6th Grade Summer Reading and Questions

THE WESTING GAME by Ellen Raskin

Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story about Brain Science
by John Fleischman

Please type up your responses to the novels on separate documents. DO NOT ATTACH THEM.
PHINEAS GAGE...
Answer each question in complete sentences on a separate document. DO NOT attach this
to THE WESTING GAME document. You do not need to include this worksheet.

“Horrible Accident” in Vermont – Chapter 1, Part 1- p. 1-10 “…matter of time”

1. Give a brief description of Phineas before the accident.
2. Describe Phineas’s tamping iron and what it is used for.
3. What caused Phineas’s accident? Explain the events that led to it.
4. Where did the rod enter and exit Phineas’s head?
5. List at least three things Phineas does immediately after the accident.
6. What does Dr. Williams think about Phineas when he first speaks with him?
7. List four medical conditions that could have killed Phineas due to his accident.
8. What can happen in a closed brain injury?
9. How can one prevent getting a concussion?
10. How is Phineas lucky by having an open brain injury? What is a main risk of an open brain injury other than the injury itself?

“Horrible Accident” in Vermont – Chapter 1, Part 2

1. Where did the term cell (as in the fundamental unit of life) come from?
2. What did doctors in Phineas’s time call what we now know to be infection?
3. What were the three biological mysteries of Louis Pasteur’s time?
4. What precautions did Joseph Lister take? What was the result of these precautions
5. What saves Phineas when he develops an abscess just above his eye?
6. What are “humors”? What is the origin?
7. Explain the test Dr. Harlow gives Phineas before he leaves Cavendish.
8. What were some of Phineas’s actions like after his accident?
9. Why did Dr. Harlow keep his observations about Phineas to himself?
What We Thought About How We Thought – Chapter 2

What We Thought About How We Thought – Chapter 2

1. What is a daguerreotype?
2. What are two odd things about the photograph on page 25?
3. What are some of the steps Dr. Bigelow took to ensure that Phineas’s story would be believable? List at least three examples of his evidence. Did everyone believe Dr. Bigelow’s claim?
4. Where did the tamping iron pass through in Phineas’s brain?
5. At the time of Phineas’s accident, list three things doctors knew about brain injuries.
6. At the time of Phineas’s accident, there was an argument over what the cortex does. There were two sides to the argument. What did the book call these two groups? Briefly explain what these groups believed.
Following Phineas Gage – Chapter 3

1. Where is it rumored that Phineas went after leaving the Boston medical school?
2. What was Phineas’s mother’s name? List at least five facts that she gives Dr. Harlow about Phineas after he leaves Boston.
3. How long did Phineas drive the stagecoach according to his mother?
4. Where does Phineas go after leaving Chile?
5. Phineas has a seizure in February. What happens immediately after the seizure?
7. What happened to Phineas’s grave in 1940? Do you think this would have been allowed to happen today? Why or why not?
8. What does Dr. Harlow learn about Phineas after his death, and how does he learn it?
9. Dr. Harlow makes a rather unusual request of Phineas’s mother. What was the request, and why did he want to do it?
10. Dr. Harlow appeared before the Massachusetts Medical Society in 1868 and disclosed all the events of Phineas’s case. What did he tell them?
11. Do you think it was right for Dr. Harlow to wait until after Phineas died to announce all the facts of his case? What were some consequences of this decision?

Putting Phineas Together Again – Chapter 4

1. People with frontal lobe damage have difficulties because of their injury. What are some of these difficulties? List at least three.
2. According to information from Phineas’s case, what makes us human?
3. Where did Phineas and his tamping iron find their final resting place?
4. How might people who study serial killers find Phineas’s case interesting?
Create a document and complete the following. Print out your responses by the first day of school. Staple them with your responses for Phineas Gage.

I. **Character Tracking** - Make list of the HEIRS (do not include Mr. and Mrs. Theodorakis). As you read, make note of the following information about each of the heirs. Include the page number with the information (quoted or paraphrased) below the character’s name heading.
   
