Home of the Braves*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002.

Long Booktalk

This was to have been my best year, my senior year, my Captain of the Lawndale High School soccer team year. All of that "best year" stuff was before Kris gave me the news. Kris was my friend who lived across the street, my almost girlfriend, and she was waiting to tell me that a new student from Brazil had just enrolled in our school. My heart beat an extra beat. Not all Brazilians played soccer. Boy! was I wrong about that. This kid, Antonio Silva, had played on the Brazilian national youth team. He was even a striker.

Antonio Silva was a Phenom. He was good-looking. He had balance and poise. He beat up the school bullies when they started shoving him around. He was a striker who could really play soccer. In addition to all of that, he drove a "nice set of wheels," a classic powder blue Mustang convertible. To cap it off, when I ask him to join our soccer team, he said, "No." He was arrogant and a great big JERK.

My best friend was Ed the Mouse McBean. He was very smart, funny, and could do perfect imitations. He was the starting right wing on the soccer team until our coach announced that Antonio Silva would be starting on the team now. This was the same Antonio Silva who said our team didn't know how to play soccer. "Life can be just plain unfair."

Most high school students have to deal with a lot of issues at the same time. Take for instance, me. The Phenom was now dating my almost girlfriend Kris, and it was apparent that I had blown my chances with her. Ed the Mouse was "marked" by the bullies, and his family moved away. My dad was going out with some new woman. Homework did not go away. Our school became like a prison because the discipline was so tight, and the community became so divided about school issues that physical violence erupted. And soccer! Well, I had to admit that Antonio Silva was a much better soccer player than I was. The coach even wanted to make him co-captain.

But, guess what? Sometimes "all's well that ends well." Read the *Home of the Braves* to discover if this story has that kind of ending

Klass, David. *Home of the Braves*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002.

It's Joe Brickman's senior year. He is looking forward to being captain of the soccer team and maybe even asking his next-door neighbor, Kristine, out for a date. All of that changes when Brazilian Antonio Silva arrives and steals Kristine's heart AND starts on the soccer team.

While Joe must deal with this new development in his life, it's what happens to his friend Mouse that causes Joe greater concern. Mouse is being picked on at school and Mouse decides to do something about it. When Joe figures out Mouse's plan for revenge, Joe must decide what to do to help his friend.

Can Joe help Mouse before it's too late? Read *Home of the Braves* by David Klass to find out.

Klass, David. *Home of the Braves*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 71766

Book Level: 6.1

Points: 12.0

Upper Grades

"A" is the Answer

1. What sport does Joe Brickman play?

- a. soccer.
- b. wrestling.
- c. football.
- d. basketball.

2. What country is Antonio Silva from?

- a. Brazil.
- b. Ukraine.
- c. Argentina.
- d. Mexico.

3. Who did Tony "Jaws" Borelli dunk in the lake at the golf course?

- a. Mouse.
- b. Charley the Fish.
- c. Joe.
- d. Antonio.

4. What was Antonio's nickname?

- a. Phenom.
- b. Tony.
- c. Flash.
- d. Phantom.

5. Who did Slag "mark"?

- a. Mouse.
- b. Charley the Fish.
- c. Joe.
- d. Antonio.

6. What was the town meeting about?

- a. The school's new zero tolerance policy.
- b. Firing the mayor.
- c. Firing the soccer coach.
- d. None of the above.

7. What happened at the end of the town meeting?
- a. A near riot broke out.
 - b. Nothing happened.
 - c. The coach was fired.
 - d. The mayor lost his job.
8. What happened to Mouse after a soccer game?
- a. Mouse was kidnapped and put in the supply closet.
 - b. He was interviewed by the media.
 - c. He was expelled from school.
 - d. Nothing happened.
9. Joe goes to interview for:
- a. A one-year program to study marine biology.
 - b. A job.
 - c. Entrance at a local college.
 - d. Student assistant for Mr. Desoto, the science teacher.
10. What was the name of the girl Joe liked?
- a. Kris.
 - b. Joan.
 - c. Ann.
 - d. Diane.

Lubar, David. *Dunk*. Clarion Books, 2002.

Long Booktalk

"His voice ripped the air like a chain saw. The harsh cry sliced straight through my guts the first time I heard it. The sound cut deep, but the words cut deeper. He shredded any fool who wandered near the cage. He drove people wild. He drove them crazy. Best of all, he drove them to blow wads of cash for a chance to plunge his sorry butt into a tank of slimy water."

"This was just about the coolest thing I'd ever seen--which made it that much more amazing, since I lived in one of the coolest places on the planet and I'd seen some of the freakiest things man or nature had ever created." (p. 1)

"Hey!" the Bozo shouted at a guy near the front of the small crowd. "Where'd you get that wig? You scalp it off a poodle?" (p. 2) "Yeah, you," the Bozo shouted, pointing straight at the guy, turning himself into a nightmare version of an Uncle Sam poster. "What's the matter? Did you get glue in your ears when you pasted on that wig?" (p.3)

"Hey lady," he said, staring at a woman who was laughing at him. "I may be wet, but you're funny looking. And tomorrow, guess what? I'll be dry." He paused for an instant as the crowd grew quiet, then added, "Yeah, I'll be dry, and you'll still be funny looking." (p. 5)

"For the first time in my life, I knew something for dead certain. Some way, somehow, I had to have a turn. Not throwing balls at the target. I wasn't going to waste money trying to dunk the Bozo. No, I wanted to be on the other side. I wanted to make the marks dance like puppets on a string. I wanted to shout and scream at the world from the safety of a cage. I wanted to be the Bozo."

