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Orson Scott Card

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Response Journal

To The Student

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

Chapter 1: Third

1. Although Ender is only six years old, he already understands that “sometimes lies [are] more dependable than the truth” and that adults often lie to children. How old were you when you first realized that adults are not always honest? Write a detailed descriptive paragraph about the experience.
2. Card writes that Ender knows “the unspoken rules of manly warfare”—that only an “animal” would strike an opponent who lies helpless on the ground—yet Ender breaks that rule in his fight with Stilson. Pretend that Ender is on trial, you are defending him, and the prosecuting attorney has just mentioned this “rule” to the jury in trying to paint Ender as an animal. Write out the speech you would give in Ender’s defense, explaining why it was necessary for him to act as he did.
3. Ender has had a monitor in his brain since he was a toddler, allowing military officials to hear everything he says and watch everything he does. If, like Ender, you were aware that you had such a monitor, would it change your behavior? Write a paragraph or two about what you might do differently if you knew you were being constantly watched. If you don’t think you’d change anything, write about why you wouldn’t.
4. At six, most of us would call for the teacher if we were approached on school grounds and pushed around by a pack of kids like Stilson and his cronies. Why do you think Ender doesn’t do this? Assume that after the fight, Ender is called into the principal’s office and asked why he resorted to violence rather than calling for a teacher’s help. In a paragraph or two, write Ender’s response to the principal.

Chapter 3: Graff

9. Card never explains why the government has made it illegal to have more than two children per family (unless a third is permitted to be born for military purposes). First, list three reasons why a government might decide to pass such a law. Then respond to the following statement in one or two paragraphs: a government is never justified in trying to control the reproductive lives of its citizens.
10. Imagine that you have just received the same opportunity Ender has. Are you willing to trust your future to the military and travel through space to the Battle School, knowing that you won't see your friends, family, or home planet for at least six years? Pretend you have a chance to consider before giving your answer to Graff. Write a journal entry, weighing the pros and cons of Graff's offer and finally arriving at your decision.
11. Not only does the population law limit reproduction, it also impedes religious freedom. Graff mentions at least two religions (Catholicism and Mormonism) that can no longer be faithfully practiced under the law. If the government passed a law that made it impossible for you to practice your religion, would you practice it? (If you are not religious, substitute whatever personal beliefs and practices are most important to you). Imagine that the government has passed such a law today. Write a journal entry responding to the law and mentioning how it will (or *if* it will) change your life and practices.

Chapter 14: Ender's Teacher

51. Plans to make a movie of *Ender's Game* have been kicked around for years. Imagine that you are the casting agent for the film and cast the following roles, making sure to include a brief note with each choice as to why you feel the actor is perfect for the part. If you have difficulty casting the child roles with child actors, you may use adult actors who would have fit the roles well in their younger years.

Ender –

Peter –

Valentine –

Petra –

Graff –

Mazer Rackham –

Alai –

Bean –

Bonzo –

52. Almost immediately after Ender finds out the truth about his “final exam,” he goes to bed and sleeps for days. Imagine that before falling asleep, he takes the time to write an emotional journal entry detailing his reaction to the truth. As Ender, write this entry.
53. Mazer Rackham says that he doesn't think Ender will be permanently damaged by his experiences in this chapter. From what you know of Ender, do you agree? Explain your answer.

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54. Respond to the following statement: "Of all the characters in the book, Graff is the one who cares the most for Ender."
55. Unlike Ender, who is nearly destroyed by guilt, Alai, Bean, Petra, and the other squadron leaders seem to have no concerns about having eradicated an entire species? Is Ender the only moral child in the book? Explain your answer.
56. Now that the Bugger Wars are over, war has broken out on Earth, and all of the major powers want Ender to lead their armies. Pretend that you are the leader of one of the warring countries and are familiar with everything that has happened at the Battle School and on Eros. Do you want Ender to lead your army? Explain your answer.