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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.

Nothing But The Truth

Chapters 1, 2, and 3

1. The memo of the Harrison School District outlines the manner in which most schools throughout the country begin their day. If you are so inclined, try to write a parody of the Harrison High memo. A parody uses the format of the original, but makes fun of it through exaggeration, sarcasm, or other comic techniques.
2. Philip Malloy is excited that Coach Jamison wants him to try out for the track team, and Philip knows that his dad will be excited also. Can you think of a time that you felt the way Philip does?
3. Imagine you're Allison Dorsett, and Philip has just hung up the telephone after calling you. In a letter are you writing to a cousin, describe Philip.
4. Imagine you're a sophomore member of the track team, and imagine, also, you're in Philip's English class. Describe Philip to your best friend, who is also on the track team.
5. Mr. Lunser has a comment on every part of the announcements. Do you find him funny, annoying, or what?

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17. What is the impression of Miss Narwin you get from the letter she sent to her sister?
18. At least three students have mentioned liking Miss Narwin. What do you suppose these students see in Miss Narwin that Philip doesn't?
19. When Allison sits by Philip on the bus, he doesn't speak with her. When Allison moves her seat, Philip regrets his actions. Did you ever act one way to a person and then wish you had acted another way?

Chapter 10, 11, and 12

20. Did you have any reaction to the conversation between Mr. Lunser and Miss Narwin?
21. When Philip tells his parents about the singing incident, his father seems to have other things on his mind. Have you ever tried to talk to someone about something important to you, and he or she seemed to have something else on his or her mind?
22. Philip's dad tells him to stand up for his rights. What does this phrase mean to you? Do you think that was good or bad advice for the father to give Philip?

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35. In general, how do you think a teacher should handle this kind of request? Should a teacher give extra work or not? Try to see both sides of the issue and reach the best conclusion.
36. What is your opinion of the way the article concerning Philip's suspension was written? Write a different version of the suspension.
37. Talk radio shows are quite popular. Many of these shows seek controversy, and the ratings for these shows are high. If you are familiar with this type of program, tell about one show that has caught your attention. Describe the people involved and why you like it or don't like it.
38. From what you know of talk radio shows, did the dialogue written in the book sound realistic? Do you have any opinion of either the talk show host or his callers?
39. The school superintendent says, "It doesn't matter if it's true or not true. It's what people are saying that's important." If you understand what he means, explain it to a friend, who doesn't understand.
40. If you can, analyze the speech made by Ted Griffen and comment on the points that he is trying to make with the voters.

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Wrap Up

53. The ending of this story could be considered depressing. Can you think of a better ending, or do you think this is a good ending because it is appropriate?
54. Sequels are popular because readers wish to know more about the characters. For what reason do you think this book should, or should not, have a sequel?
55. When you read the last page of this novel, what were your thoughts and/or feelings?
56. Write about the things you liked and/or disliked about this novel.
57. Many novels that have young people as the main characters are in the Coming of Age genre. The term indicates that in the course of the novel the character moves from immaturity to maturity. Describe the ways in which *Nothing But the Truth* fits or does not fit.
58. What did you think of the title of this story? Did you understand its significance? Can you come up with a better title?