So begins Chad's summer on the boardwalk, playing games, looking for the girl that worked at the Cat-a-pult game, hanging with his friends. Then everything seems to fall apart. His mom rents out the room above them to none other than the Bozo. He gets harassed by the beat cops on the boardwalk, just because they think he's a no-account like his father. The Cat-a-pult girl starts hanging out with Chad's arch-enemy, a drug dealer, and his best friend Jason gets extremely sick.

The sign above one of the boardwalk shops claimed, "We have whatever you want". "No you don't." I grabbed the bars on either side of me. "What do I want?" I said. I didn't know. I wanted Jason to be okay. I wanted Gwen to smile at me again. I wanted Mom to be happy. Those were things I wanted right now. But what about tomorrow or next year? What did I want? I didn't have a clue. Everyone else knew what they wanted. Everyone. Jason had a goal. Corey had his career all planned out. Mike had the army. What did I have??? (p.133).

Read *Dunk* by David Lubar to see if Chad finds what he wants and if he gets a chance to sit on the seat above that slimy water tank to yell, "Hey girlie, girlie! You like a blind date!"

Lubar, David. *Dunk*. Clarion Books, 2002.

Short Booktalk

"His voice ripped the air like a chain saw. The harsh cry sliced straight through my guts the first time I heard it. The sound cut deep, but the words cut deeper. He shredded any fool who wandered near the cage. He drove people wild. He drove them crazy. Best of all, he drove them to blow wads of cash for a chance to plunge his sorry butt into a tank of slimy water." (p.1).

Chad loves listening to the Bozo on the Jersey shore Boardwalk. He wishes he could scream at the world from the safety of a cage and knows he'd make a great one. "Hey, lady. I may be wet, but you're funny looking. And tomorrow, guess what: I'll be dry, and you'll still be funny looking! Hey, man, where'd you get that wig? You scalp it off a poodle? Yeah, you! What's the matter? Did you get glue in your ears when you pasted on that wig?" (Lubar 4-5).

As always, the mark pulls out his wallet, takes out a couple of dollars, and starts throwing balls at the smart-mouthed clown. Once in a while, the target is hit and the heckler is dropped into a tub of filthy water. Usually, however, the customer misses, continues hearing the Bozo's harassing wisecracks, and keeps handing over money to buy balls. Being a Bozo is an art, and 16-year-old Chad wants to learn.

Chad is depressed and full of anger. His mother is overworked, seldom home, and rents their upstairs rooms to boarders. His deadbeat father has left, his best friend is dying of a rare disease, he loses his girl to another guy, and most adults think Chad is lazy. However, their new tenant, Malcolm, happens to be a college drama professor with a unique summer job. He is the annoying Bozo at the dunk tank.

Will Chad allow Malcolm into his life? Does he learn the difference between laughter fueled by anger that cuts like a knife and humor that heals? Will Chad Accomplish his goal, let go of his rage, and become a dunk-tank Bozo? For answers, read *Dunk*, a well-written, page-turning novel by David Lubar.

Lubar, David. *Dunk*. Clarion Books, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 63068

Book Level: 3.8

Points: 9.0

Upper Grades

Correct Answers are "A"

1. What job on the boardwalk does Chad dream of having?
*A. The Bozo.
B. An arcade worker.
C. A vendor.
D. A janitor.
2. What does the gift shop owner accuse Chad of stealing?
*A. A pair of sunglasses.
B. Money.
C. A walkman.
D. Headphones.
3. Why is Chad angry with Malcolm?
*A. Malcolm witnessed the theft and didn't proclaim Chad's innocence.
B. Malcolm stole money from the gift shop.
C. Malcolm hit Chad.
D. Malcolm was rude to Chad.
4. What is Chad's first job at the dunk tank?
*A. Ball collector.
B. Bozo.
C. Gopher.
D. Money-collector.
5. Who did Chad use to set-up Malcolm?
*A. Stinger.
B. Jason.
C. Doc.
D. His mother.
6. At what ride does Chad keep looking for Gwen?
*A. Cat-a-Pult.
B. Tilt-a-Whirl.
C. Merry-Go-Round.
D. Ferris Wheel.

7. Who poses as Chad's father at the police station?

- *A. Malcolm.
- B. Jason.
- C. Doc.
- D. Bob.

8. Why is Chad depressed?

- *A. All of the above.
- B. His girl is seeing another guy.
- C. His best friend is dying.
- D. His deadbeat father has left.

