

Grade 9 Summer Reading for 2017-2018 School Year

HONORS: STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ALL THREE COMPONENTS

1. **Read** *Night* by Elie Wiesel.
 - a. Be prepared to **TEST**, discuss, and write about the book upon return.
2. **Print and complete** the short story excerpt from *An Ordinary Man* by Paul Rusesabagina and the poem “Who Understands Me But Me” by Jimmy Santiago Baca.
3. **Print and complete** the non-fiction summer reading assignment detailed below.

STANDARD: STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE BOTH COMPONENTS

1. **Read** the short story excerpt from *An Ordinary Man* by Paul Rusesabagina and the poem “Who Understands Me But Me” by Jimmy Santiago Baca.
 - a. **Print** and complete the assignment.
 - b. Be ready to hand this in when you return in August.
2. **Print and complete** the non-fiction summer reading assignment detailed below.

NON-FICTION SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT

Directions: Choose one article that relates to the theme of survival to read from a newspaper or news magazine either online or print. The article needs to be a minimum of five paragraphs. Possible choices – CNN, New York Times, Huffington Post, Florida Times Union...**PRINT** the article out and attach it to your answers.

For the article complete all questions regarding text features and select one additional section (respond to ALL of the questions in that section.)

You do not need to rewrite the questions, but you do need to number your paper and respond in complete sentences with correct capitalization and punctuation. You may type or neatly print your responses. Make sure your name is on your paper. Answer every question. “I do not know,” “No,” “It doesn’t,” and similar responses are unacceptable and will not receive credit.

Text Features (required): MUST ANSWER IN COMPLETE SENTENCES.

1. Explain how the title connects to the material.
2. Explain how the information is organized. (Cause and effect, compare and contrast, spatial, problem-solution, or chronological, etc.)
3. Explain how the text features of the article help you to understand the topic better. (Text features can include: subheadings, pictures, captions, charts, diagrams, etc.)
4. Include two challenging words that you do not use in everyday language from the article AND their definitions.

Select ONE additional SET of questions: MUST ANSWER IN COMPLETE SENTENCES.

Making Connections

1. Explain what drew you to the topic of this particular article.
2. What background information did you already have about this topic OR what is something new that you learned while reading this article?
3. How does this text remind you of another text you have read? (Movies, TV shows, news media, plays, poems, stories, or music).
4. Describe a real-life experience that helps you understand the topic.
5. What was interesting to you? What was surprising to you? What did you question?

Content

1. What makes this topic important? How does this article connect to survival?
2. How does the author feel about the topic? What is his/her perspective (opinion or viewpoint)?
3. What parts of the article might be difficult for readers to understand? (For example, vocabulary, sentence structure, concepts, cultural references, historical references, etc.) What questions might someone still have about this topic?
4. What did you learn about this topic OR what was the most interesting part about this topic?
5. If someone wanted to learn more about this topic on the Internet, what would be some key words that someone would need to enter into a search?

From An Ordinary Man – Memoir by Paul Rusesabagina

Background *In 1994, a mass genocide took place in the East African state of Rwanda when Hutus killed 800,000 men, women, and children over a period of 100 days. Although tensions existed between the Hutus and the Tutsis (the two main ethnic groups in Rwanda) for hundreds of years, things came to a head on April 6, 1994, when a plane carrying the President of Rwanda, a Hutu, was shot down. Many perceived this as an attack by Tutsis, and the tensions between the two groups escalated into full-blown violence. Paul Rusesabagina lived through the genocide and wrote about the horrors in his memoir An Ordinary Man (from which this excerpt comes), which later became the film Hotel Rwanda.*

(1) My name is Paul Rusesabagina. I am a hotel manager. In April 1994, when a wave of mass murder broke out in my country, I was able to hide 1,268 people inside the hotel where I worked.

