

Summer Reading Assignment - 2022

Incoming grade 7

1. Please read the book *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis. The story is told by Kenny Watson, the 10-year-old main character, who believes that his family is thought of as “the weird Watsons.” Kenny is the 10-year-old brother to 13-year-old Byron, who gets in and causes a fair amount of trouble, and Kenny is also big brother to younger sister Joetta who loves and looks up to her older brothers. Because Mr. and Mrs. Watson cannot get Byron to behave as they want, they decide to take him to stay with Grandma Sands in Birmingham, Alabama, during the summer of 1963; here they all face a tragic event based on a real one that took place that same summer in Birmingham. There are many humorous moments in the story as well as some very serious – even suspenseful - ones, which will keep you turning the pages.
2. AS YOU READ, complete the attached 5 “quizzes.” These exercises require you to record significant details about settings, characters, and plot AND ask you to do some critical thinking about the story. Please respond directly on the sheets. Because there is not a lot of room for your answers, you do NOT have to respond in complete sentences but do respond WITH DETAIL where you are asked to explain. These exercises will be graded for HOW WELL/CAREFULLY YOU COMPLETE THEM upon your return to school; we will use them as a basis for discussion of the book at the beginning of next year. It will also be important to have a good understanding of this book as we will “dig deeper” and complete other assignments and activities upon your return to school.

Happy Summer and Happy Reading, and I look forward to seeing you in August in 7th grade!

Quiz Time

Directions: Respond to the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is the setting (time and place) of this story? _____

2. What does Kenny believe the neighbors secretly call his family? _____

3. From what you've already learned about Byron Watson, what are two of his personality traits?

4. When does Byron say, "Give my regards to Clark, Poindexter," to Kenny? _____

5. Discuss two problems that Kenny faces at school. _____

6. Do you agree with Kenny's statement that God sent Rufus to be his savior? Explain why.

7. Who is Buphead? _____

8. What causes trouble in Kenny's and Rufus's friendship? _____

9. Name two people who treat Kenny badly. What do they do to him? _____

10. Name two things that Momma does that indicate she's a caring person. _____

11. Why do you think Rufus and Cody eat a part of Kenny's lunch each day?

12. Do you think it was a good idea for Kenny to tell Byron that Larry Dunn had stolen his gloves?
Explain. _____

Quiz Time

Directions: Respond to the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Who is Joetta? _____

2. Describe Byron's "Nazi Parachutes Attack America and Get Shot Down Over the Flint River" movie. _____

3. How does Joetta stop her mother from burning Byron with a match? _____

4. Why is Momma so upset about Byron playing with matches? _____

5. Why was Kenny surprised when he came across the popsicle-stick cross in the alley? _____

6. How do you think Byron felt about killing the mourning dove? Explain. _____

7. Who is Grandma Sands? _____

8. Explain what a "butter" or "conk" is and how it fits into the story. _____

9. What might have happened if Byron had run away before Dad came home and saw his "conk"? _____

10. Describe the similarities between Kenny and Byron. _____

11. What do all of Byron's Latest Fantastic Adventures have in common? _____

12. How do you think Byron felt about being sent to live in Alabama for the summer? Explain. _____

Quiz Time

Directions: Respond to the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is the Ultra-Glide? _____

2. What does Dad tell Kenny is the reason that Byron is being sent to Birmingham? .

3. Name three things that Momma did to get ready for the trip to Birmingham. _____

4. Why do you think Mrs. Davidson gave Joetta the angel statue? _____

5. Did you think that Byron was going to make the entire trip without speaking? _____

6. Of the places that the Watsons stop during their trip, which one would have interested you the most? Explain why. _____

7. Name two things that frightened both Kenny and Byron at the two different rest stops.

8. Why doesn't anyone want to hold Joey's head while she sleeps? _____

9. How would the Watsons' trip have been different if they had followed Momma's plan?

10. How does Grandma Sands compare to Kenny's expectations? _____

11. Why do you think that Momma seems so upset about Mr. Robert? _____

12. Who do you think will triumph this summer: Byron or Grandma Sands? Explain.

Quiz Time

Directions: Respond to the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Who is Mr. Robert? _____

2. What does Mr. Robert say he did for Toddy that impressed Kenny and Byron? _____

3. How does the Birmingham weather affect the Watson children's choice of activities? _____

4. Why does Grandma Sands warn the kids to stay away from Collier's Landing? _____

5. Why do you think Kenny defied everyone and went to Collier's Landing? _____

6. What caused Momma to act like a little kid that just got yelled at? _____

7. What is out in the deep water that Kenny wants to catch, and why does he want it? _____

8. What did Grandma Sands really mean when she said there was a Wool Pooh? _____

9. Describe Kenny's encounter with the Wool Pooh. _____

10. What would probably have happened if Byron hadn't pulled Kenny out of the water? _____

11. Why do you think Kenny had a vision of Joetta in an angel costume while he was in the water? _____

12. What do you think will happen if Kenny explains his "adventure" to his family? Explain.

Quiz Time

Directions: Respond to the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Does Kenny tell his parents about his near drowning? Tell why or why not. _____

2. What does Kenny say to Joey as she leaves for Sunday school? _____

3. What does Kenny do when he reaches the church? _____

4. What causes Kenny to flee from the church? _____

5. Back at Grandma Sands's house, why doesn't Kenny want to look at Joetta? _____

6. Since Kenny wasn't physically there, who or what do you think lured Joetta from the church?

7. Where is the World-Famous Watson Pet Hospital, and who goes to hide there? _____

8. What did Byron do to lure Kenny from behind the couch? Name at least three things. _____

9. What does Kenny tell Byron he feels ashamed about? _____

10. What is Byron's opinion of the Wool Pooh, magic powers, and genies? Explain. _____

11. What does the Wool Pooh symbolize to Kenny? Explain. _____

12. Does this story seem believable to you? Give at least two reasons that support your answer.
