

English II Honors- Summer Reading

Code Talker by Joseph Bruchac
Heroes by Robert Cormier

Welcome Sophomore Honor Students!

You are asked to read two novels over the summer. Additionally, you are required to type a response to your reading based on the assignments below. The class will briefly discuss the novels to evaluate your understanding.

The responses for all the questions should be typed and double-spaced on 8.5 x 11 inch paper with a 12 pt. font. All papers must have a heading in the upper right-hand corner with your name, this course name, and Summer Reading as the title on separate lines. Bring the completed work with your book (unless you borrowed a book) on the first full day of class. You will be expected to discuss the novels in class and take a quiz after some discussion of the required readings. You will receive a grade for responses based on content, focus, spelling, punctuation, grammar and ability to follow directions.

Questions for Code Talker (30 points)

Use these questions and activities that follow to get more out of reading *Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War Two* by Joseph Bruchac. These short answer essay questions require a typed one or two sentence answer.

1. Once he arrives at boarding school, how does Ned Begay get his new name?
2. Describe the warfare method the Americans call "banzai."
3. Ned says that his weeks in training at Camp Elliott are "some of the best in my life" (p. 81). Why is this so?
4. When Ned is terribly worried about crossing the deep waters of the Pacific Ocean in a boat, how does his friend Bill Toledo encourage him (p. 90)?
5. Some of Ned's classmates, including John Roanhorse, openly defy their boarding school teachers. Ned also disobeys his teachers, but in his own quiet way. How does Ned defy his teachers?
6. On the sign in front of Ned's mission school is the motto: "Tradition is the enemy of progress" (p. 23). What does this motto mean to the teachers of the mission school?
7. Describing the battle of Iwo Jima, Ned says, "Our Navajo nets kept everything connected like a spider's strands spanning distant branches" (p. 187). How does this simile describe the work of the code talkers?
8. Throughout his time in training and in service as a code talker, Ned carries a pouch of corn pollen with him. What does this pouch mean to Ned, and how does he use it?

9. Ned notices that the Navajos have a much easier time adjusting to life as Marines than the white men. Why does he feel his life as a Navajo prepared him for being a Marine?

10. When First Sergeant Shinn, the Marine Corps recruiter, comes to Fort Defiance, why is Ned interested in joining the Marines?

11. Ned mentions that the Japanese army does not follow the “rules of modern warfare” (p. 168). List three examples that support Ned’s statement.

12. One of the Marine generals writes a report saying, “The Navajos have proved to be excellent Marines, intelligent, industrious, easily taught to send and receive by key and excellent in the field” (p. 137). Why is Ned so surprised to read this report?

13. How would you describe the teaching methods and classroom styles of Ned’s teachers in the boarding school? What do you think of the methods Ned’s teachers use, both to teach and to discipline their students?

14. Ned survives both the hardship of boarding school and the trauma of war. How is Ned able to get through these difficulties? Which of his personal qualities do you think helped him most during his trials?

15. In *Code Talker*, the character Ned Begay is telling his grandchildren the story of his time spent as a Marine in World War II. How do you think Ned’s grandchildren would feel about their grandfather after hearing about his experiences? What do you think is the most important lesson that Ned’s grandchildren might learn from his story?

Activity (20 Points)

1. Using a map of the South Pacific, trace Ned’s travels as a code talker, from Guadalcanal to Okinawa, and all the places he visited in between. Draw a small picture or symbol to show what happened at each of the locations that Ned visited.

Other Books by Joseph Bruchac

Children of the Longhouse

Geronimo

The Heart of a Chief

Sacajawea

The Warriors

Heroes: A Novel by Robert Cormier (Type responses in complete sentences.) (30 Points)

Chapter 1

- 1 Why do you think so many physical details are mentioned in the first page?
- 2 Why doesn't the doctor have much success in developing Francis's sense of humour (page 2)?
- 3 'I knew that my mission was about to begin' (page 5) marks a beginning. Up to this point, how has the writer suggested details from Francis's past life?
- 4 In the section beginning 'Later, I light a candle in St Jude's Church' (page 5), the writer introduces the other time periods in the book. How does he do this?
- 5 In this first chapter, what is revealed about Francis's feelings about Larry and Nicole?
- 6 What is suggested in the first chapter about the events in the rest of the book?

Chapter 2

- 1 At the beginning of this chapter, how does the writer show that this is the beginning of the action of the book, in terms of time?
- 2 How does the first description of Nicole establish her character? Look carefully at the words used about her in the paragraph beginning 'Nicole Renard was small and slender' (page 8).
- 3 In the five paragraphs that follow the sentence 'I knelt there like a knight at her feet' (page 8), how does the writer describe Francis's words and actions to show that he is very young here?
- 4 Look at the paragraph beginning 'I was so startled by her voice' (page 11). How does the author show that Francis is very young here?

Chapter 3

- 1 Find the sentence 'I stare at the final proof that Nicole has gone away' (page 14). How does the writer move from one time period to another here?
- 2 In the page following this, what is suggested about Nicole, and how she changed after Francis left?
- 3 In the section beginning 'I can never trace the moment ...' (page 18), how does the writer move from one time period to another?

