

Summer Reading
English Skills 11-12

Due: The second day of school starting August 2007

Read: Chris Crutcher's KING OF THE MILD FRONTIER(An Ill-Advised Autobiography)

Chris Crutcher is an author of young adult books who also works as a family therapist and child protection specialist. His autobiography is a humorous, yet honest look at the real issues facing teenagers today. Chris revisits his late 1950's and early 1960's youth. From trying to impress a member of the girls' softball team (with disastrous dental results) to enduring the humiliation of his high school athletic club initiation, this memoir of the tricky road to adulthood is hilarious, timely, relevant, and interesting to read.

Answer the following questions in the space provided. Write neatly, and if you just want to word process the answers instead, that would be acceptable. Write your answers in complete sentences.

Chapter 1: "Fireworks"

1. Define: impulsivity
2. What were two things Chris did to display his temper?
3. How was his temper useful? Embarrassing?
4. How did Chris as a writer use his youthful anger?
5. What career did Chris Crutcher become involved in?
6. How does Chris try to help Ray in therapy?

Chapter 2: “Bawlbaby”

1. Define: extrapolate (page 30)
2. Define: flirtatiousness (page 31)
3. What trick with cookies does Chris’s brother play on him?
4. Were you ever a “bawlbaby?” Explain.
5. What bet did Grandfather lose to Chris’s dad?

Chapter 3: “Something Neat This Way Comes”

1. Define: misdemeanor (page 39)
2. Define: felony (page 39)
3. Tell briefly the two stories in chapter 3 of how Chris’s brother John got him in trouble.

Chapter 4: “Foul Bawl”

1. Tell about two instances with the jocks that Chris experiences in his school.
2. What was the principal’s reaction to his accident?

Chapter 5: “Of Oysters and Olives and Things That Go Bump in My Shoes”

1. What is a stotan?
2. How did Crutcher use “stotan” in one of his novels?
3. How did Tartar discipline students?
4. What were some things Crutcher had to do in the initiation?
5. Why are initiations now illegal in schools?
6. Do you think initiations should be allowed? Why or why not?

Chapter 6: “E Equals MC Squared”

1. How did Chris mess up “senior sneak?”

Chapter 7: “The Roots of Angus”

1. Janice Winthrop, one of the least popular girls in school, was voted Cascade High School carnival queen. Who instigated “rigging” the election so that Janice won? What was Janice’s response in the spotlight? What did Crutcher learn from this experience?

Chapter 8: "Conversations with Gawd"

1. What problems does Chris Crutcher have with Christianity?
2. How are his beliefs about God different from your beliefs?

Chapter 9: "A Different Kind of Love Story"

1. What problem does Chris face?
2. How does he solve it?

Chapter 10: "Dead Boy Sledding or Why things Happen"

1. Chris Crutcher writes about a student at one of his school visits asking him why someone always dies in his books. What was Crutcher's answer? Do you agree with him that "without loss there is no story?"(page 163)

Chapter 11: “King of the Wild Frontier”

1. Who was Davey Crockett?
2. Tell about one of Chris’s scouting/camping experiences.
3. Tell about one of your scouting or camping experiences.(50-100 words)

Chapter 12: “A Requiem for Rosa Campbell”

1. Define: requiem
2. Who is Rosa Campbell?

Chapter 13: “Becoming a Story Teller”

1. Crutcher was not much of a reader when he was a teenager. He only read when he had to and that was not often. What does Crutcher mean when he writes, “Serendipity did get me to read one book during my high-school years” (page 218)? Why had he not read before this? What was the book he read? Was the next school-assigned book as enjoyable?

Chapter 14: “From Chip Hilton to Michael Jordan and Beyond”

1. When Crutcher was in upper elementary school he was enthralled with the series of Chip Hilton sports books by Clair Bee. In later years Crutcher realized that although the character Chip Hilton may represent something young readers can aspire to, “Chip also represents what can never be” (see page 218)? What does Crutcher mean by this statement? How does it relate to the type of young adult novel Crutcher writes?
2. What censorship problems would this book have?