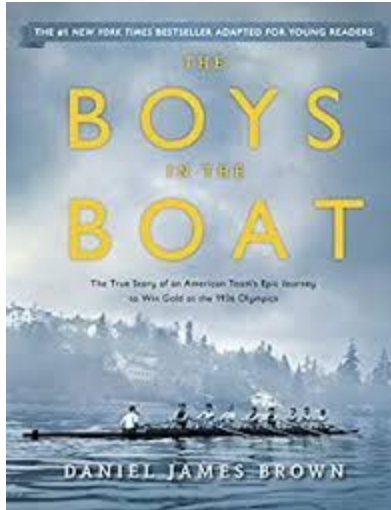


# 8th Grade Summer Reading Assignment



*The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown  
**Young Readers Version**

## Reading Standards

### Cluster 1: Key Ideas and Details

LAFS.8.RL.1.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

LAFS.8.RL.1.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

LAFS.8.RL.1.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Directions: While you are reading the novel, please fill out the following comprehension questions.  
Use **blue text color** for your answers.

## Prologue

1. What did you learn about the novel and subject matter from the prologue?

## Chapter 1 Exposition



1. Cite 2 pieces of evidence that vividly describe the setting at The University of Washington.
2. What is Joe's motivation for joining the crew? Cite text evidence.

## Chapter 2

1. Cite text evidence to describe Spokane Washington.
2. List and describe Joe's family members. (Add them to your character chart below)
3. What major events happened to Joe when he was 4 years old? How do you think this may help to shape his future?
4. What was special about the relationship Joe had with his older brother, how do you know?

## Chapter 3

1. Fill out the following Character Chart to keep track of the characters introduced in the book.

Character Chart

Character	Description	Text Evidence

## Chapter 5

1. What can you extrapolate from this statement stated by professor Bolles? "The boys had a chance to become someone larger than themselves" (Brown 32).
2. Cite evidence that explains why the coaches nickname is "the professor".
3. Analyze the photo on pg. 36. What does this add to the chapter?

## Chapter 6

1. Why does the author choose to have flashbacks throughout the book? What does this show us about the main character?
2. Analyze the photo on pg. 38 about Joe and Joyce's school. What do you notice? What does this add to your understanding?
3. What are the reasons Joe had to stay back at the farm? Use text evidence to support your answer.
4. Joe's dad says, "...if you want to be happy, you have to learn how to be happy on your own" (Brown 43). What does this mean?

## Chapter 7

1. According to the text, how does Joe describe his bond with Roger?
2. What kind of effect does weather have on the boys while they are rowing? Use textual evidence to support your answer.
1. “As he [George Pocock] studied and worked with them and counseled them, he learned much about the hearts and souls of young men. He learned to see hope where a boy thought there was no hope. He saw the power of trust, the strength of affection that sometimes grew between a pair of young men”(Brown 50). Assess the characteristics of George based on this quote.
2. One idea presented in this chapter was how it was hard to find money and shelter. Cite evidence where this is shown.

## Chapter 8

1. What does the title, “Going It Alone” have to do with the central idea of the chapter?

## Chapter 9

1. “‘The only time you don’t find a four-leaf clover,’ he liked to say, ‘is when you stop looking for one.’ When he told her to sit and wait for a moment, she figured he was looking for one of those tokens of his affection” (Brown 60). How does this quote from Joe reveal aspects of his character?

## Chapter 10

1. How does the title, “A broken machine” relate to the central idea of the chapter? Provide text evidence.
2. Is there a better solution to switching the positions of the boys in the boat? What would you do to get the boys out of their slump? Provide text evidence.

## Chapter 11

1. What do Joe's reaction to the bullying and the teasing from his teammates tell us about his character? Provide Text Evidence.
2. How would the story change if Joe decided to fight with his teammates? What would you do?