9. How does Chad help Jason during his sickness?

- *A. Shares humorous books and videos with him in the hospital.
- B. Takes over his summer job while he is gone.
- C. Runs errands for him while he is in the hospital.
- D. Leaves him alone so he can get well.

10. Who made the video of Chad as Bozo?

- *A. Corey.
- B. Malcolm
- C. Gwen.
- D. Jason.

Murphy, Claire Rudolf. *Free Radical*. Clarion Books, 2002.

Long Booktalk

Luke McHenry loves baseball, and because Alaska has never-ending daylight at this time of year, he can play and play and play. Luke also loves living in Alaska, and this summer Luke plans to work hard enough to be part of the All-Star team in Fairbanks. However, little does he know that his mom has plans that will affect not only her, but her family as well.

Thirty-one years ago, Luke's mom was involved in a violent anti-Vietnam War protest activity that accidentally killed a college student. By hiding out in Alaska far from the law in the lower Forty-eight States, she has managed to evade the consequences of her youthful actions. She knows that the decision to turn herself in will include some prison time. Luke and his stepfather must now learn how to deal with this knowledge and these painful realities.

Luke believes that his mother could heal faster from this experience if she were to meet with the family of the student who was killed. The meeting, the trial, and the sentencing all provide opportunities for everyone, including Luke, to find acceptance and the beginning of closure.

Murphy, Claire Rudolf. *Free Radical*. Clarion Books, 2002.

Short Booktalk

The 1960's were an interesting time. Young people wore funny clothes, smoked funny cigarettes, reveled in psychedelic music and large outdoor concerts. They protested the Vietnam War and any other cause they felt to be unjust. The 1960's were an interesting time, but they're over--aren't they?

Not for 15 year-old Luke McHenry. He discovers that his shy, introverted mother, Mary Margaret, was involved in a violent protest that resulted in the tragic death of an innocent student. She has spent the last 31 years hiding in Alaska. Wracked with guilt and eager to set things right, she plans to travel to California to turn herself in. A plea bargain has been arranged, but her penalty will involve some prison time.

Luke's world is rocked! The things he thought he knew to be true are not as he once believed. The mother he thought he knew and understood turns out to be someone quite different! The sports victories and peer acceptance that once stood as his ultimate goals have lost some of their glamour. Gradually, Luke learns to accept the harsh reality that the events in our lives, the choices we make for good or for bad, have consequences that reach far beyond the moment.

Murphy, Claire Rudolf. *Free Radical*. Clarion Books, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 43435

Book Level: 4.4

Points: 6.0

Upper Grades

Correct Answers are "A"

1. What toy did Luke's mother never allow him to play with?
 - a. A gun.
 - b. A dog.
 - c. A baseball bat.
 - d. A doll.

2. What made Amy different than Luke's other friends?
 - a. She was confined to a wheelchair.
 - b. She spoke with a British accent.
 - c. She was in high school.
 - d. She liked to cook gourmet foods.

3. What was Mary Margaret's big secret?
 - a. She was hiding from the FBI because a bomb she planted killed an innocent college student.
 - b. She had robbed a bank.
 - c. She had cheated on a test.
 - d. She had stolen a car.

4. What sport did Luke play?
 - a. Baseball.
 - b. Football.
 - c. Hockey.
 - d. Tennis..

5. What national park did Luke and the team visit in San Francisco?
 - a. Alcatraz Island.
 - b. Yellowstone National Park.
 - c. Fisherman's wharf.
 - d. Haight-Asbury district.

6. Why did Luke's mom have to wear a disguise to watch his games in San Francisco?
 - a. She didn't want to be spotted by the FBI.
 - b. She worried about getting sunburn.
 - c. She didn't want to make Luke nervous.

d. She enjoyed being mysterious.

7. Did Luke go to court with his mother when she surrendered?

a. Yes.

b. No.

c. He tried, but arrived at the courtroom too late.

d. He watched the proceedings on closed circuit TV.

8. Whom did Luke meet at the courthouse?

a. His mother's family.

b. His coach.

c. The FBI agents who were searching for her.

d. Amy.

9. Why did Mary Margaret agree to meet with the Dolans?

a. To apologize for her part in the death of their son.

b. To make new friends.

c. To sell her car.

d. To see what they looked like.

10. Where did Mary Margaret's family think she was for 31 years?

a. They didn't know where she was.

b. They thought she worked at Disneyland.

c. They thought she lived in Mexico.

d. They thought she had died.

Park, Linda Sue. *When My Name Was Keoko*. Clarion Books, 2002.

Long Booktalk

"Nobody ever told me anything. I always had to find out for myself. But at least I was good at it. You had to do two opposite things: be quiet and ask questions. And you had to know when to be quiet and who to ask." (p.2)

"They'll never carry it out. They're masters of organization. I knew who 'they' were. The Japanese. Whenever there was talk that I wasn't supposed to hear, it was almost always about the Japanese. A long time ago, when Abuji (my father) was a little boy and Uncle just a baby, the Japanese took over Korea. That was in 1910. Korea wasn't its own country anymore. The Japanese made a lot of new laws. One of the laws was that no Korean could be the boss of anything. All our lessons were in Japanese. Hardly any books or newspapers were published in Korean. People weren't even supposed to tell old Korean folktales. Every once in a while another new law was announced. I decided that this must be the rumor-Abuji and Uncle had heard about a new law." (p3-4)

"By order of the Emperor, all Koreans are to be graciously allowed to take Japanese names." This is how Sun-hee Kim becomes Keoko Kaneyama. It is just one more step in a familiar process, but somehow it changes everything.

