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The Journey of Finding Yourself

I remembered how I was so hooked up to the *Percy Jackson* series when the books first came out, that I wouldn’t put the book down. I got so excited when Percy got to know his father, but also cried when Luke had to sacrifice for his parents’ mistakes. The adventures and quests the main characters went on built their identities on the way, and they eventually learned their backgrounds. The awkward time between teens and adulthood is always hard to locate an identity. Who are we? And who do we want to be? Every time I open an adventure novel, or a mystery book, I search along with the characters. I admire when the characters are courageous and fearless while encounter the obstacles. I wanted to be as brave and as intelligent as they are, and the characters always taught me to be as strong and firm when I face challenges. Finding myself was definitely a hard process, having to search my own interests and passions were the absolute hardships in my college career. The process of finding my own identity is what made me. The environments and the people that I have been with shaped me; such as the people I met in college, and the cultural differences I adapted. I was heart broken when Luke asked if Annabeth ever loved him. However, Annabeth finally found the answer she has been searching throughout the series; how could she love Luke when she spent most of the time with Percy, through death, and through battles?

The search of self-identification along our journey of life is an important process, at the end we will eventually find out who we really became. Not copies of our parents, or clones of our siblings, but ourselves. Self-identification will not find itself unless experiencing hardships. The importance of the process of self-identification for young adults is about developing character and personality. Through the hardships and after time passes, young adults will eventually locate where they stand, also learn to accept, tolerate and appreciate everyone else’s flaws. The most important of self-identification is to develop the strength to change one’s own flaws and self improve until he or she outgrows from his or her old self.

Dashner, James. *The Maze Runner.* , 2009. Print.

The Maze Runner is a story about a bunch of selected teenage boys that got purposely put into the middle of a maze, and were all self-trained to survive in this jungle-like place. The only way out is to go through the changing and unpredictable maze. No one ever considered or dared to stay over night out in the maze because of the fear of getting killed until Thomas and Teresa came along. Thomas found out he previously know Teresa, making the situation even more complicated. The providers stopped the food supplies, and the people inside the maze have to figure out a way to get out of the maze before starving or getting eaten alive by the maze monster, the Grievers.

The Maze Runner is a post-apocalyptic dystopian science fiction novel, which indicates a break-through revolution from the teenage boys. This novel was intensely written by the horrifying details such as facing death and extreme survival. As the novel goes, Thomas learned to trust people he had never met in his life, and cooperate with the people inside the maze, along with identifying himself. This novel emphasizes the importance of friendship, the bravery of taking risks, and the intelligence of out-running the experiment conductors.

Noel, Alyson. *Evermore.* , 2009. Print.

Evermore is a fantasy novel that introduced the immortals, who lives in completely different world from the mortals. The story goes on having Ever dealing with her own car accident condition, causing her to see people’s emotions. Just as her life starting to get as ordinary as always, Damen came along holding the power of silencing the random energy Ever kept sensing. Despite the unknown status of Damen, Ever still tried her best to identify him and understand him.

Evermore seems like a cheesy young adults novel, with common romance and a typical happy ending. However, along with Ever suffering from her own post accident conditions, she also had to help deal with Damen’s problems. Ever may not be a loving character, but she is willing to satisfy for any loved one in her life, even though she has no idea what the consequences are. To take other people’s issues as one’s own is something very selfless, usually lack around young adults. Ever learned to care for her loved ones and not taking them for granted, and take risks when it’s necessary.

Meyer, Stephanie. *The Host.* , 2008. Print.

The Host is an alien invading Earth and everyone dies kind of novel. Melanie and Wanderer are forced to cooperate because they’re in the same body but have totally different thoughts. Wanderer took over Melanie’s body, but the conscious of Melanie did not fade away, which is not usual and unexpected after a host has taken over. Melanie and Wanderer agreed and strived to find the person they both love, but has experienced difficulties such as consider each other’s needs and desires.

The Host is definitely more in depth in relationships. As an intruder, Wanderer wanted the perfect condition to let her do her work and make her fellow relatives proud. As for Melanie who was trapped inside her own body, just wanted to save her family and loved ones. The friendship between Melanie and Wanderer was almost impossible in reality since they’re considered enemies, and though they experience a lot of hardships accepting each other, they have achieved both of their goals while adapting each other’s existence. Melanie became a less selfish person as the novel goes on, and she has accepted that she is an outsider and she has to communicate, not just blurting everything out. And later she found out Wanderer never wanted to hurt anyone, Melanie tried her best to trust her enemy. Wanderer also learned what she known for all her life is questionable and not everything is right.

