

All students entering grades 6,7,and 8 at Chatham Day School should read Jacqueline Woodson's novel, *Before the Ever After*. Set in Maplewood, NJ, the novel-in-verse tells the story of a family in flux as they face the reality of what football can do to the body. As you read, I want you to pay attention to certain aspects of the story and respond in writing to the following prompts:

Rising 6th graders:

1. In a paragraph of at least six sentences, please identify a character who shows respect and explain with examples from the story how they demonstrate respect. Please identify a character who shows responsibility and explain with examples from the story how they demonstrate it. Finally, please identify a character who is kind and explain with details from the story how they demonstrate kindness.
2. In ZJ's community, there are leaders, followers, and people who are the glue that hold others together. In a paragraph of at least six sentences, identify which of these titles best describes **you**. Give me examples to show me how you fit the description. If you feel like you are a mix, explain this!
3. Watch the film *Remember the Titans*. After viewing the movie, explain to me which character you would like to be friends with and why and which character you would not like to be friends with and why.

Rising 7th graders:

1. In a paragraph of at least six sentences, please identify a character who shows respect and explain with examples from the story how they demonstrate respect. Please identify a character who shows responsibility and explain with examples from the story how they demonstrate it. Finally, please identify a character who is kind and explain with details from the story how they demonstrate kindness.
2. What if you were ZJ, what would you do in this situation? Explain to me in a paragraph of at least six sentences how you would cope with ZJ's father's illness, how would you interact with the father, mother, friends, etc. What if you were an NFL coach, what would you do to protect your players? Explain to me in a paragraph of at least 6 sentences what you would do as a football coach to ensure the safety of the athletes.
3. Using research engines, find out what CTE is and explain it to me in a paragraph.
4. Read this [article](#) from the WashingtonPost. If you had the chance to play in the NFL, would you do it? Why or why not? Explain in a complete paragraph.
5. Watch the film *Remember the Titans*. After viewing the movie, explain to me which character you would like to be friends with and why and which character you would not like to be friends with and why.

Rising 8th graders:

1. In a paragraph of at least six sentences, please identify a character who shows respect and explain with examples from the story how they demonstrate respect. Please identify a character who shows responsibility and explain with examples from the story how they demonstrate it. Finally, please identify a character who is kind and explain with details from the story how they demonstrate kindness.
2. When thinking about the characters in Woodson's story, who uses their voice to create change? Who is silenced? Who doesn't speak, but should? In three separate paragraphs, please answer each of these questions using evidence from the text to support your arguments.
3. Using research engines, find out what CTE is and explain it to me in a paragraph.
4. Read this [article](#) from the WashingtonPost. Based on your reading, why do you think Sean Morey believes in football? In what ways is he speaking up for himself and for others? Lastly, why do you think that sports exist? Answer each of these questions in a complete paragraph.
5. Watch the film *Remember the Titans*. After viewing, explain to me in a paragraph or a letter the following: who uses their voice and for what, who is silenced and why, and who learns the most and what do they learn?