When World War II comes to Korea, Keoko and her older brother begin to see changes. Soldiers are everywhere. Their school days are spent on preparations for the war. There are neighborhood accountings where everyone is called out of their houses and counted. Through all of this, Keoko and her family try to hold on to some shred of their Japanese heritage. Keoko does so by asking to learn the ancient art of Japanese writing. Her uncle prints an underground Japanese newspaper, and her brother takes a chance to help his beloved country by joining the Japanese kamikazes.

Tense moments, loss and love are all a part of this powerful novel that looks at a little known part of World War II history. Read *When My Name was Keoko* to see how Keoko and her family survive life-and-death secrets of a family at war.

Park, Linda Sue. *When My Name Was Keoko*. Clarion Books, 2002.

Short Booktalk

The Japanese ruled Korea for more than 30 years. They took away the Koreans' freedom, their language, their names, their food. Their sons were conscripted into the Japanese army. Japan never took away the Korean spirit, however. It survived in the hearts of the Korean people.

Two stories are entwined into this novel. One is the story of a nation occupied but not conquered. The other is the story of a family ripped apart but not divided. Keoko and her brother Nobuo grow up in a land controlled by the Japanese army and attend a school where the curriculum is controlled by the Japanese emperor. Nonetheless, their family roots go deep into the Korean soil. With courage and a spirit of adventure, they struggle to maintain their national heritage, their family structure, and regain their independence from Japan.

Park, Linda Sue. *When My Name Was Keoko*. Clarion Books, 2002.

Quiz

Word count 54951

Book Level 4.6

Points 8.0

Middle Grades

Correct answers are "A"

1. Was Keoko a Japanese or Korean name?
 - a. Japanese.
 - b. Korean.
 - c. Both.
 - d. Neither.

2. What was Uncle's business?
 - a. A print shop.
 - b. A bicycle repair shop.
 - c. Rice merchant.
 - d. A middle school teacher.

3. What did Sun-hee teach Mrs. Ahn?
 - a. How to count to five in Japanese.
 - b. How to cook rice.
 - c. How to ride a bike.
 - d. How to grow vegetables.

4. What happened to Tae-Yul's bicycle?
 - a. Japanese soldiers took it away from him.
 - b. It crashed into a tree.
 - c. He gave it to an orphanage.
 - d. He painted it purple.

5. What warning did Tomo deliver to Sun-hee?
 - a. Her Uncle was in danger.
 - b. The rice supplies were low.
 - c. The Americans were invading.
 - d. She was going to fail her spelling test.

6. What are Kamikaze pilots?
 - a. They are suicide pilots.
 - b. They are excellent mechanics.
 - c. They train other pilots.
 - d. They fly entertaining aerobatic maneuvers.

7. Why did Tae-Yul leave home?
 - a. He joined the Japanese army.
 - b. He went to the mountains to chop wood.
 - c. He went to college.
 - d. He got married.

8. What assignment was Tae-Yul given in the Army?
 - a. Kamikaze pilot.
 - b. Cook.
 - c. Artillery soldier.
 - d. Sailor.

9. How did America bring the war with Japan to an end?
 - a. Atomic bombs were dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, Japan.
 - b. A peace treaty was negotiated.
 - c. Korea and America attacked Japan.
 - d. Australia and America attacked Korea.

10. What did Abuji (father) do to help the resistance during the Japanese occupation of Korea?
 - a. Wrote articles for Uncle's newspaper.
 - b. Delivered newspapers to secret locations.
 - c. Smuggled food to Korean prisoners.
 - d. Taught Korean language to private students in the evening.

Philbrick, Nat. *Revenge of the Whale: the True Story of the Whaleship Essex*. Putnam's, 2002.

Long Booktalk

In 1819, Thomas Nickerson was 14 years-old, and ready for the sea! After what had seemed an endless wait, he was stepping aboard the whaleship Essex ready to serve as cabin boy on this big venture! This ship, one of a fleet of more than 70 Nantucket whaleships, would prowl the Atlantic and Pacific oceans stalking the giant sperm whales and rendering the precious oil from their bodies. Nantucket was fast becoming one of the wealthiest towns in America because of their whaling industry. In the week that the Essex sailed out of Nantucket and out into the open sea, nine other whaleships left the same wharf. None of the sailors assembled into those ships could have imagined the future that lay before the crew of the whaleship Essex.

