

Value of Life– Student Packet

In this module you will be asked to determine the value of life.

Items needed to complete the module:

- Articles: “To be or, not to be” soliloquy by Hamlet
“It’s not About the Bike” by Lance Armstrong
“What is a Life Worth?” by Amanda Ripley
- Internet access
- Handouts:
 - Activity 2: Key Concepts
 - Activity 3: Key Vocabulary
 - Activity 4: Annotations
 - Activity 5: Charting the Text
 - Activity 8: Annotations
 - Activity 12: Annotations
 - Activity 14: EPT Prompt

Instructions: Complete all of the activities on a separate piece of paper. Label each activity so that it is easy for your teacher to check your work.

Activity 1: Getting Ready to Read

Before you read what others have to say about the value of life, write a paragraph in response to the following quickwrite prompt:

What does being alive mean to you? How do you assign a value to life? What makes life challenging? What makes life worth living? Describe a few examples that help you to show your thinking about how people should value life.

Activity 2: Key Concepts

See handout

Text #1: “To Be or Not to Be” soliloquy by Hamlet

Activity 3: Key Vocabulary

See handout

Read “To Be or Not to Be” Soliloquy from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*

Read Hamlet’s Soliloquy “To be or not to be”

Watch the following clips on youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JD6gOrARk4>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdp6dpiK8Ko&feature=related>

Activity 4: Annotations

See handout

Activity 5: Charting the Text

See handout

Directions: As you look down the side of the chart, you will see that it asks you for information about the different texts you will be reading in this assignment:

- Title
- Author
- Genre

The title and author are self-explanatory. “Genre” means “type,” so you are asked to describe the type of writing. For this first text, you would put “Drama” or “Play” as the genre.

Across the top of the chart are the ideas you will be tracking as you read the texts in this module. They are presented in the form of questions:

- What is the text’s big issue?
 - This asks you to identify the “main idea” of the text.
- What claim does the text make?
 - This asks you to identify the writer’s perspective on the main idea.
- What are examples or quotes from the text?
 - This is where you would put examples given by the writer to help the reader understand his or her claim. The quotes and paraphrases you worked on earlier will fit well here. Be sure to include page or line numbers (or both) to identify where you found the quote or idea.
- What do you think about the text’s claim?
 - In this box, you will explain your response to the text’s claim, including to what extent (if any) you agree with it.
- What are your examples?
 - Give a few examples from your own experiences that help explain your response to the text’s claim.
- How does this text connect to other texts?
 - If you see a similarity to another text, make note of it here. Connections can be made even among texts that have very different claims.

Now fill in the chart for Hamlet’s soliloquy. The final box on making connections may be left blank for the moment.

Text #2: *It's Not About the Bike* by Lance Armstrong

Activity 6: Surveying the Text

The second text is an excerpt from *It's Not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life* by Lance Armstrong with Sally Jenkins. The excerpt you will read is from the book's opening chapter. Prior to reading, try to answer the questions below. They are designed to help you activate your schema, which is a technical term that means you generate some prior knowledge so you will be ready to read and comprehend more actively.

1. What do you know about Lance Armstrong? If you do not know anything about him, try doing a quick Internet search and see what comes up.
2. What is the significance of the fact that the book was written by Armstrong *with* Sally Jenkins?
3. What kind of text—what genre—do you think this book is?
4. What topics do you think Armstrong might talk about that are related to the issue of how society values life?
5. Do you think Armstrong's claim about the value of life will agree with Hamlet's or not?

Activity 7: Background

Look at the following website for background information on Lance Armstrong and the LiveStrong foundation.

<http://www.livestrong.org/Lances-Story>

<http://www.livestrong.org/Who-We-Are/Our-History>

(Return to) Activity 3: Key Vocabulary

Read the excerpt from *It's not About the Bike* by Lance Armstrong

Activity 8: Annotations

See handout

Activity 9: Charting the Text

Make an entry in your chart from Activity 5 for the Armstrong text. Fill it out as you did with the soliloquy. When you reach the entry for “How does this text connect to other texts?”, briefly describe the ways in which Armstrong responds to or challenges the assertions Shakespeare makes in his Hamlet's soliloquy.

Text #3: “What is a Life Worth?” by Amanda Ripley

Activity 10: Surveying the Text

The article “What Is a Life Worth?” comes from the February 12, 2002, issue of *Time* magazine. Take a look at its form and length.

1. How much time do you think it will take to read this piece?
2. Have you read anything from *Time* magazine?
3. What do you know about that publication?
4. What kinds of articles are commonly included in it?
5. What types of people do you think compose the magazine's primary readership?

Activity 11: Making Predictions and Asking Questions

This article includes the following subtitle: "To compensate families of the victims of Sept. 11, the government has invented a way to measure blood and loss in cash. A look at the wrenching calculus."

1. What predictions can you make about the article's content from this subtitle?
2. What connections do you think you might see between this article and the previous two texts you have read?
3. The first two texts took first-person perspectives on the subject.
Do you anticipate that this article will continue in that vein, or will it be different?
Why do you think so?

(Return to) Activity 3: Key Vocabulary

Read "What is a Life Worth?" by Amanda Ripley

Activity 12: Annotations

See handout

Activity 13: Charting the Text

Make a third entry on your chart from Activity 5 for "What Is a Life Worth?" Feel free to use the highlighting, summarizing, connections, and critical thinking work you did previously as a way to fill out the chart.

Activity 14: EPT Writing Prompt

Schedule a time to meet with your teacher to complete the Timed Practice EPT. You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay about the Greenhouse article. This essay will be scored using the EPT Rubric and is intended to mirror the English Placement Test. The essay *must* be completed in front of a teacher.

Turn in your completed Module Packet when you meet with your teacher to write your essay.