

# **STUDENT RESPONSE JOURNAL**

**for the novella**

***Muchacho***

**by LouAnne Johnson**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Hello! Welcome to the world of Eddie Corazon, the narrator of *Alternative Ed*. I hope you will enjoy reading this book as much as I enjoyed writing it. (If you hate reading, hold on to your books. I'll talk about that in a minute). First, I want to talk about this journal for a minute. This is exactly the kind of journal I used with the students who were portrayed in the movie *Dangerous Minds*. They had a good time using it; I hope you do, too.

## **YOUR STUDENT RESPONSE JOURNAL**

I created this journal for you to use while reading *Alternative Ed*. I didn't call it a workbook because reading isn't supposed to be work. Reading is supposed to be entertaining, informative or thought-provoking. It isn't supposed to be a chore or a test. It isn't a competition, either. Some people read quickly – they also walk and talk quickly. That doesn't make them smarter. It just means that their internal motors are faster than some other people's motors. Faster isn't always better.

## **YOUR WRITING VOICE**

Have you ever answered the telephone and immediately recognized the voice of a friend or relative? That's because everybody has a distinctive voice. Your friends know what your voice sounds like when you talk -- high or low, loud or soft, fast or slow, throaty or nasal.

You have a writing voice that is just as distinctive as your speaking voice. You may write quickly or slowly. You may use lots of adjectives—or just plain, simple language that gets directly to the point. Writing a note to a friend is easy and feels natural.

But when it comes to school assignments, you may not like writing. Suddenly it doesn't feel natural. It feels like work. You worry about writing correctly or writing in the style that you think your teachers will like.

## **DON'T WORRY**

In this journal, don't worry about writing. Don't try to sound like a professor or a textbook – or the kid sitting next to you! Just write the way you talk and writing will be easy. It will flow out of you just as easily as conversation. Imagine that a friend asks you what you did over the weekend. You don't stop and edit your comments. You just talk. Do the same thing with your writing in this journal.

## **READING READING READING.**

Reading is a skill, just like playing basketball or piano or riding a bike or swimming or training a dog or skateboarding or skiing. You can't do any of those things well unless you practice. But after lots of practice, those things feel easy and comfortable.

If you hate reading, something made you hate reading. You weren't born hating to read. Little kids will eventually figure out how to read if we leave them alone with books because reading is like figuring out a secret code. It's interesting.

But, unfortunately, we don't let kids learn when they are ready. They have to go to school and learn to read whether they are ready or not. And then the problems start. You know what those problems are:

- Everybody reads faster than you do, so you feel stupid.
- Everybody else seems to understand more than you do, so you feel stupid.
- You have to read books and stories that don't interest you, so you feel bored.
- You have to take tests on the boring books and stories, so you feel angry or stupid.
- The teacher makes you read out loud, and you feel stupid
- Reading gives you a headache, but nobody believes you when you tell them –  
so now you wonder whether they are mean or you are crazy. You avoid reading.
- You think of all the years of school and reading ahead of you-- you feel depressed.
- You start to hate reading and the more you hate it the less you read.

The less you read, the worse your grades get – because school revolves around reading.

Do any of those scenarios sound familiar? If so, then you need to back up and figure out where things went wrong with reading and you. There is nothing wrong with your brain or you wouldn't be reading this paragraph right now. You can learn. You are an intelligent human being. So, let's take a look at the way people learn to read.

## **YOUR BRAIN KNOWS HOW TO LEARN**

How do you learn to ride a bicycle? First, you see other people riding bikes. You know how it supposed to look. It doesn't look hard. It looks like fun. You see that you have to hold onto the handlebars, push the pedals with your feet, and steer the bike. Then you try it. You fall down. You get on the bike again. You go a few feet. You fall down. Over and over again.

You don't quit trying to ride the bike. You don't feel stupid. You know it's possible to ride a bike and it can't be that hard because so many other kids are riding bikes. So, you get back on the bike. You realize that you have to learn how to balance your body and the bicycle. You make some adjustments in the way you sit and lean and move the handlebars. You go a few feet farther than you did before – and you fall down again. Maybe somebody older helps you out by holding the bicycle upright. Maybe you just keep trying. But eventually, you ride for a while without falling down.