(2) When the militia and the Army came with orders to kill my guests, I took them into my office, treated them like friends, offered them beer and cognac, and then persuaded them to neglect their task that day. And when they came back, I poured more drinks and kept telling them they should leave in peace once again. It went on like this for seventy-six days. I was not particularly **eloquent** in these conversations. They were no different from the words I would have used in saner times to order a shipment of pillowcases, for example, or tell the shuttle van driver to pick up a guest at the airport. I still don't understand why those men in the militias didn't just put a bullet in my head and execute every last person in the rooms upstairs, but they didn't. None of the refugees in my hotel were killed. Nobody was beaten. Nobody was taken away and made to disappear. People were being hacked to death with machetes all over Rwanda, but that five-story building became a refuge for anyone who could make it to our doors. The hotel could offer only an illusion of safety, but for whatever reason, the illusion **prevailed** and I survived to tell the story, along with those I sheltered. There was nothing particularly heroic about it. My only pride in the matter is that I stayed at my post and continued to do my job as manager when all other aspects of decent life vanished. I kept the Hotel Mille Collines open, even as the nation descended into chaos and eight hundred thousand people were butchered by their friends, neighbors, and countrymen.

(3) It happened because of racial hatred. Most of the people hiding in my hotel were Tutsis, descendants of what had once been the ruling class of Rwanda. The people who wanted to kill them were mostly Hutus, who were traditionally farmers. The usual stereotype is that Tutsis are tall and thin with delicate noses, and Hutus are short and stocky with wider noses, but most people in Rwanda fit neither description.

Use paragraphs 1-4 to answer questions 1-6.

1. **Underline** the actions Rusesabagina took when the genocide broke out.
2. In paragraph 2, explain what Rusesabagina has trouble understanding.
3. **Circle** words and phrases that show a tone of disgust and horror.
4. Define **eloquent**:
5. Define **prevailed**

This divide is mostly artificial, a leftover from history, but people take it very seriously, and the two groups have been living uneasily alongside each other for more than five hundred years.

(4) You might say the divide also lives inside me. I am the son of a Hutu farmer and his Tutsi wife. My family cared not the last bit about this when I was growing up, but since bloodlines are passed through the father in Rwanda, I am technically a Hutu. I married a Tutsi woman, whom I love with a fierce passion, and we had a child of mixed descent together. This type of blended family is typical in Rwanda, even with our long history of racial prejudice. Very often we can't tell each other apart just by looking at one another. But the difference between Hutu and Tutsi means everything in Rwanda. In the late spring and early summer of 1994 it meant the difference between life and death.

(5) Between April 6, when the plane of President Juvenal Habyarimana was shot down with a missile, and July 4, when the Tutsi rebel army captured the capital of Kigali, approximately eight hundred thousand Rwandans were slaughtered. This is a number that cannot be grasped with the rational mind. It is like —all at once—to understand that the earth is surrounded by billions of balls of gas just like our sun across a vast blackness. You cannot understand the magnitude. Just try! Eight hundred thousand lives snuffed out in one hundred days. That's eight thousand lives a day. More than five lives per *minute*.

Each one of those lives was like a little world in itself. Some person who laughed and cried and ate and thought and felt and hurt just like any other person, just like you and me. A mother's child, every one irreplaceable.

(6) And the way they died... I can't bear to think about it for long. Many went slowly from slash wounds, watching their own blood gather in pools in the dirt, perhaps looking at their own severed limbs, oftentimes with the screams of their parents or their children or their husbands in their ears. Their bodies were cast aside like garbage, left to rot in the sun, shoveled into mass graves with bulldozers when it was all over. It was not the largest genocide in the history of the world, but it was the fastest and most efficient.

(7) At the end, the best you can say is that my hotel saved about four hours' worth of people. Take four hours away from one hundred days and you have an idea of just how little I was able to accomplish against the grand design.

6. What is his purpose in describing his family when explaining the differences between Hutus and Tutsis?
7. For paragraphs 5, 6, 7, and 8 **underline** words or phrases that demonstrate Rusesabagina's tone.
8. **Circle** the resources Rusesabagina used to save the people hiding at the hotel.
9. Read the boxed description in paragraph 5. What is Rusesabagina's purpose in these lines?

(8)What did I have to work with? I had a five-story building. I had a cooler full of drinks. I had a small stack of cash in the safe. And I had a working telephone and I had my tongue. It wasn't much. Anybody with a gun or a machete could have taken these things away from me quite easily. My disappearance – and that of my family – would have barely been noticed in the torrents of blood coursing through Rwanda in those months. Our bodies would have joined the thousands in the east-running rivers floating toward Lake Victoria, their skins turning white with water rot.

