**Rising 8th Graders-- Summer Reading Requirements 2018**

**Questions and creative writing are due the day students return to school**

**Questions will be due September 5th, 2018**

This summer, you will be asked to read *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer. It is an inspiring and thought-provoking autobiography. This book will become a part of our 8th grade curriculum.

As you read this story, you will be asked to complete questions thoughtfully. You will also be asked to select **one** project from a number of possible projects that vary in their subject area focus.

Below are the questions that you will respond to along with the chapter number that correlates with the question. **You must use evidence from the text for each response**. Below the questions are the different project ideas. You are required to select one and follow the directions for the selected project.

**Chapter 1.**

**1. How do magic and science interact in our world?**

**2. How do the folk tales and legends depicted in this chapter reflect the values and beliefs in Kamkwamba’s village?**

**Chapter 2.**

**1. A major theme in this story is overcoming adversity. What kinds of adversity do William and his father need to overcome in this chapter? What character traits support William in this process?**

**2. Again, the conflict of magic and science continues to challenge William. How does he react to his first-and only- direct encounter with magic? Is it realistic?**

**Chapter 3**

**1. How does William respond to challenges and problems in his environment?**

**Chapter 4**

**1. Which of William’s character traits are revealed in this chapter? Does William undergo any changes?**

**Chapter 5 and 6**

**1. How does our education shape and influence our relationship to the world? Use William as an example or answer from a personal standpoint.**

**Chapter 7**

**1. What exciting news does William get in this chapter? Why is it so significant?**

**Chapter 8**

**1. What are the major conflicts presented in this chapter? Be specific.**

**2. Can the harvest be viewed as a symbol for something?**

**Chapter 9**

**1. Explain the powerful turning point in William’s education-and his life.**

**2. How can necessity act as a catalyst for learning? Use examples from the text to support your thinking.**

**Chapter 10**

**1. What has happened in the final paragraph of Chapter Ten? What is the possible significance of this event? Do you think it was real- or was it a dream? Explain.**

**Chapters 11-12**

**What effect does William’s success have on his family, friends, and/or village?**

**Chapter 13**

**1. A continuing conflict in this book is the tension between the inventors and creative dreamers. Explain how it pertains in this chapter. (Think about the definition of an inventor and a creative dreamer.)**

**Chapter 14**

**This chapter defines a true turning point in William’s life. Explain.**

**Chapter 15**

**1. How have William’s experiences in his village with his family, his friends and his country prepared him for this moment?**

**2. William concludes by saying, “But whatever it was I decided to do, I would apply this one lesson I’d learned: If you want to make it, all you have to do is try.” Do you agree that this is a major lesson in the book? To what extent do you agree-or disagree-with William and his view on human potential? Use evidence from William’s life experiences to support your response.**

**You will need to pick ONE of the projects below from one of the categories. If it is a writing piece (W), it should be at least one page but not exceed two pages. After each project, a format for the project is listed. If you have ideas based on any of the projects below and would like to be more creative or present the information in a different way, please do!**

**Fine Arts:**

1. Create visual representations of key events and experiences in the life of William

Kamkwamba. For example, you might create a series of drawings, paintings,

sculptures, or installations to express your understanding of them and what they

meant to the author.

2. Develop and present a dramatization of events from the life of the author. If time

and opportunity are available, share your dramatization with other students—

either in your current grade level or other grade levels (e.g., at a local elementary

school). **(VIDEO)**

**Health:**

1. Research one of the health issues presented by the author in his book (e.g., hunger

and malnutrition, epidemics, effects of pollution, lack of access to resources such

as water). Present an update on this issue to your class, including the current

status of that issue in Malawi or another country**. (W)**

2. Investigate service and world health organizations working in areas such as

Malawi. What kinds of services and resources do they provide? What is the

current status of health conditions in Michael’s country? **(W)**

**Mathematics:**

1. Study the illustrations and schematics presented in *The Boy Who Harnessed the*

*Wind.* Analyze and present an overview of the mathematical implications of his

work with the windmill. **(W)**

2. Use your knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and other branches of

mathematics to explain the mathematical challenges and issues implicit in

William’s work with designing and building the windmill. **(W)**

3. Investigate statistical data related to the events and issues presented in the book.

**Design graphic representations** to illustrate these data and to explain their

implications.

**Science:**

1. *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* is rich with possibilities for investigating a

range of scientific concepts and processes. Select one from the following list (or

select one that interests you) and investigate it, preparing a report on your findings

for your class **(W) This can also be a poster board project with images and written explanations.**

 The Physics of Windmills

 Wind Farms and Their Potential Contributions to Energy Consumption

 Electromagnetism and Its Relation to Energy Consumption

 Simple Machines and Their Importance

 Farming and Its Impact on Ecosystems

 Electricity: What Is It? How Do We Use It?

2. Although in his early years, the author lacked formal scientific training and

education, he still displayed the habits of mind of a scientist as he approached

creating his windmill. What were these habits and intellectual dispositions (e.g.,

curiosity, commitment, mechanical aptitude, etc.)? To what extent do all scientists

demonstrate these behaviors?

**Social Studies:**

1. Use your study of *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* to investigate one or more of

the social science aspects of the text **(W) This could also be a poster board project with written explanations**

 Government in the Country of Malawi

 The Nature of Village Culture in Malawi

 The Local, Regional, and National Economic Circumstances of Malawi Today

 The History of Malawi as a Country

 The Role of Malawi in International Relations

 The History of Windmills

**Technology:**

1. Try your hand at creating your own windmill. If you’re very adventurous, start

with the specifications and observations made by William Kamkwamba in his

book. Present your scale model to your class—and write about your process comparing your

experiences with those of the author.

2. Create a power point or digital story, highlighting the major events in the text. If

possible, integrate music and narration as you present these events to your viewer.

3. Research the emerging field of alternative energy sources. What is their status in

the world today? What predictions can you make about the role they will play in our future? **This could also be a poster board project with written explanations.**

**Special thanks to the Alexandria City Public Schools from whom much of this assignment was borrowed to allow our students to have an interdisciplinary opportunity!**