   A. Things to “track”:
      1. **Age, appearance, and personality** traits. Three to five examples.
      2. **“Occupation” at beginning** of the story and **“occupation at the end** of the story.
      3. One to three places in the story where the **character changes** and why.

II. **Prompts** - Rewrite the **chapter number** and then type your response in complete sentences using correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. **You do not have to retype the prompt for this novel.**

**Chapter 1**
On the first page, there are examples of situational irony. Name two.

**Chapter 2**
We meet “Turtle” Wexler. How would you describe Turtle? Cite evidence from the story that supports your opinion.

**Chapter 3**
By the end of Chapter 3, it is obvious that Angela Wexler is the favorite child of her mother. Find two sentences from the book that contrast how Mrs. Wexler feels about Angela and Turtle.

**Chapter 4**
From Samuel Westing’s obituary, what can you conclude about his life? Use information from the newspaper article to support your statement.
Chapter 5
At the very beginning of Chapter 5, the author writes: “The marbled sky lay heavy on the gray Great Lake when Grace Windsor Wexler parked her car in the Westing driveway and strode up the walk ahead of her daughters.” Discuss the use of figurative language in this passage and determine what Ms. Raskin was attempting to describe.

Chapter 6
During the reading of Sam Westing’s will, we “hear” and “see” many reactions from the heirs. Gather evidence from that scene to write a description of the character traits of one of the people in attendance.

Chapter 7
Re-read the pairings that were made for the Westing Game. Choose one team and describe why you think they will win the game. Use evidence from any chapter to support your decision.

Chapter 8
At the beginning of Chapter 8, Ms. Raskin tells us, “During the night Flora Baumbach’s itsy-bitsy snowflings raged into a blizzard. The tenants of Sunset Towers awoke from clue-chasing, blood-dripping dreams, bound in twisted sheets and imprisoned by fifteen-foot snowdrifts.” Discuss the use of figurative language in this passage and determine what mood the author was trying to create.

Chapter 9
Turtle is suspicious of her mother trying to get her clues. How does the author show us that Turtle figures out what her mother is up to?

Chapter 10
Two lesser-known characters, Mr. and Mrs. Theodorakis, attend Judge Ford’s party. One passage mentions “George Theodorakis placed his hand on the shoulder of his invalid son.” From the context of the sentence and what you already know about Chris, what do you think invalid means? What information did you use to come to that conclusion?

Chapter 11
Sydelle Pulaski is enjoying the attention she is receiving because she has the notes for the reading of the will (and its clues). What other things has Sydelle done to draw attention to herself?

Chapter 12
In the end of this chapter, Judge Ford summarizes some of the heirs’ connections to Sam Westing. Recap the information that the judge has collected. Add any additional clues that YOU know.

Chapter 13
Angela and Theo end up having a meal together at the Hoo’s restaurant. Both seem very unsure of themselves. Discuss the clues that the author gives us about their personalities.
Chapter 14
Dr. Denton Deere claims that Sydelle Pulaski, his fiance’s partner is crazy. The psychiatrist says that she is not. What has Sydelle done to raise this concern? Cite evidence from the text that proves your point. (RL1)

Chapter 15
The title of this chapter is “Fact and Gossip”. Do you think it contains more facts or gossip? Give examples of facts or gossip that was discussed to support your opinion.

Chapter 16
Throughout Chapter 16, Ms. Raskin uses many sets of parentheses. Why do you think she decided to write this way? What do the parentheses help Ms. Raskin to tell us?

Chapter 17
Sandy McSouthers is doing some investigating for Judge Ford. In Chapter 17, he reads to her the research he has collected about James Shin Hoo. After reading Sandy’s notes, why might Mr. Hoo be a suspect?