It feels wonderful. It feels comfortable. You are riding a bicycle. And then you fall down! Now, your brain really goes to work. It says, "I know what riding a bike is supposed to feel like. I am going to keep trying different actions and making adjustments until I figure out how to ride a bicycle without falling down every time." And it does. It may take you 10 tries or 100 tries, but eventually your brain figures out how to ride a bike.

## **FROM BIKE RIDING TO READING**

The same process happens when you learn to read. You hear other people read. Maybe they read you funny little books. Reading looks easy. You try it. You make mistakes. You make lots of mistakes. But you keep trying. Eventually, you read one sentence correctly. Your brain creates a picture of how that feels. It sets a standard for reading – and it makes adjustments until it figures out how to read properly. It knows that reading well involves three things – it sounds natural, it feels comfortable and it makes sense.

The problems start when people interfere with your brain and its learning process. They teach you how to sound out words. They try to make you read faster. They interrupt and ask you questions to make sure you understand what you're reading. Maybe they teach you phonics or some other method of learning to identify words. They tell you not to point at the words. Or they tell you to point at the words. They tell you to skip over the big words. Or they tell you to sound out the big words. Your brain gets confused. You start to hate reading. And then reading becomes a battleground between you and your parents, or you and your teachers, or you and yourself.

## **HOW TO BECOME A BETTER READER**

Your school probably has a reading specialist who has been trained to help people who have reading problems. If you are working with a specialist or a tutor, and it is helping you, then just keep on with that program. But if you've been working and working and you still hate reading, then I have some suggestions for you to try.

### **#1. CHECK THE LIGHTS**

First, ask your teacher for a transparency -- blue, purple, red, gray and yellow are good colors to try. If your teacher doesn't have any transparencies, use a clear tinted report cover that you can buy at any office supply store. Just make sure it's clean and there aren't any creases in it. Place the transparency over the page and see if it feels more comfortable to look at the words.

Yes? Then you might have scotopic sensitivity – your eyes are sensitive to light. Millions of people have light sensitivity and many of them have reading problems. Most schools have fluorescent lights and those lights are the worst for people who have sensitive eyes. Ask your teacher or one of your school counselors to get you a transparency for reading. Or you can ask your parents to go online to [nr.si.com](http://nr.si.com) or [irlen.com](http://irlen.com) where they can read about light sensitivity and find products that may help you. In the meantime, try wearing a hat or sunglasses while you're reading. Try to find a place that has natural daylight. See if that helps.

## **#2. FIND SOMETHING TRULY INTERESTING**

Second, find something interesting to read. Go to the library or a bookstore and look. Take your transparency with you, if you need to. Nobody will notice and if they do, they will be interested. Maybe they have light sensitivity, too! So, you will have a chance to help somebody else.

Okay. We're looking for books. Don't give up. If you don't like the stories and poems that you read in school, then try looking in the nonfiction section. Fiction means made up. Novels and plays and short stories are fiction. The people in those books are not real and the events in those books didn't really happen. Maybe you aren't a fiction person.

Nonfiction means not made up. Maybe you're a nonfiction sort of person. Nonfiction includes thousands of subjects from auto mechanics to zebras, from basketball to outer space, from cooking to dinosaurs.

Take the time to keep looking, browsing for books. Ask other people what books they like and check them out. You might have to look at 100 books before you find one that speaks to YOU. But, eventually you will find something that you think is so interesting that you forget you are reading when you are reading it. Bingo! That's your book.

## **#3. PRACTICE READING BY YOURSELF**

Now that you have something you enjoy reading, you can focus on learning to read well. First, read a few sentences out loud. Do they sound like normal conversation? Does it feel comfortable? Does it make sense? Do you see a movie in your head of what you're reading? If so, then keep on reading. Don't worry about how fast you read. Don't worry about memorizing everything. Just read. The more you do it, the easier it gets.

