

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
- Browse the site. It is an excellent source for reading advice.

THE TASK : STEP TWO

1. Research Canadian authors, playwrights or graphic novelists that you might be interested in reading.
2. Select an author or authors and choose:
 - ___ one novel
 - ___ two plays
 - ___ two graphic novels
 - ___ one play and one graphic novel
3. The novel, plays or graphic novels you choose MUST be adult level reading.
4. Write a rationale for choosing the novel, plays or graphic novels. This is not a summary of the text. Your rationale should include why the author(s) piqued your interest and why the text(s) piqued your interest. The rationale should be approximately 250 words and submitted to the Eleven Reader's Club discussion forum by March 11, 2011.
5. Note: a MAXIMUM of three students can read the same book, plays or graphic novels. Decide early go ensure that you get the text(s) of your choice.
6. You are responsible for locating the text(s). If you need to purchase a copy, I will order from **amazon.ca**. You must bring in the cost plus applicable taxes if you choose this route. This is strictly optional.

THE TASK : STEP THREE

1. Read the text(s) critically. Take thorough and extensive notes. Use the template for active reading to organize your notes.
2. Think about the following questions when reading:

Why should Canadians read the novel/play/graphic novel and why should people visiting or immigrating to Canada read the novel/play/graphic novel to learn about Canadian culture?
3. Be prepared to discuss your critical reading during student-teacher conferences.

THE TASK : STEP FOUR

1. Write a critical assessment and analysis of the novel, one play or one graphic novel. The critical analysis must answer the questions (see Step Three) and use properly formatted analytical paragraphs (include quotes) strong vocabulary, various sentence patterns, and original rhetorical language.
2. Open the analysis with a quote(s) from the novel, play, or graphic novel that you feel best captures the importance of the text in informing Canadians and immigrants or visitors to Canada about Canadian culture.
3. The analysis 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 late MAY or early JUNE. A firm deadline will be determined in the near future.

THE TASK : STEP FIVE

1. Round table discussion and advocacy session. You will be advocating for the novel or one of the plays or graphic novels you have read. Advocacy means that you will be attempting to persuade your classmates that the text is worthwhile and important for Canadians to read en masse. You will not be reading from a script. You will be clearly stating why the novel is important and debating/discussing with other advocates the merits of your argument.
2. A poll will be taken and the top three novels from the class will be chosen to represent Eleven Reader's Club 2011 in the final round.
3. The due date for this task will be late MAY or early JUNE. A firm deadline will be determined in the near future.

THE TASK : STEP SIX

The Final Round. The final six novels - the top three selections from two classes - will be debated and advocated for selection. The top three will likely receive a prize, though there will not be a first, second or third placing. The top three will be considered the most worthy of inauguration as the representative novel of Eleven Reader's Club 2011.

15 percent of overall ENG3U mark.