Chapter 18
Throughout the story, Flora Baumbach has mentioned her daughter, Rosalie. In Chapter 18, she mentions Rosalie’s love of color and that “her daughter might have been an artist if things had turned out differently.” Look back at other mentions on pages 75, 89, and 123 and create a description of Rosalie and why Flora thought she was so special.

Chapter 19
At the very beginning of the book, the author mentions “A Mistake”. The mistake is revealed in Chapter 19. What was it? Explain in detail.

Chapter 20
Judge Ford and Sandy McSouthers come to a conclusion regarding who the suspect is, and therefore, who is in trouble. They even mention a name, but it has no connection to the heirs/players of the Westing Game. Who do you believe they are worried about?

Chapter 21
Throughout the book, Judge Ford infers that she did not like, nor did she trust, Sam Westing. In this chapter, we learn more about the judge’s childhood and why she most likely had those feelings. Summarize the reasons that Judge Ford had a bad opinion of Westing.

Chapter 22
In this chapter, Jake and Grace Wexler argue. What do you think the root of their disagreement is? In other words, why are they fighting? Provide proof from the text that supports your opinion.

Chapter 23
Chapter 23 leads us through the heirs’ guesses about who the murderer is. Some of the teams give very strange answers. For example, can “BOOM!” or “Mr. Westing is a good man” be a logical answer to the question? Who do you believe has the best answer? Explain your choice using evidence from the story.

Chapter 24
Judge Ford comes to some very important decisions regarding Sandy McSouthers and Berthe Erica Crow. Why is she suddenly afraid OF Sandy and afraid FOR Crow?
Chapter 25
Turtle’s kicking skills and Theo’s chess skills get mixed up in the investigation of the Game. Summarize what the characters have discovered and what it might mean to finding the murderer and/or the “winner”.

Chapter 26
Turtle discovers that the secret to the inheritance may lie in the clue that Sam Westing had four identities. She mentions (1) Sam Westing, and (2) Sandy McSouthers. Have you figured out his third and/or fourth name? If you have figured it out, what clues lead you to this conclusion? If you are still “in the dark,” what additional information would help you?

Chapter 27
In Chapter 27, Westing’s four identities are revealed. List his four names and how Turtle figured out the clue. The names all refer to something connected to Sam’s *original* nick name. What is the connection? What details from the story can you use to support your statement?

Chapters 28 - 30
Ms. Raskin uses Chapter 28 to wrap everything up. In literature, this is called the *denouement* (day-new-mon). We get to find out what has happened to the residents of Sunset Towers since the end of the Game. Which update did you find most exciting/funny/touching/surprising? Explain your reasons.

**MY SUMMER TRAVEL LOG (OPTIONAL)**

**Goal:**
- Document a summer experience via pictures, photos, stamps, postcards, etc. accompanied by writing pieces. Use a phone, iPad, laptop, notebook, or journal.

**Guidelines:**
- **Five to Ten pages.** A “page” consists of a photo, picture, postcard, stamp, or any other kind of visual representation along with a written entry in the form of a poem, description, conversation, diary entry, super short story, part of story, advertisement, etc...
Suggestions for framing your work:

- Pick a **theme** for your entry like “Things Unseen”, “People, Places, and Pigeons”, “Up Close and Afar”, “All Things Blue” (or red or green or any color), “Creature Feature”, “The Story Behind the Picture”, “Postcards”, etc...

- Pick a **style** - poetry, short play scenes, lyrics, Dear Diary, mock interviews, super short stories, story excerpts, etc. Or try a different form every day! Mix it up according to inspiration.

Finally, format your experience on Keynote, Powerpoint, Google Slides, or some other program which can be shared with Mrs. Luckie on Google Drive or emailed to rluckie@keystoneschool.org. If you write on paper or in a journal, simply take pictures of the pages once you get back home to technology.

All completed entries will be shown during the *NEW* Thursday lunch break program: "Read it; Write it; Share it". Since every student **must** participate **and** observe once each quarter, you will easily fulfill these requirements! It’s a win-win and fun, to boot!

Submissions are due by the first day of school.