



THOMAS

Common Read 2018

Instructions

The Thomas College Common Read is our invitation to join our academic community of individuals who share and explore ideas with each other.

After reading and reflecting on this year's selection, Tom Rinaldi's *The Red Bandanna*, we'd ask you to create a written response from one of the options listed below. During Fall Orientation, you will have an opportunity to discuss what you have written along with other students in your class.

Option 1

The Red Bandanna relates the tale of Welles Crowther, a young man working in the World Trade Center who perished during the terrorist attack of 9/11. Crowther decided that day to help others escape from the scene, sacrificing himself to help others. The author concludes that Crowther is the kind of person who had “the chance to live out and execute an edict every child is taught but most forget fast: to help” (13).

Rinaldi sees Crowther's fateful decisions on 9/11 as a reflection of an approach to life where, for matters great and small, “Effort counts. Attitude matters. Hard work wins” (23).

For this writing option, identify a time or a challenge in your life where effort, attitude and hard work made the difference, and helped define success for you. What was your challenge, and how did your effort and attitude help you succeed?

Consider the following when outlining your essay:

- Describe the specific goal or challenge you faced. What did you want to achieve, and what did it require?
 - How did your attitude impact your experience, either positively or negatively? How did attitude, hard work and effort help you achieve your goal?
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Option 2

Welles harbored a desire to become a firefighter, even after he found success in a financial firm on Wall Street. He shares that dream of change with his father, and Rinaldi points out, “For so many of us, change first begins by giving it voice” (81).

For this writing option, identify a time when you wanted or needed to make a change, and the first step began with “giving voice” to that option, to openly accept the possibility of change. What was that change and how did “giving voice” to it make it possible?

Consider the following when outlining your essay:

- Identify the specific change you considered. What were the barriers that stood in your way?
- How were you able to give voice to the option for change? Who—or what—helped you on your way, and how did giving voice to that option make it possible?

(continued on back)

A word about writing. . .

Write at least 500 words (two typed double-spaced pages). Provide illustrations or examples from your life to support your work. Since this will be the first example of your writing skills for your instructor for your First-Year Experience course, you should demonstrate your understanding of appropriate sentence structure, grammar, punctuation and word choice.

Please return your essay by Friday, August 3rd to

Dr. Thomas Edwards
Provost
Thomas College
180 West River Road
Waterville, ME 04901
Tel (207) 859-1362
Email: edwardst@thomas.edu

If you email your essay, please save it as a Microsoft Word or “rtf” (rich text format) document.

If you have any questions about the Common Read project, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Edwards or Debbie Cunningham, Vice President of Student Success. Debbie’s telephone number and email address are (207) 859-1297 and retdean@thomas.edu. She will be happy to help you in any way she can.

We are looking forward to receiving your project, and to welcoming you on campus this fall.

Our best wishes to you this summer and for the coming semester!