## Chapter 12

1. Why was the win in New York so significant to the people of Seattle and Sequim?
2. What is the main difference between the boys of the west and the boys of the east? Provide text evidence.
3. How does the theme of determination and hard work versus natural talent present itself in this chapter?
4. Read the following quote and answer the question. Pg. 76, " Lookee there at Cowboy Joe!" one shouted. "Another called down the aisle, 'Hey, boys, come and hear Rantz the rowing troubadour!' Joe looked up, startled, and stopped playing. Red-faced but with his jaw set and his eyes stone cold, he quickly fumbled the guitar back into its case and walked to a different part of the train" (Brown 76).
  - a. What hurt Joe the most about this interaction with his friends? What does this tell us about Joe's character?

## Chapter 13

1. How did Joyce react to the interaction between Joe and Thula? What was Joe's response to Thula?

## Chapter 14

1. How were they driven, "Nearly to Madness"? Provide text evidence.
2. " Ulbrickson began to grow animated, almost emotional. There was more potential in this room, he said, then he had ever seen in a shell house in all his year of rowing and coaching, more than he ever expected to see again in his lifetime" (Brown 94). How was this uncharacteristic of Ulbrickson?

## Chapter 15

1. Use this quote from coach Ulbrickson to explain an important decision about the race between Washington and California? 'I'm sorry,' he said. 'I probably shouldn't do this, but I can't help it" (Brown 104).
2. What can you infer about the relationship between Joe and Joyce from this quote? "Then Joe slipped into soft, sweet, love songs, and Joyce grew quiet, watching him and listening, happy in a different, deeper way" (Brown 102).
3. How is Joe's relationship with Harry, his father, changing in chapter 15? Cite evidence from the text.

## Chapter 16

1. Write an objective summary of Chapter 16 below.

## Chapter 17

1. How did the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the building of Coulee Dam help people like Joe Rantz during the depression?

2. How did the setting of the Depression influence the main character in his struggle to survive?
3. Use the text to cite evidence of difficult and dangerous work at Coulee Dam.
4. How does the theme of teamwork represented as Joe works with the other miners to avoid the dangerous result of explosives?

## Chapter 18

1. Cite evidence that Joe was having a difficult time finding money for tuition at Washington?
2. Explain Joe's emotions when he heard of Thula's death. Use evidence from the chapter.

## Chapter 19

1. Cite evidence to explain why it was so difficult for Joe to trust his rowing teammates?
2. Analyze the quote from coach Pocock, "' If you don't like some fellow in the boat, Joe, you have to learn to like him. It has to matter to you whether he wins the race, not just whether you do'"(Brown 134).
3. What happened on March 21st that changed Joe's chances of going to the Olympics?

## Chapter 20

1. Give an objective summary of Chapter 20, *Finding Their Swing*.

## Chapter 21

1. Why is Chapter 21 titled: *Save, Save, Save?*

## Chapter 22

1. Why is Chapter 22 titled *Here's Where We Take California?*

## Chapter 23

1. What do the photographs in this chapter add to the text? What do they show us about the Olympics?

## Chapter 24

1. What were the Nazi police and soldiers doing to "prepare" the country for the Olympics?
2. What was the "fuming" about?
3. How did the boys show teamwork?

## Chapter 25

1. What does the idiom "A Game of Cat and Mouse" mean?
2. How does the central idea of the chapter relate to this idiom?

## Chapter 26

1. When have you or someone you know been involved in a "Race of your life"?

## Epilogue

1. What happened to Joe?

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### Part 2 Interview

**Interview** and take notes about someone in your life that shows these traits of **perseverance and resilience**, just like Joe.

Suggested Interview questions:

1. When have you struggled to overcome a major obstacle in your life?
2. How did you overcome this obstacle(s)?
3. Who helped you to overcome this obstacle(s)?
4. What skills helped you to overcome this obstacle(s)?
5. Who do you look up to for inspiration?
6. What do the words perseverance and resilience mean to you?
7. What strategies do you use to overcome challenging situations in your life?
8. What words of advice do you have for myself and the younger generation?
9. What skills do you think young people will need to be successful in life?