CHECKLIST

- set up account on goodreads.com

- join eleven Reader's club

- research Canadian writers

- choose an author and novel/plays/graphic novels
author(s) _____ text(s) _____

- submit rationale

- obtain novel, plays or graphic novels

- take extensive notes

- conference with teacher

- write analysis; submit to goodreads.com

- prepare to discuss text

RUBRIC: ELEVEN READER'S CLUB WRITTEN ANALYSIS

name: _____

Focus: Literature Studies & Reading	below level 1	level 1	level 2	level 3	level 4	mark
knowledge and understanding of ideas & themes; form and structure; language (K/U)	-shows minimal or no understanding (supported description) themes; form & structure; language	-shows limited understanding (supported description) themes; form & structure; language	-shows some understanding (supported description) themes; form & structure; language	-shows considerable understanding (supported description) themes; form & structure; language	-shows thorough and insightful understanding (supported description) themes; form & structure; language	/20
analysis (T/I)	analyzes work with minimal or no effectiveness	analyzes work with limited effectiveness	analyzes work with some effectiveness	analyzes work with considerable effectiveness	analyzes work with high degree of effectiveness and risk-taking	
use of evidence, including quotations (T/I)	-provides minimal or no specific and relevant (examples from reality/modern life, direct quotes) evidence to support interpretations	-provides limited specific and relevant (examples from reality/modern life, direct quotes) evidence to support interpretations	-provides some specific and relevant (examples from reality/modern life, direct quotes) evidence to support interpretations	-provides considerable specific and relevant (examples from reality/modern life, direct quotes) evidence to support interpretations	-provides thorough and convincing specific and relevant (examples from reality/modern life, direct quotes) evidence to support interpretations	
FOCUS: Writing	below level 1	level 1	level 2	level 3	level 4	mark
use of essay form (C)	-shows minimal or no command of the essay form, including clear thesis, effective organization (ie. paragraph structure); logical conclusion	-shows limited command of the essay form, including clear thesis, effective organization (ie. paragraph structure); logical conclusion	-shows some command of the essay form, including clear thesis, effective organization (ie. paragraph structure); logical conclusion	-shows considerable command of the essay form, including clear thesis, effective organization (ie. paragraph structure); logical conclusion	-shows extensive command of the essay form, including clear thesis, effective organization (ie. paragraph structure); logical conclusion	/30
clarity (C)	-thoughts and feelings are communicated with minimal or no clarity	-thoughts and feelings are communicated with limited clarity	-thoughts and feelings are communicated with some clarity	-thoughts and feelings are communicated with considerable clarity	-thoughts and feelings are communicated with high degree of clarity	
connections (A)	-makes few or no connections to own and outside ideas, values and experiences	-makes logical connections to own and outside ideas, values and experiences	-makes some connections to own and outside ideas, values and experiences	-makes logical connections to own and outside ideas, values and experiences	-makes insightful connections to own and outside ideas, values and experiences	
language & voice (C)	-uses appropriate language and voice (literary devices/ rhetorical devices) with minimal or no effectiveness and consistency	-uses appropriate language and voice (literary devices/ rhetorical devices) with limited effectiveness and consistency	-uses appropriate language and voice (literary devices/ rhetorical devices) with some effectiveness and consistency	-uses appropriate language and voice (literary devices/ rhetorical devices) with considerable effectiveness and consistency	-uses appropriate language and voice (literary devices/ rhetorical devices) with high degree of effectiveness and consistency	
language conventions (A)	-applies grammar, usage (diction), spelling and punctuation with minimal or no accuracy	-applies grammar, usage (diction), spelling and punctuation with limited accuracy	-applies grammar, usage (diction), spelling and punctuation with some accuracy	-applies grammar, usage (diction), spelling and punctuation with considerable accuracy	-applies grammar, usage (diction), spelling and punctuation with high degree of accuracy	
comments					total	/50

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION + ADVOCACY SESSION

name:

- uses strong language to advocate for the text

1 2 3 4

- advocates for the text using relevant persuasive and focused arguments; uses textual content to advocate for the text; relates the text to the objective of the task (why text is important for Canadians? etc)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

- listens and responds to ideas being discussed and debated

1 2 3 4

- voice is used as a persuasive tool; uses emphasis, tone and enunciation (clarity)

1 2 3 4

/ 20

CONFERENCES

name:

- discusses text with depth and critical insight maturity and sophistication (L4)

8 8.25 8.5 8.75 9 9.25 9.5 10

- discusses text with depth (L3)

7 7.25 7.5 7.75

- discusses text with some depth; needs to look more closely at the thematic, symbolic and connectedness of the text (L2)

6 6.25 6.5 6.75

- discusses the text with minimal depth and insight; a more thorough examination and understanding of the thematic, symbolic and connectedness if the text is required

5 5.25 5.5 5.75

- discussion of the text indicates minimal understanding of the content; discussion lacks a basic understanding of themes or symbols; needs to read more actively and critically

0 1 2 3 4

RATIONALE FOR READING

name:

- rationale indicates a thoughtful, educated and sophisticated assessment of the literature; communicates using strong and sophisticated language conventions (rhetorical devices, various sentence patterns, strong vocabulary)

8 8.25 8.5 8.75 9 9.25 9.5 10

- rationale indicates a thorough assessment of the literature; communicates using strong language conventions (rhetorical devices, various sentence patterns, strong vocabulary)

7 7.25 7.5 7.75

- rationale indicates an adequate (surface) assessment of the literature; communicates using adequate language conventions (rhetorical devices, various sentence patterns, strong vocabulary) but need to take time to review, revise, and edit writing

6 6.25 6.5 6.75

- rationale indicates a limited and uninformed assessment of the literature; communicates using weak language conventions (rhetorical devices, various sentence patterns, strong vocabulary); need to take time to review, revise, and edit writing

5 5.25 5.5 5.75

- rationale indicates a weak assessment of the literature; communicates using weak language conventions (rhetorical devices, various sentence patterns, strong vocabulary); need to take time to review, revise, and edit writing

0 1 2 3 4

NOTES

name:

_____ notes show insight and critical reading of the novel

_____ notes show understanding of the various narrative elements in the novel

_____ notes are useful for discussing ideas related to the novel

_____ notes are organized and detailed, through and extensive