After several months of fruitless searching and encountering dramatic storms upon the sea, 1500 miles west of the Galapagos and just 40 miles south of the equator, the lookout on the Essex sighted spouts. The chase ships were launched and soon three whales had been harpooned. That is when the ultimate drama began to unfold. It had never happened before, but on November 20, 1820, the unthinkable occurred. An 85 foot male sperm whale weighing approximately 80 tons attacked the whaleship Essex! It rammed the sides of the ship, knocking sailors off their feet and sending supplies skittering across the deck. It swam under the ship and thumped the bottom so severely the keel was broken. The giant whale attacked the ship again and again until the Essex was doomed to fall to the bottom of the sea. Once this act of revenge was completed, the whale turned and swam off, never to be seen again. Could this have been in response for the agony the whalers brought to the members of his pod?

As the Essex sank to the bottom of the sea, twenty sailors scrambled into three small ill-equipped harpoon boats, and thus began three months of unbelievable agony. At the start they tried to keep the three vessels together. The ship's officers each took command of one boat. The meager supplies and navigation equipment they salvaged were evenly divided. Responsibilities were assigned so that half the crews slept while the other half kept watch. Food supplies were rationed and plans for their rescue were spiritedly discussed. The small ships were equipped with sails and a rudder; so the vessels did not drift aimlessly. Discipline helped maintain hope and sanity. However, days and weeks and months passed as they floated through a sea of trials.

Now insert yourself into this nightmare. Imagine that you are cramped into an open boat with half a dozen shipmates. The bread is gone, the water is gone, and a shipmate has just died from starvation. You still have the skills to sail to a safe landfall, but where will you get the strength?

This chilling and very true story contains action and courage and stamina beyond anything a storyteller could imagine! It is said that Herman Melville read of this event and was inspired to create his dramatic tale of the great white whale Moby Dick.

Eighty nine days and 2500 miles away from the sunken ship Essex the first of her crew found rescue. A boat, with three survivors, was found on the open sea. Five days later and 300 miles south of that location, a second boat, with two survivors was found by another whaleship upon the open sea. The third boat was eventually found, with no survivors, washed up on a deserted island.

The eerie, yet thrilling version of this event comes from the personal journal of 14 year-old Thomas Nickerson. Nantucket welcomed her sailors back home. The majority of the community understood that the crew did what they had to do in order to survive. In one of the strangest twists I can imagine, Captain Pollard, Thomas Nickerson and one more of the Essex crew members set off on another whaling ship three months later! The sea was not their enemy, but just the place they went to work.

This true tale of action and adventure is a one-of-a-kind thriller! Make sure to read this book over a weekend, or long vacation, because once you begin the journey, there is no turning back!

Philbrick, Nat. *Revenge of the Whale: the True Story of the Whaleship Essex*. Putnam's, 2002.

Short Booktalk

You've all heard about Moby Dick, but have you heard about the whaling ship Essex? The Essex was the real ship that inspired the story of Moby Dick. In August of 1819, the Essex sailed from New England on her fateful voyage to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, a trip from which she would never return. With a crew of twenty men, the Essex survived the perils of storms, whaling disasters, and desertion. However can the crew continue to survive when it becomes lost at sea in three small rowboats with little food and water, and over a thousand miles from land?

Join Cabin Boy Tom Nickerson, Captain Pollard, and the rest of the crew as they try to survive the Revenge of the Whale.

Philbrick, Nat. *Revenge of the Whale: the True Story of the Whaleship Essex*. Putnam's, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 48387

Book Level: 8.3

Points: 9.0

Middle Grades

Correct Answers are "A"

1. Tom Nickerson remembered it as the "most pleasing moment of his life" What was it?
 - A) Stepping aboard the whale ship Essex for the first time.
 - B) His fourteenth birthday.
 - C) Harpooning his first whale.
 - D) Arriving back on land after the ship sank.
2. On her third day out to sea the Essex encountered:
 - A) A severe storm that damaged the ship.
 - B) A large whale.
 - C) A pod of dolphins.
 - D) Great sailing weather.
3. When the whale struck the Essex, who was piloting the ship?
 - A) Tom Nickerson, the youngest member of the crew.
 - B) Captain Pollard.
 - C) First Mate, Mr. Chase.
 - D) Second Mate, Mr. Joy.
4. Of the Twenty men aboard the Essex, how many survived the trip?
 - A) 8.
 - B) 20.
 - C) 3.
 - D) 12.
5. After the ship sank the men took refuge in:
 - A) Three of the whaling boats.
 - B) In the life rafts.
 - C) On an island.
 - D) On a raft the built with pieces of the ship.
6. The first meat the sailors had to eat after the ship sank was:
 - A) Tortoise.
 - B) Shark.
 - C) Birds they caught.
 - D) Flying fish.

7. The first Island they landed on was actually named:

- A) Henderson Island.
- B) Dulsie Island.
- C) Pitcarn Island.
- D) Nantucket Island.

8. On Christmas Day, they:

- A) Found nothing to eat but grass on the island.
- B) Feasted on fish.
- C) Were drifting in the ocean.
- D) Attended church with the natives on the island.

