

Summer Reading – Pioneer Valley Christian Academy 2017

Entering Grade/Course: Grade 7/English and Lit

Book/Author: *Mockingbird* by Kathryn Erskine and *Crash* by Jerry Spinelli.

Required to purchase? No, but strongly recommended since they will be used at the beginning of the year. Students may borrow books from friends, family, or libraries.

Requirements: See below

Evaluation: See below

Late enrollees: Students who have admissions meetings after Friday, August 11, 2017, need to read *Crash* and read and complete written work for *Mockingbird*.

1. *Crash* by Jerry Spinelli.

- A. List 5 things you learned about how to handle relationships from this book. Be specific: explain what you learned and tell what part of the book taught you that and why.
- B. Imagine that you are Crash, one year after high school graduation. You're in college. Write a letter to Penn, reflecting on your relationship when you were in high school and the relationship you have now.
 - a. You will have to imagine what happened in high school, where they are going to college, and if they are attending the same college.
 - b. Make sure your reflections on the past and the possibilities for the future fit the characters and the setting. How did their friendship affect them?
 - c. Your letter should be about 250 words.
- C. Your work may be typed or neatly written.

2. *Mockingbird*, by Kathryn Erskine

This is a story about an eleven-year old girl whose mother died years earlier and her older brother –her hero- was killed in a random act of violence. Caitlin is trying to put all the pieces together, a tough enough job for any pre-teen, but in her case, it's much harder because she has a difficult time understanding relationships because she has Asperger's Syndrome. The story is told from Caitlin's perspective. We hear her thoughts, her words, and her reasoning process. The words spoken actually spoken by the characters are in italics.

A. Pretend you are interviewing Caitlin for a radio show. You want her to share with the audience the path she took to understanding and processing her brother's death. Be sensitive to Caitlin's needs.

- a. You will have to frame your questions in such a way that she will understand what you mean and she won't get upset.
- b. Remember, Caitlin tends to see the world as very concrete.
- c. She doesn't understand figures of speech (when you say "She's a pain in the neck", she thinks you have a sore spot in your neck).
- d. You will write both the questions and the answers.

B. Make a two-column section and take notes on the following:

- a. On the left side, list the things Caitlin does that seem odd to you.
 1. include page numbers
- b. On the right side, explain why she does them. If you can't find an answer in the book, explain where you looked.
 1. Include page numbers
- c. I expect you to list 5 things and to be thorough in your explanations. Your choices should reflect material from throughout the book, not just one section.