(9)I wonder today what exactly it was that allowed me to stop the killing clock for four hours.

(10)There were a few things in my favor, but they do not explain everything. I was a Hutu because my father was Hutu, and this gave me a certain amount of protection against immediate execution. But it was not only Tutsis who were slaughtered in the genocide; it was also the thousands of moderate Hutus who were suspected of sympathizing with or even helping the Tutsi “cockroaches.” I was certainly one of these cockroach-lovers. Under the standards of mad extremism at work then I was a prime candidate for a beheading.

(11)Another surface advantage: I had control of a luxury hotel, which was one of the few places during the genocide that had the image of being protected by soldiers. But the important word in that sentence is *image*. In the opening days of the slaughter, the United Nations had left four unarmed soldiers staying at the hotel as guests. This was a symbolic gesture. I was also able to bargain for the service of five Kigali policemen. But I knew these men were like a wall of tissue paper standing between us and a flash flood.

(12)Yet another of my advantages was a very strange one. I knew many of the architects of the genocide and had been friendly with them. It was, in a way, part of my job. I was the general manager of a hotel called the Diplomates, but I was eventually asked to take charge of a sister property, the nearby Hotel Mille Collines, where most of the events described in this book took place. The Mille Collines was *the* place in Kigali where the power classes of Rwanda came to meet Western businessmen and dignitaries. Before the killing started I had shared drinks with most of these men, served them complimentary plates of lobster, lit their cigarettes. I know the names of their wives and their children. I had stored up a large bank of favors. I cashed them all in – and then borrowed heavily—during the genocide. My preexisting friendship with General Augustin Bizimungu in particular helped me

10. Read from paragraph 9 through paragraph 12. Underline the advantages Rusesabagina had at the time of the genocide.

11. In paragraph 11, why is the word *image* important?

12. Circle **TWO** instances in which Rusesabagina mentions being at risk.

13. Define **alliances**.

save the Mille Collines from being raided many times over. But **alliances** always shift, particularly in the chaos of war, and I knew my supply of liquor and favors would run dry in some crucial quarters. Before the hundred days were over a squad of soldiers was dispatched to kill me. I survived only after a desperate half hour during which I called in even more favors.

(13) All these things helped me during the genocide. But they don't explain everything.

(14) Let me tell you what I think was the most important thing of all.

(15) I will never forget walking out of my house the first day of the killings. There were people in the streets who I had known for seven years, neighbors of mine who had come over to our place for our regular Sunday cookouts. These people were wearing military uniforms that had been handed out by the militia. They were holding machetes and were trying to get inside the houses of those they knew to be Tutsi, those who had Tutsi relatives, or those who refused to go along with the murders.

(16) There was one man in particular whom I will call Peter, though that is not his real name. He was a truck driver, about thirty years old, with a young wife. The best word I can use to describe him is an American word: *cool*. Peter was just a cool guy; so nice to children, very gentle, kind of a kidder, but never mean with his humor. I saw him that morning wearing a military uniform and holding a machete dripping in blood. Watching this happen in my own neighborhood was like looking up at a blue summer sky and seeing it suddenly turning to purple. The entire world had gone mad around me.

(17) What had caused this to happen? Very simple: words.

(18) The parents of these people had been told over and over again that they were uglier and stupider than the Tutsis. They were told they would never be as physically attractive or as capable of running the affairs of the country. It was a poisonous stream of rhetoric designed to reinforce the power of the elite. When the Hutus came to power they spoke evil words of their own, fanning the old resentments, exciting the hysterical dark places in the heart.

(19) The words put out by radio station announcers were a major cause of the

14. In paragraph 16, why does Rusesabagina include the story about Peter?

15. In paragraph 18, underline text describing the "words" people had heard causing them to go "mad."

16. Define **exhortations**.

violence. There were explicit **exhortations** for ordinary citizens to break into the homes of their neighbors and kill them where they stood. Those commands that weren't direct were phrased in code language that everybody understood: "Cut the tall trees. Clean your neighborhood. Do your duty." The names and addresses of targets were read over the air. If a person was able to run away his position and direction of travel were broadcast and the crowd followed the chase over the radio like a sports event.