## **#4. PRACTICE READING WITH AN EXCELLENT READER**

(This advice is from a book called *Read Right* that has helped a lot of kids.)

If it doesn't feel comfortable and doesn't sound like natural conversation when you read, then ask an excellent reader to read a sentence for you. Listen to how they say the words. Read that same sentence out loud yourself. Ask your good reader whether you did a good job. *Ask them not to lie to you.* If your reading is not really excellent, the person should say so. They should read that sentence again. Then you read it. Don't just mimic, look at the words as you read them.

Eventually, you will be able to read that sentence well – and your brain will now understand what excellent reading feels like! It will start creating the process that will eventually help you become a good reader. This may take some time, but it will happen.

If you don't have a friend or family member or teacher who can sit down and read with you, then go to the library and find a book on tape. Get the book itself and sit down someplace

quiet where you can listen to a professional reader read the book to you. Play the tape and listen to a sentence. Read that sentence yourself, trying to sound like the professional reader. If you can record your own reading, that would be even better. If not, just keep practicing until it feels comfortable and easy to read that sentence correctly. Don't give up!

If one method doesn't work for you, then try another. Everybody has a unique brain, and a unique learning style. **Just because somebody can't teach you doesn't mean you can't learn.** It may mean that you don't learn that way that person teaches. But eventually you will find a match for the way you learn – or you will create your own way.

## RIGHT BRAIN? LEFT BRAIN?

One more thought about thinking and then I'll shut up, I promise. Most people tend to be right-brain or left-brain dominant. That means they think more often with one hemisphere of their brain. School is a left-brain kind of place: analytical, logical, orderly. Art studios and music shops are right-brain kinds of places: creative, intuitive, imaginative. If you are a right-brain kind of person, you might not feel so intelligent when you are in school, unless you have learned to switch on your left-brain thinking.

Here's an example of a right-brain word game:

Look at the words *eye, you, sea, tea*. They all have something in common NOT their meanings. There is something similar about all of them.

Only one of the following words shares that same common trait: *them, can, jay, dew*. Can you figure out which word from the second list has the same trait as all the words in the first list?

The answer is "jay" because it sounds like a letter of the alphabet (j). *Eye, you, sea,* and *tea* also sound like letters of the alphabet when you say them (i, u, c, t).

Here's another example. Look at the boxes below. Each one of them represents a common phrase or familiar saying such as "flat broke" or "dead wrong." The location and size of the words may give you clues. (*The answers are on the next page...but don't peek!!*)

A

five

B

pigs pigs pigs

C

cof fee

Did you figure them out? If that was easy for you, you may be a right-brainer.

Answers: A. high five B. three little pigs C. coffee break

## GOOGLE IT

You can read more about Right-Brain Left-Brain dominance on the Internet. If you are a right-brainer, you may be having trouble with subjects such as math and science. You aren't dumb or weird. You just need to learn how to turn on that logical part of your brain. There are breathing exercises and other things you can do. Research this – I think you'll find it interesting.

And if you are a right-brain person, chances are high that you will blossom after you graduate from school where your creativity will be a huge plus instead of a problem. In the meantime, good luck! And, as Eddie Corazon would say: *Ay te watcho!*

Visit [www.louannejohnson.com](http://www.louannejohnson.com) for links to more information and to find out about the kids who were portrayed in the movie *Dangerous Minds*.

## **CHAPTER 1: Beecher at the Library**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

Do you think Miss Beecher is a good teacher? Why or why not?

What kind of person is Eddie? What makes you think so?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why does Miss Beecher tell T.J. Ritchie to go out and start his criminal career? Does she really want him to be a criminal? If not, then why did she say what she said?

As the story begins, why does Eddie duck out of the library without talking to Beecher?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

Eddie's school is located in New Mexico. How does this affect his story?

Would you rather attend an alternative or a traditional high school high– why?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

Near the end of Chapter 1, Eddie says, "...then I think Beecher realized you should never talk that long to a kid like Ritchie..." What does this suggest might happen in the future?

