**READING LETTERS: format and notes:**

When you finish your novel, please write a letter to me about what your thoughts about the book were. Each letter should be at least 200 words. Remember to start a new paragraph each time you begin to discuss a different idea/prompt.

Put your name and date in the upper left-hand corner of your paper. Underneath this, put the prompt number(s) that you chose to respond to for this letter. Start your letter with the greeting: *Dear Ms. Savoy,*

In the first paragraph, mention the title and author of the book you are reading. (Remember to underline the title.) Also, tell me how many pages are in the book. In your introduction, please include why you picked the book. (Was it recommended by someone? If so, who?)

In the body choose **3** prompts to respond to. Each prompt paragraph should be 3 or more sentences. Start a new paragraph for every new prompt.**DO NOT** simply tell the plot (what is happening in the story). I am interested in what your reading makes you think about rather than being told what you read. Back up your thoughts with examples from the novel when possible. Your letter should show some type of insight on your part. Insight means “new thinking”---thoughts that have come to you in response to what you have read. Even if the thought is “I don’t understand why Randy is behaving this way,” it is a thought you did not have before; it is a thought that you did not have before; and it would be a good start of a response as you explore possible reasons for his actions and words.

In your conclusion, give me your overall thoughts of the novel and if you would read something else by this author/from this genre. Give it a rating and explain why you give it that rating.

Don’t forget to close your letter and sign it.

Sample letter:

Hans Solo

January 22, 2018

Prompts (3, 7, 11)

Dear Ms. Savoy,

These past few weeks I have been reading Artemis Fowl by Eoin Colfer. The novel had 289 pages. I read the book because you asked me to read it.

The character I dislike is the Detective. He is always missing important details like the time he checked for eyewitnesses forgetting to write down their information! He could have solved the mystery quicker by recording all data. This incompetency was frustrating. He finally learned by the end of the importance of collecting and recording data to be a better detective. I guess they are human, and we all need to learn things to improve ourselves.

I think the author wants the reader to realize the importance of friendship. At the end Buddy says that being the first dog to walk on the moon was not the most important thing but the friends he made on the journey. For most, being the first to accomplish something awesome would mean everything but this story puts things in perspective. We all need to value the important things that don’t come as an award or certificate.

I wonder why the king couldn’t stay with his new friends. I guess he couldn’t because he has many important responsibilities and others depend on him. I wonder why Buddy’s aunt is so mean. I think that she is not happy with how her life turned out and is miserable toward others. I wonder if she will ever be happy. I hope she learns that the past is the past and that she is missing out on living life and distancing herself from everyone who loves her.

In conclusion, since I have finished this book, I think I will try a new genre to increase my vocabulary. I give this book 3/5 stars because even though the ending was beyond my imagination and had me guessing, the beginning took a long time to get my attention.

Your student,

Hans Solo

Source---Nancy Atwell’s revised edition of In the Middle

**PROMPTS FOR RESPONSES:**

1. Where and when did this story take place? (in the future, present, past and in a city, another planet, in a prison, etc.). What did you think about the setting? Was it realistic or unrealistic? Who was the main character and how do you know they are the main character? Who were the secondary characters, if any? What did you think of the characters? Were they believable? Did the author keep you interested in the story? How?
2. Describe the protagonist’s (main character) -traits NOT physical appearance in your novel. What have they said/done to back up your description? Would they be a good friend? Why? What were they like at the beginning of the story? What were they like at the end? What do you think caused this change?
3. Describe the antagonist’s (character who is causing problems for the protagonist) -traits NOT physical appearance in your novel. What have they said/done to back up your description? How are they getting in the main character’s way? Why do you think they are opposing the main character?
4. What things have you learned about people or life from character(s) in this book? Explain. What new information did you learn from reading this novel? What is the theme/message of the novel? What do you think the author wants you to think about/remember? What does the author think is important for people to know?

Why do you think this?

1. Which character would you like to be like? Why? Which character is most like you? How?
2. What was the most important event in the story? Explain why it is important. How would things have worked out differently without this event?
3. Do any incidents, ideas, or actions in this book remind you of your own life or something that happened to someone you know or in another novel? Explain.
4. Write about the major conflict(problem) in the book. Is the main character’s problem with another person? Their society? Nature/survival? Their own feelings/emotions and values- themselves. How did the main character deal with conflict? How did it change them?
5. Explain the title of the novel, what is the meaning/connection to the story? Do you think the title fits the book? Why or why not? List another possible title for this book and explain your choices.
6. Would you change the ending of your story in any way? Tell your ending and why you think it is more appropriate. Do you think there is more to tell?
7. In what ways did the weaknesses/strengths of the character affect the chain of events? How would the story be different had they acted differently?