(20)The avalanche of words celebrating racial supremacy and encouraging people to do their duty created an alternate reality in Rwanda for those three months. It was an atmosphere where the insane was made to seem normal and disagreement with the mob was fatal.

(21)Rwanda was a failure on so many levels. It started as a failure of the European colonists who exploited trivial differences for the sake of a divide-and-rule strategy. It was the failure of Africa to get beyond its ethnic divisions and form true coalition governments. It was a failure of Western democracies to step in and avert the catastrophe when abundant evidence was available. It was a failure of the United States for not calling a genocide by its right name. It was the failure of the United Nations to live up to its commitments as a peacemaking body.

(22)All of these come down to a failure of words. And this is what I want to tell you: Words are the most effective weapons of death in man's **arsenal**. But they can also be powerful tools of life. They may be the only ones.

(23)Today I am convinced that the only thing that saved those 1,268 people in my hotel was words. Not the liquor, not money, not the UN. Just ordinary words directed against the darkness. They are so important. I used words in many ways during the genocide – to plead, intimidate, coax, cajole, and negotiate. I was slippery and evasive when I needed to be. I acted friendly toward despicable people. I put cartons of champagne into their car trunks. I flattered them shamelessly. I said whatever I thought it would take to keep the people in my hotel from being killed. I had no cause to advance, no ideology to promote beyond that one simple goal. Those words were my connection to a saner world, to life as it ought to be lived.

(24)I am not a politician or a poet. I built my career on words that are plain and ordinary and concerned with everyday details. I am nothing more or less than a hotel manager, trained to negotiate contracts and charged to give shelter to those who need

17. Define **arsenal**.

18. Underline the reasons given for Rwanda's failure.

19. **Circle** the biggest failure that led to the genocide.

20. Underline the reasons Rusesabagina gives for his actions.

it. My job did not change in the genocide, even though I was thrust into a sea of fire. I only spoke the words that seemed normal and sane to me. I did what I believed to be the ordinary things that an ordinary man would do. I said no to outrageous actions the way I thought that anybody would, and it still mystifies me that so many others could say yes.

Please respond to the following questions in complete sentences with correct capitalization and punctuation.

21. What is Rusesabagina's purpose in writing his book?

22. What is the significance (importance) of the book's title, *An Ordinary Man*?

Continue on for the poem

Who Understands Me But Me - Poem by Jimmy Santiago Baca

They turn the water off, so I live without water,
they build walls higher, so I live without treetops,
they paint the windows black, so I live without sunshine,
they lock my cage, so I live without going anywhere,
(5)they take each last tear I have, I live without tears,
they take my heart and rip it open, I live without heart,
they take my life and crush it, so I live without a future,
they say I am beastly and fiendish, so I have no friends,
they stop up each hope, so I have no passage out of hell,
(10)they give me pain, so I live with pain,
they give me hate, so I live with my hate,
they have changed me, and I am not the same man,
they give me no shower, so I live with my smell,
they separate me from my brothers, so I live without brothers,
(15)who understands me when I say this is beautiful?
who understands me when I say I have found other freedoms?

I cannot fly or make something appear in my hand,
I cannot make the heavens open or the earth tremble,
I can live with myself, and I am amazed at myself, my love, my beauty,
(20)I am taken by my failures, astounded by my fears,
I am stubborn and childish,
in the midst of this wreckage of life they incurred,
I practice being myself,
and I have found parts of myself never dreamed of by me,
(25)they were goaded out from under rocks in my heart
when the walls were built higher,
when the water was turned off and the windows painted black.
I followed these signs
like an old tracker and followed the tracks deep into myself
(30)followed the blood-spotted path,
deeper into dangerous regions, and found so many parts of myself,
who taught me water is not everything,
and gave me new eyes to see through walls,
and when they spoke, sunlight came out of their mouths,
(35)and I was laughing at me with them,
we laughed like children and made pacts to always be loyal,
who understands me when I say this is beautiful?

1. Underline each thing the speaker lives without in lines 1-16.
2. Explain what setting the speaker makes you think about in lines 1-16.
3. Explain what the speaker finds when he follows the tracks (lines 28-37).

4. Reread lines 28-37. What is the feeling or emotion of the poem in these lines? Which words or phrases help you understand that emotion? Respond in complete sentences with correct capitalization and punctuation.