9. Members of the Essex, Nickerson, Chase and Laurence:

- A) Were rescued by the ship, The Indian.
- B) Died at sea.
- C) Sailed into a small port and found help.
- D) Stayed on the island.

10. What did the sailors have to do to stay alive?

- A) Eat the other sailors who had died.
- B) Tow the small ships by swimming.
- C) Drank lots of sea water.
- D) Ate the whale oil they had gathered.

Rinaldi, Ann. *Numbering All the Bones*. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children, 2002.

Long Booktalk

Eulinda is my name, and I am thirteen-years-old. I am a house slave, although right now I am sitting down to eat my breakfast at my master's table. I know this seems a bit unusual, but my white master is my white father. My black mother was the cook in the kitchen before Iris became the cook when Mama died. I am educated and don't have very many chores. Sometimes it is very hard to remember that I am a slave.

I am painfully reminded, though, when I think of my brothers. My older brother Neddy ran away and joined the Eighth United Colored Troops in Kentucky. My younger brother Zeke was sold after being accused of stealing a ruby ring from the mistress. I don't know what is going to happen to me. Some say that Mr. Lincoln will free all of the slaves after the war. Do I want to be free?

The South built Andersonville Prison about a mile from our house. Yankees are prisoners there. It is said that hundreds of soldiers in the prison die every day from sickness and the lack of food. These are the same soldiers who are in Mr. Lincoln's army, the same ones who are fighting to free us. I want to go to visit the prison to see if Neddy might be there. I know they allow visitors, and I am going to ask father for a pass.

On my first visit to Andersonville Prison, I find that Neddy is indeed there. Father must come and take him home. There are also some women there. One of them has just given birth to a baby girl. The mistress offers to let the woman and her baby stay at our house for awhile. Her name is Mrs. Hunt, but she asks us to call her Janie. Neddy would not come home. He said, "He'd rather die a free Yankee soldier than come home and be a slave."

Things are changing. Father put the mistress in control of the plantation so that it can not be taken away if he were accused of being a Union sympathizer. That means that we all belong to the mistress and not to father anymore, and she can sell us whenever she wishes.

Soon after the visit to the prison, Janie, the baby, and I are sitting on the grass visiting. Janie asks me if I would like to go north with her when she leaves the plantation. I don't know how to answer her. When she left, I remained at the plantation.

The war ended, and we were freed.

Eulinda finally does leave the plantation and becomes somewhat of a celebrity after the war. She meets and works with some famous people, including Clara Barton. To learn the exciting details, read *Numbering the Bones* by Ann Rinaldi.

Rinaldi, Ann. *Numbering All the Bones*. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children, 2002.

Short Booktalk

Thirteen-year-old Eulinda is the daughter of a slave and a slave-owner. Though the Civil War is moving toward an end and Eulinda is offered freedom and a chance to go North, she chooses to wait and know the fates of her two brothers. One, Zeke, had been sold off and the other, Neddy, had run away to join the Yankees. Since Neddy has the ruby ring that Zeke was accused of stealing and he may be imprisoned in nearby Andersonville Prison, she vows to find Neddy and the ring.

"We smelled the prison before we saw it. At the gates we went our separate ways. The last I saw of Moll, she was running off in the rutted muddy road, after some soldiers who had just come out with carts loaded with dead." (page 46)

"Then I looked over the shoulder of one white lady, into the vast muddy enclosure. Never had I seen the likes of it! And I don't know what got filled up first--my eyes, my nose or my heart. On our plantation, animals were treated better." (pages 48-49)

By the time the war has actually ended, Eulinda believes Neddy must be dead. "If he were alive, he'd have come to Pond Bluff to get me." (page 97) One day as she wanders the fields with Otis, her dog, Eulinda meets a lone man wearing a Confederate uniform. William Griffin has come to Andersonville to identify and give a proper burial to the thousands who died there. "I felt my heart pounding hard. Maybe now I would find Neddy." (page 109)

Will Eulinda ever find her beloved brother Neddy? What has happened to Zeke and where is the ring that was the cause of all their heartbreak? *Numbering All the Bones* by Ann Rinaldi has the answers.

Rinaldi, Ann. *Numbering All the Bones*. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 33632

Book Level: 4.2

Points: 5.0

Middle Grades

"A" is the Answer

1. The main character of the story is 13 year-old Eulinda. She was a house slave and:
 - a. the master's daughter.
 - b. the music teacher.
 - c. a three time runaway.
 - d. a midwife.

2. Towards the end of the Civil war, many slaves ran away to join the Yankee Army. Among those who left from the Kellogg plantation was:
 - a. Eulinda's brother Neddy.
 - b. Eulinda's mother.
 - c. Iris, the plantation cook.
 - d. Annalee, Eulinda's friend.

3. Eulinda admits that she is treated, "half slave and half white." Where did she take her meals?
 - a. some with the family.
 - b. all with the family.
 - c. none with the house slaves .
 - d. all with the house slaves.

4. When Sancho and Moll returned from the north, Sancho brought an important message to Eulinda from Neddy about the ring.
 - a. the ring will bring freedom in their future.
 - b. the ring has been lost.
 - c. the ring has been sold.
 - d. the ring is cursed.