What do you think Eddie will be doing ten years from now? Twenty years from now?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

How do you feel about school? Why?

How do you think your teachers would describe you?

What do you think your life will be like 10 years from now? 20 years from now?

What is the best thing about you – as a person (not as a student)?

## **CHAPTER 2 – Getting Rid of a Teacher**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

What kind of kid is T.J. Ritchie? What does he do or say to make you think so?

Does Eddie like Miss Beecher? What passage(s) in the book make you think so?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why does Eddie remember so many things that Beecher said, even though she was his teacher for only a few months?

If you were a teacher, what would you do to motivate Eddie and kids like him? Why?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

What kind of neighborhood do you think Eddie lives in? How is it different from yours?

Why do some parents object to kids learning about evolution?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

Why are Eddie and his classmates so proud of making teachers quit?

What do you think is the real reason Beecher got fired?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

What is your long-term goal for your education and/or your career?

Beecher said, "Your time is your life." What does that mean?

How do you spend most of your time when you aren't in school?

What activities are you doing to move you closer to your long-term goal?

## **CHAPTER 3 – Go Back Where You Came From**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

Why does Eddie use bad grammar sometimes and not at other times? How does it change your opinion of him when he uses good or bad grammar?

What is the difference in the way Miss Beecher and Mr. McElroy teach?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why does Eddie feel sorry for the new kid from Ohio?

Why doesn't T.J. Ritchie care what people say about him? Do you think he really cares?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

Why do borders between states or countries create so much conflict between people?

What would happen if we got rid of all the borders between countries?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

What do you think of Eddie's "Canadian idea"?

What do you think T.J. Ritchie's future holds in store for him?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

What does your first name mean? (Check it out online at [www.babynamaddicts.com](http://www.babynamaddicts.com))

Do you like your name? Why or why not?

Where were your grandparents born? Your great-grandparents? Great-great grandparents?

(If you don't know, ask your teacher how to research genealogy on the Internet. A good place to start is HYPERLINK "<http://www.familysearch.org>" [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) which offers a free search – watch out for scams and sites that charge fees.)

## **CHAPTER 4 - Just Say No**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

What kind of person was Bobby Chavez? Why do you say this?

Why is Eddie so upset about Bobby's death?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why does Eddie stop watching TV news?

Why do TV news stations play the same story over and over and over again?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

How do the police in your neighborhood compare to the ones in Eddie's neighborhood?

What is the drug situation at your school? Does this bother you? Why or why not?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

How does Eddie seem different in this chapter than in the previous three chapters?

What is Eddie's attitude about police officers?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

Do you think of police officers as friends or enemies? Why?

Why do you think people become police officers today, when the job is so dangerous?

What would you do if the drug dealers approached you the way they approached Eddie?

What do you think are the real reasons that kids join gangs?

## **CHAPTER 5 - Harvey Castro**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

What do you think is the basic difference between Eddie and Harvey?

Why didn't Eddie just explain what happened after he accidentally kicked his teacher?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why do people from similar backgrounds often have such different personalities?

Why do some people want to make English the official language of the U.S?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

What do you think would be the hardest thing about moving to the U.S. from some other country?

How should schools handle arguments between teachers and students in order to be fair?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

Based on the book, how would you describe Eddie's mood and attitude at the end of this chapter?

What could Eddie do to calm down and behave more like Harvey?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

Have you ever tried to learn a foreign language? If so, how did you feel? If you haven't tried, what foreign language would you choose to learn and why?

How would you describe your personality?

How is your personality similar to or different from your parents or other people in your family?

If you could change one thing about your personality, what would you change and why?

## **CHAPTER 6 - Walking with a Cop**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

In what ways is Eddie similar to his father? How is he different?

How is Sgt. Cabrera look and act differently from what Eddie expected?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why hasn't Eddie dropped out of school?

Why does Sgt. Cabrera suggest that Eddie read *The Four Agreements*?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

Is racism a problem at your school? Why or why not?

How do you feel about having police officers on school campuses? Should they be armed?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

What might prevent Eddie from graduating?