4 In the section beginning 'I don't want to think about them' (page 18), in what ways is it suggested that the soldiers are not heroes? How is it suggested that war is brutal and nasty rather than heroic?

Chapter 4

1 What does Francis remember about Arthur Rivier before the war (page 21)? Why do you think the writer has included this detail?

2 In this chapter, which is all set in the present time of the story, how does the writer remind you of the other periods in the story?

3 How is it shown here that Francis feels himself to be an outsider, even though he is in his home town?

Chapter 5

1 The first page and a half of this chapter detail the history of the Wreck Centre, as a place of celebration and a place of tragedy. How does this relate to what happens in the Wreck Centre in the story?

2 Look carefully at the story of Hervey, Marie-Blanche and Dennis (pages 25–6). How can you relate this to the story of Larry, Nicole and Francis?

3 Look at the text from 'The Centre opened its doors' to 'directing musical shows' (page 27). In what ways might Larry seem heroic here?

4 Now look at the way Francis is presented in the passage that follows, from 'The Wreck Centre became my headquarters' (page 27) to 'where the shorter kids belonged' (page 28). How does Francis contrast with Larry? Think about what he likes, how he behaves, and how he thinks of himself.

5 Look at the description of Larry's history on page 29. What seems suspicious about it? How does the writer prepare the reader for what happens later?

6 Look at the description of Nicole, from 'Nicole Renard began coming to the centre' at the bottom of page 29. What is shown here about Francis's attitude to her?

7 How does the writer bring the reader back to the present at the end of the chapter? What effect does the last sentence have on the reader?

Chapter 6

1 In the second and third paragraphs of this chapter, how does the writer foreshadow

later events in the novel?

2 Look at the details given about the visiting baseball player and the Strangler (page 32). How is heroism suggested here?

3 The Strangler defines Larry's Silver Star as being for 'gallantry' (page 33). Find out what this word means, apart from heroism. How is it ironic when applied to Larry?

4 Francis looks away from 'the admiration' in Arthur's eyes (page 34). Why do you think he does this?

5 How does the writer change the time period before the beginning of Chapter 7?

Chapter 7

1 How is Francis's respect for Larry shown in the first page of this chapter?

2 Find the description of Nicole in dance classes (page 39). How does the writer suggest what is to happen later?

3 Look at the passage from 'For the first time in my life' (page 40) to 'the centre seemed vacant when I looked and did not see her' (page 41). What feelings does Francis have here? How are the feelings related?

4 Look at the last part of the chapter, beginning 'Finally, the score stood at 20–19' (page 44). What is shown here about the relationships between Francis, Larry and Nicole at this point in the story?

5 The last sentence of the chapter is 'But tomorrow was 7 December 1941'. What is the significance of this date? How does the writer change the mood of the chapter with this sentence? Think about the words he uses as well as the significance of the date.

Chapter 8

This is one of the shortest chapters in the novel. The plot does not move forward at all here, so why do you think it is in the novel? Think about:

_ what happened in the war?

_ what has happened to the men and their lives since heroes?

Chapter 9

Find the paragraph beginning 'At some point during the afternoon' (page 50). Read to 'embarrassment made my cheeks grow warm' (page 51). How does the writer convey Francis's emotions here?

Chapter 10

1 Read the first page of the chapter, about Francis's experience in London. How does this partly explain his later behavior?

2 Read the end of the chapter, from 'Now each day when I wake up' (page 55). What do you think Enrico and Francis mean by 'disposal'?

3 How does the writer move the time period at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 11

1 This chapter is the key moment in the plot. Look at the beginning and the end. How does the mood change?

2 Look at the passage from 'A moment later' to 'pumping bullets into the enemy' (pages 57–8). How is Larry the same, and how has he changed?

3 Look at the passage from 'A surprise awaits' (page 60) to 'As if we were living a love scene at the Plymouth'. How does the writer suggest what is to happen later?

4 In the passage from 'As she went off to search among the records' (page 61) to 'I think he wants to tell you something' (page 62), what does Francis not understand? Pick out the words and phrases that explain why he behaves in the way he does.

5 From 'the song ended' on page 63 to the end of the chapter, only two words are spoken. Find all the references to words and silences. What story do they tell about the three characters?

Chapter 12

1 When Francis climbs the stairs to the steeple (page 68), why do you think the writer describes the sound of his gasps being 'like cloth ripping'?

2 Read from 'Despite the calmness of the summer night' (page 68) to the end of the chapter.
_ What are the three reasons that persuade Francis not to jump?
_ What does he feel about himself here?

Chapter 13

Read the first paragraph of this chapter. How are things different from what Francis has imagined?

Chapter 14

1 In the first three paragraphs of this chapter the author makes three references to Francis's intention to shoot Larry. How does he do this?

2 Read from 'Come in, the door's not locked' (page 72) to 'sighing, as if tired suddenly' (page 74). Find all the suggestions here that Larry has changed. How is he still the same?

3 Francis says that he 'had always wanted to be a hero' but 'had been a fake all along' (page 75). How was he a fake, and how does he 'rid myself of the fakery'?

4 What does Larry reveal about himself when he refers to 'the sweet young things' (page 76)?