5. The Yankee soldiers called the prison near the plantation Fort Sumter. The local people called it:
 - a. Andersonville.
 - b. Jacksonville.
 - c. Tent City.
 - d. Hooverville.

6. On her first visit to the prison Eulinda was looking for her brother Neddy but instead she saw the prisoners:

- a. from a special viewing platform.
- b. from outside the fence.
- c. during a guided tour.
- d. not at all.

7. Mr. Hampton found Neddy in Andersonville but Neddy refused to come out with him because:

- a. he was a freeman and would not go back to being a slave.
- b. he was dying.
- c. he would not leave his friends behind.
- d. he was helping in the prison.

8. As the end of the war grew closer and closer, Eulinda finally realized where she really belonged. She moved permanently to:

- a. slave quarters.
- b. the big house.
- c. the field.
- d. the prison.

9. Eulinda was a free woman, the war was over and the prison was empty when Eulinda met Mr. William Griffin. Mr. Griffin came to:

- a. bury the dead properly.
- b. loot the prison.
- c. build a factory on the land.
- d. inventory the freed slaves.

10. Clara Barton came to help with the graves and cemetery. With her was a man named Dorence Atwater who had made a list of the prisoners. Mr. Atwater was:

- a. a former prisoner.
- b. a newspaper reporter.
- c. a former Yankee officer.
- d. a government agent.

Rottman, S. L. *Stetson*. Viking, 2002.

Long Booktalk

I'll bet you haven't met too many guys like me. I'll bet that even if you think you know all about me from the way I dress, the way I talk and the friends I have, that you really don't know a thing. You know me as Stetson, that kid who'd bet on anything, anything to make a buck. You'd bet that I spend all my money on pills or booze. I'd win that bet, because you'd be wrong.

I live in a really crappy house with my broke-down drunk dad. He's the one who spends our money, when we have any, on booze. I figured out a long time ago after my mother left us that I was the one who was gonna have to take care of business, especially if I wanted out...out of this kinda life.

"Cause you know, I'll bet that I have something going for me that you can't even see. I got a gift, a talent. I'm an artist. An artist with an airbrush and the automobile is the perfect canvas for my one of a kind over the top designs.

So, I kinda had a plan, and was workin' it when she showed up. A little surprise from my mom, a sister I never knew I had--Kayla. Can my life get any more complicated? Now what am I gonna do?

Rottman, S. L. *Stetson*. Viking, 2002.

Short Booktalk

"She's Gonna give a quiz, I just know it!"

"What's it worth to you?" I asked Chip

"What?"

"I can keep Ms. Pepper from giving a quiz today. What's it worth to you?" Over his shoulder, (Chip) said "Ten Bucks." This would be an easy ten.

Stetson was use to taking care of himself. His alcoholic father paid little attention to him. All that mattered to Stet was his job at the salvage yard, the car he was restoring, and graduation from high school.

Now, all of this was in jeopardy. A prank to earn eating money backfired, threatening his ability to earn money to survive. And to top off the day, he came home to find that he had a 14-year-old sister he knew nothing about. He was earning just enough money to eat on as it was. How is he going to take care of someone else?

Can he keep from being expelled, take care of his new sister, keep his job at the salvage yard, and finish restoring his car? Find out how Stet tackles these problems in S. L. Rottman's book, *Stetson*.

Rottman, S. L. *Stetson*. Viking, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 52993

Book Level: 4.6

Points: 7.0

Middle Grades

Correct Answer Are "A"

1. After getting the class out of a quiz, Stet:
 - A) Has to sign a behavior contract to stay in school.
 - B) Is given a weeks suspension.
 - C) Is expelled from school.
 - D) Is the class hero.
2. Before Stet takes Kayla to school to enroll, he has to:
 - A) Try to get her sober.
 - B) Fix her breakfast.
 - C) Clean up the trailer.
 - D) Call his boss.
3. The person who has affected Stetson's life the most is:
 - A) Jason, the owner of the salvage yard.
 - B) Mr. Kincade, the school counselor.
 - C) Stetson's father.
 - D) Kayla.
4. At the salvage yard, Stetson.
 - A) B, C, D.
 - B) Takes cars apart for their usable parts.
 - C) Repairs small appliances.
 - D) Runs the cash register.
5. Stetson was restoring a:
 - A) Honda Civic.
 - B) A Mustang.
 - C) A Camero.
 - D) Toyota pickup.
6. Kayla has a plan to get out of living with her father, she:
 - A) Wrote to her mom's second cousin in Kansas.
 - B) Wants to live with her grandmother.
 - C) Has called the department of children' s services.
 - D) Wants Stetson to run away with her.

7. Stetson has not painted his car yet because:

- A) He has not come up with the right design.
- B) He does not know how.
- C) He has nowhere to paint it.
- D) He is saving money for a professional paint job.

8. Stetson makes extra money by.

- A) Air brushing custom t-shirts.
- B) Working at MacGregor's.
- C) Cutting Grass.
- D) Working at the Mill.