What does Sgt. Cabrera mean when she says a book can change your life? How could that happen?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

What was your reaction when you read T.J. Ritchie's outburst in class?

How do you feel about class discussions? Are they useful?

Do you participate in class discussions or do you just listen? Why?

What do you think about Eddie's statement, "If you want to graduate high school, you have to be a liar"?

## **CHAPTER 7 - Yo! I Got a Girlfriend!**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

What is Eddie's attitude towards girls? Give an example from the book to show this.

Is Eddie prejudiced? Explain why you believe he is or isn't.

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why does Eddie finally decide to sign up for ballroom dance class?

Why do you think Lupe was standing by herself?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

What is the bully situation at your school?

What can schools do to prevent the kind of bullying that Lupe experienced?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

At the end of the chapter, Eddie argues with Primo instead of taking his advice, as he used to. What does this tell you about Eddie?

Lupe and Eddie have very different attitudes about school and life in general. How do you think this will affect their relationship?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

If a student kept attacking you and the school officials didn't believe you, what would you do?

Lupe says that women just pretend to let men run things? Is she right or wrong? Why?

Why do you think Primo and Lupe don't get along?

If you and Eddie were in the same class, would you be friend? Why?

## **CHAPTER 8 - I Wrote Some Poems**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

Eddie was surprised to hear that T.J. Ritchie wrote a good poem? Were you surprised? Why?

What do you think Primo would say or think about Eddie's poems?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why would a tough kid like T.J. write poetry?

Is competition a good motivator for students? Why or why not?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

What kinds of art, posters, etc. are displayed in your English or Reading classroom?

If you were a teacher, how would you decorate your classroom?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

In what ways has Eddie changed since the beginning of the book?

What do you think has caused Eddie to change?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

Would you like to have a teacher like Miss Beecher? Why?

Do you prefer poems that rhyme or ones that don't? Why?

What could teachers do to make poetry more fun for students who don't like it?

Why do you think students have to study poetry in school, since very few people read or write it?

## **CHAPTER 9 - Getting Rid of the Mexicans**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

If T.J. Ritchie went to your school, would you be friends? Why?

In your opinion, what three words best describe Lupe?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

What does Eddie mean when he says, "I got a reputation to maintain?"

Essays take a long time to grade, so why do teachers give so many writing assignments?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

What different ethnic groups live in your neighborhood or town?

How do you feel about going to school with kids from different countries?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

Does Eddie have more or less self-esteem now than he did in Chapter 1? Explain.

What grade do you think Eddie will earn on his 5-paragraph essay? Why?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

Why do you think so many kids smoke when they know it can kill them?

What do you think of the idea of building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico?

How do you feel about reading? Why?

Do you like to write? Why?

## **CHAPTER 10 - Googling God**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

Eddie calls Curtis Coleman an intellectual. What does he mean?

Is Eddie an intellectual? Why?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why did Eddie get so upset about the book-burning preacher?

Why do people care so much about other people's religious beliefs?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

Why doesn't Mr. McElroy punish the students who start arguments in his classroom?

How would your English teacher handle a kid like T.J.?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

Is Eddie a good or bad influence on Lupe? Why?

Is Lupe a good or bad influence on Eddie? Why?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

If you were a teacher, how would you handle class discussions?

Would you punish students who swear in your class? Why?

What is your opinion of the book-burning preacher?

Do you think Eddie and Lupe are a good match? Why?

## CHAPTER 11 - Getting Arrested

### WHAT A CHARACTER!

Why does Eddie let Lupe go with him to Planned Parenthood?

What does Eddie think about Lupe's father?

### WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?

Why does Sgt. Cabrera care so much whether Eddie reads *The Four Agreements*?

Why does Eddie's father send him to stay in Truth or Consequences? How will this affect the relationship between Eddie and his father?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

If nobody gets pregnant or gets a disease, why do parents still not want their kids to have sex?

How is Lupe's relationship to her father different from Eddie's relationship with his father?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

How does Eddie feel about going to T or C?

