

ELEVEN READER'S CLUB: AN INDEPENDENT CANADIAN READING ADVENTURE

THE REASON

The quote is not firmly imprinted on my mind yet the meaning has stuck with me ever since. I was watching a CBC interview a couple of years ago between Yann Martel - the writer - and Evan Solomon - the journalist. The discussion was robust and diverse. Martel discussed his various novels, as well as his more generic ideas regarding the importance of literature in society. One topic dealt with Martel's ongoing - yet recently derailed - quest to get Prime Minister Stephen Harper to read various books that he sent him (check out the website, *What is Stephen Harper Reading?* to read more). His quest ultimately failed.

But that is not what left an imprint. Martel also discussed his ideas about travel and literature. He said something - the Forgotten Quote - like literature is an open window to peep into a culture; that a poignant novel is more useful than a token phrase book or sightseeing manual. He described - though my mind might be adding details and impressions - how novels allow distant readers to walk the streets, smell the foods, listen to the rhythm of the local words and share thoughts before ever purchasing a ticket or counting out the number of pairs of socks to pack.

I was reminded of that discussion when listening to another CBC program, Canada Reads 2011, because the program passionately, critically, and aggressively presented discussion and debate around the Canadian novel that should be read by all Canadians. It was a fascinating program because in the end no book lost - although one ultimately won the debates. Martel's philosophy was reinforced because the program highlighted the importance of literature in informing us about our culture and informing the world about our culture.

That got me thinking. How can the youth of our nation enter the debate? The answer is simple. Choose a Canadian novel, play or graphic novel and debate it's worth as an important novel for Canadians and immigrants or visitors to Canada.

THE TASK : STEP ONE

- Sign up for an account at GOODREADS.COM.
- Once your account is set up, join the following group:
- Eleven Reader's Club at <http://www.goodreads.com/group/show/77563-eleven-reader-s-club>
- Browse the site. It is an excellent source for reading advice.

THE TASK : STEP TWO

1. Research Canadian literary award websites to find a Canadian novel (no plays or graphic novels) to read and discuss.
2. The novel you choose **must be adult level reading**.
3. Try and find an excerpt for your novel and read it before finalizing your selection. If you cannot get into the first pages, perhaps another selection would be more suitable. **DO NOT CHOOSE A NOVEL BASED ON LENGTH. YOU WILL PROBABLY REGRET IT.**
4. The following websites will provide you with a rich selection. You are not restricted to award winners. All nominated selections from the long or short lists are acceptable.
 - **Scotia Bank Giller Prize**
www.scotiabankgillerprize.ca/home.html

Scotia Bank Giller Prize Wiki - for additional information on past long-list nominees
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotiabank_Giller_Prize
 - **Governor General's Literary Awards**
<http://www.canadacouncil.ca/prizes/ggla>
 - **The Sunburst Award for Canadian Literature of the Fantastic**
<http://www.sunburstaward.org/>
 - **Toronto Book Awards**
http://www.toronto.ca/book_awards/index.htm
 - **Canada Reads**
<http://www.cbc.ca/books/canadareads/>
4. Write a rationale for choosing the novel. This is not a summary of the text. Your rationale should include why the author piqued your interest and why the text piqued your interest. It should be very personal. The rationale should be approximately 250 words and submitted to the Eleven Reader's Club discussion forum by OCTOBER 1, 2012. This will be worth 10 marks in total.
5. You are responsible for locating the text. If you need to purchase a copy, I will order from **chapters.indigo.ca**. You must bring in the cost plus applicable taxes if you choose this route. This is strictly optional.

THE TASK : STEP THREE

1. Submit ongoing updates of your progress on the Eleven Reader's Club discussion forum. Update your progress every 20% of the book (i.e. every 60 pages in a 300 page book). The update must include the following: 1) a strong/poignant "word" image from the section, 2) three new words, 3) two examples of rhetorical/literary devices, and 4) a one sentence statement of your impressions/feelings/reactions towards the section.
2. Think about how the impressions/feelings/reactions you are feeling during and after the reading are imprinted on you (stuck to you).
3. Be prepared to discuss your critical reading during student-teacher conferences.
4. This will be worth 15 marks in total.

THE TASK : STEP FOUR

1. Write a critical assessment of your impressions/feelings/reactions to the novel.
2. Open the analysis with a quote(s) from the novel that is the most 'poignant' and use it as a springboard for developing your assessment.
3. The critical assessment should be between 500 and 750 words in length.
4. Post your analysis on the Eleven Reader's Club discussion forum, as well as your GOODREADS account.
5. The due date for this task will be early JANUARY 2013. A firm deadline will be determined in the near future.
6. This will be worth 45 marks in total

THE TASK : STEP FIVE

1. Create a multi-media product for your novel. This will follow the model of the *Macbeth: Re-envisioned* activity, and include an auditory and visual component. This should be highly creative, organized and appealing. DO NOT USE BRISTOL-BOARD. Think about this early on and be prepared to discuss your ideas and progress during conferences.
2. You will have to present this to your classmates.
3. This will be worth 30 marks in total.

15 percent of overall ENG3U mark.

CHECKLIST

name

- set up account on goodreads.com
- join eleven Reader's club
- research Canadian writers
- choose an author and novel
author(s) _____ text(s) _____
- submit rationale (10 marks)
- obtain novel
- submit updates to ELEVEN READER'S CLUB 11/12 discussion forum
- conference with teacher; be prepared to talk about your updates; be prepared to talk about your multi-media ideas; be prepared to talk about how the novel is imprinting itself on you (15 marks)
- write critical assessment; submit to goodreads.com (45 marks)
- prepare your multi-media project (30 marks)