9. Stetson paints the car to with a/an:

- A) Falcon on it.
- B) Eagle on it.
- C) Flames on it.
- D) Original paint job.

10. Stetson's car is wrecked when:

- A) Kayla swerves to miss a deer.
- B) Stetson's father drives it while drunk.
- C) Stetson is street racing.
- D) The building burns down.

Vande Velde, Vivian. *Heir Apparent*. Harcourt, 2002.

Long Booktalk

What a way to spend your 14th birthday thought Giannine Bellisario as she fought her way through the group of Citizens to Protect our Children protesters outside of Rasmussen Gaming Center. Giannine's birthday present from her father was a half-hour gift certificate for the gaming center. At least, he remembered her birthday this year.

Once inside she looked through the list of age appropriate games. "Heir Apparent" caught her eye. The secretary advised her that the game had many ways in which to win, and many ways things can go wrong. Giannine later realized that the secretary was right in more ways than one.

After the game started, Giannine woke up to find herself the oldest girl in a peasant family. Her job was to look after the sheep. Soon, she is called from the field to meet Sir Deming who has come to tell her that she is actually the daughter of the King. It seems that the King, on his death bed, has named her over her three older half brothers as heir to the throne.

As Janine the peasant girl is trying to stay alive in the palace, she is informed by the apparition of Nigel Rasmussen himself that the gaming machinery has been damaged by CPOC. He tells her that she must win the game to exit from the gaming machinery. He also tells her that there is a limited amount of time before the gaming machinery damages her brain.

Janine dies time after time, but learns to survive longer with each life. Can she learn fast enough? Read *Heir Apparent* and find out if Janine or Giannine survives.

Vande Velde, Vivian. *Heir Apparent*. Harcourt, 2002.

Short Booktalk

Today is my fourteenth birthday. This morning my father presented me with a gift certificate for the Rasmussem Gaming Center Virtual Reality Arcade. This afternoon I decided to cash it in and treat myself to a quick, total immersion game. I should have seen the protesters outside the facility as an omen. Now, I am frantically trapped within the computer game, "Heir Apparent," and struggling to leave. Evidently, the program malfunctioned shortly after I began when members of the "Society to Prevent Cruelty to Children" broke into the building and damaged the equipment.

Nigel, the CEO of the company, appeared once during my virtual experience to explain the emergency situation and advise me to not panic. Apparently, the only way to safely disconnect from "Heir Apparent" is to successfully complete the game as quickly as possible. This is easier said than done since wrong decisions during play loop me back to the start of the program. I keep finding myself at the beginning of the game and am becoming very frustrated.

To make matters worse, Nigel is no longer able to communicate with me and could not tell me the solution to the game because no one, single, right path exists. Before losing contact, however, he reminded me to finish as quickly as possible since prolonged, direct stimulation to my brain is dangerous.

Will Giannine, the player of "Heir Apparent," stay calm and make correct decisions to complete the game? What complications arise to challenge and hinder her advancement? Will she finish before it's too late? For answers, read Vivian Vande Velde's riveting, fast-paced fantasy novel, *Heir Apparent*.

Vande Velde, Vivian. *Heir Apparent*. Harcourt, 2002.

Quiz

Word Count: 72682

Book Level: 5.6

Points: 11.0

Middle Grades

Correct Answers are "A"

1. What company issues Giannine's Gift certificate?

- A. Rasmussem Enterprises.
- B. Radical Games, Inc.
- C. Virtual Experiences, Inc.
- D. New Divisions Enterprises.

2. What is "Heir Apparent"?

- A. A virtual reality computer program.
- B. A television show.
- C. A movie.
- D. A board game.

3. What group causes Giannine to be trapped in the game?

- A. The Society to Prevent Cruelty to Children.
- B. The Society to Promote Civic Awareness.
- C. Parents Against Virtual Reality.
- D. Person Against Self-Expression.

4. What is the only way to safely exit the program?

- A. Successfully complete the game.
- B. Repeat the first level three times.
- C. Unplug the machine.
- D. Find your lost friend.

5. Who is Janine?

- A. Giannine's character in the game.
- B. Giannine's best friend.
- C. Nigel's daughter.
- D. Dusty's mother.

6. Why does Janine continue to loop back to the start of the program?

- A. She makes wrong decisions.
- B. She is too scared to continue to the end.
- C. She is waiting for her friends to catch up with her.
- D. She is looking for her friend.

7. What does Janine recite to the head-chopping statue?

- A. A poem.
- B. A joke.
- C. A riddle.
- D. A parable.

8. Why do guards have trouble raising the drawbridge?

- A. Ghosts are present.
- B. The ropes are missing.
- C. The crankshaft is broken.
- D. Trolls are hindering the guards.

9. What must Janine defeat at the end of the program?

- A. A dragon.
- B. A gargoyle.
- C. A man-eating plant.
- D. A giant scorpion.

10. How old is Nigel?

- A. 16.
- B. 25.
- C. 46.
- D. 63.