Do you think Tio Antonio is going to be able to “whip Eddie’s *nalgas* into shape”? Why?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

What kind of relationship do you have with your parents/guardians? What could you do to improve your relationship?

How do you think your parents/guardians would describe you to somebody who doesn't know you?

How would you answer Eddie's question – Who is Eddie Corazon?

Who are you?

## CHAPTER 12 - The Four Agreements

### WHAT A CHARACTER!

Is Eddie intelligent? Why?

Do you agree with Eddie's theory about gangbangers needing love? Why?

### WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?

Why does Eddie finally decide to read *The Four Agreements*?

Eddie thinks he sets a good example for his little brothers and sister. Do you agree? Why?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

How would your life be different without electronics such as TV, cell phones, computers, etc?

Which one of the Four Agreements do you think Eddie needs to think about the most? Why?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

Will Eddie's plan to change his appearance and be an intellectual work out? Why?

What do you think Eddie's cousins will say about his decision to "turn over a new leaf"?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

Write about a time when your own thoughts created a reality.

Who would you ask if you needed a recommendation? Why this person?

Do you think Eddie will make it to college? Why?

Which do you plan to do: go to college, trade school, tech school or get some kind of on-the-job training? Why?

## **CHAPTER 13 - Living in T or C**

### **WHAT A CHARACTER!**

How does Eddie feel about his new status as one of the smart kids?

How is living with Tio different from what Eddie expected?

### **WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?**

Why does Eddie agree to go to the poetry reading?

Why doesn't Tio like commercial TV? Do you agree with him?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

Would you like living with Tio? Why?

What is the most interesting animal or bird you have ever seen? Describe it.

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

Do you think Lupe will wait for Eddie or will she break up with him? Why?

Will Eddie be able to maintain his new attitude and image? Why?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

If you had to go to a different school, what kind of impression would you like to create there?

What adult has made the strongest impression on you in your life? Why?

Do you think following *The Four Agreements* really could change your life? Why?

## CHAPTER 14 - The Black Cat

### WHAT A CHARACTER!

Why is Eddie so surprised to hear that his mother was once a “hot babe”?

What does Miss Beecher mean when she says Eddie is not a manipulative person?

### WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?

Why doesn't Eddie want to hear the answer to the question of why Tio thinks he is a virgin?

Why does Eddie decide not to ask Lupe to marry him until he's 21 or a big success?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

Why does Eddie feel nervous about Miss Beecher reading his journal?

Having a person conversation in a car is different from having a personal conversation when you are sitting or standing face-to-face with somebody. Why is this?

## **AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

What does Eddie mean when he says, "...who knows, I might do a little flying myself...?"

What do you think Miss Beecher will say about Eddie in her letter of recommendation?

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

Why is it better sometimes to just be quiet, instead of trying to make somebody feel better?

If your parent(s) or guardian(s) weren't in your family, how do you think they would seem different to you?

Did your parents or guardians have big dreams as teenagers that didn't come true? If so, what were those dreams? Or are they living their dream lives today?

What is your dream for your future?

## CHAPTER 15

### WHAT A CHARACTER!

How does Eddie compare now to the boy he was in Chapter 1?

What do you think Eddie's parents would think of his poem, "*Veinte/Veinte Vision?*"

### WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK?

Why does Ramona secretly sign up Eddie to read his poem?

Eddie could have escaped if he really wanted to, so why does he stay and read his poem?

**A TIME AND A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING:**

How would you feel about reading your poems in front of a group of people at a book store?

Why do we care so much about what other people think of us, especially people we don't know?

**AND THE PLOT THICKENS:**

What do you think will happen when Eddie gets back to Rosablanca?

What is the first thing you think Eddie will do when he gets back home?

**WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

Do you like Eddie better at the beginning or at the end of the book? Why?

Do your friends encourage you to follow your dreams? If they do, in what ways do they support you? If they don't, why are you friends with them?

Which of The Four Agreements would make the most difference in your life, if you really followed it? Why?

**Thank you for considering the questions in this journal and sharing your opinions. Good luck to you in school and in life. Follow your heart.**

***Ay te watcho!***