Gaiman, Neil. *Coraline.* , 2002. Print.

Coraline is a dark fantasy novella describing the perfect dream life for unsatisfied and lonely kids. Coraline and her parents recently moved into the Pink Palace Apartments, where neighbors are weird and irritating, and the place is old and wicked. Coraline hated moving away, and she also hated she never gets attention from her parents. While discovering the house, she found out this little door in the living room that was blocked by bricks after opening. She couldn’t think more of the door, and she went to bed without having dinner. The door opened late at night, and she later discovered the doorway leads to a completely different life, where everything is better. Little does she knows, that everything comes with a consequence.

Coraline gave young adults a slap in the face. While becoming an adult, the un-satisfaction of not having attention from parents turned into annoyance, and often wished to have a different set of parents, who does everything one wished for. The novella by letting Coraline poke through the pink dreamy bubbles of kids, directly tell them there is no such thing as a “free lunch”. Everything will not just automatically turn better. Coraline got spoiled by the other mother and wanted to live in the fantasy world forever, and the other mother finally gave out what she wanted in exchange: her eyes. Coraline forced herself to face the other mother by challenging her, in order to save her parents. Coraline learned to face reality and had finally realized despite her parents are boring, they will never hurt or demand anything from her.

Riordan, Rick. *The Son of Neptune.* , 2011. Print.

The Son of Neptune is a fantasy adventure novel filled with all the Greek and Roman Myths you could think of. Percy woke up confused and with lost memory. He did not understand why the monsters kept coming at him and have no idea where to go or where to be. Percy managed to get to a half-blood camp, but somehow filled with different demigods and the wrong domain of Gods – Romans. Percy needs to find Annabeth and his dad to figure out what’s going on.

Personally, the Percy Jackson series is my favorite out of all of these books. The fact that the story is engaging and intensely detailed, Percy and his friends need to find out who their real parents are, and try not to get killed along the way. The Son of Neptune also pointed out how disorganized the authorities (parents/Gods) are, the fact that they never cared how many children they had and put the children at great risk. Young Adults are encountering the challenges of figuring out who they’ll become and who they want to become, if the parents never give substantive care, the children would follow whoever they think that’s trust worthy.

Hadden, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time.* , 2003. Print.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time (The Curious Incident) is a brilliant mystery novel about a boy with Asperger syndrome, functions with high intelligence but easily at ease. Christopher has learned his mother was dead by his father and had never really questioned it until he saw Wellington, the neighbor’s dog, died under a garden fork. The owner called the police and the police suspected Christopher has killed the dog. During the interrogation, Christopher was under too much pressure and he hit the policeman when he touched him. He was later released, but he decided to investigate the case himself. While investigating, Christopher found out that his background might be a total lie.

The Curious Incident is published in two different versions for adults and children. This is another book that reveals the mistrust between relationships. Young Adults are going through the process of finding themselves and mostly based on their parents, and if along the process they found out what they have believed were all lies, it’ll mostly cost damage to the relationships, and resulting broken families. Christopher learned to stand-up from the lies and forgives his parents, which extremely hard for a child that has Asperger syndrome.

Cass, Kiera. *The Selection.* , 2012. Print.

The Selection is a series five young adult novels focuses on a competition for the current king’s heir for a hand in marriage. As a daughter of a Caste Five family, the selection will be the only chance to bring America Singer’s Caste up. By competing the girls of the entire kingdom, marrying Prince Maxon will almost be impossible. America wasn’t exactly interested entering the selection because she was in love with Aspen, who was a caste lower than her, and she knew her mother would never let her marry someone with lower status. America still entered the selection, and she soon found out the selection was nothing to her imagination.

The Selection went through most of the young adults’ struggles: the inner conflicts of developing a relationship with someone she once loved, and the person that she faces towards now, the debate between her parents and her own will on the selection, and the completion with all the other girls. This novel went through a young lady trying to absorb as much as she can during the selection, and realize how cruel the reality can be. The fact that any of the girls could become loyalty and anyone could go home overnight put tons of pressure on their shoulders. The need of intelligence to win over everyone’s heart and the bravery of taking chances are necessary for young adults.

Lore, Pittacus. *I Am Number Four.* , 2010. Print.

I Am Number Four is a science fiction novel that included young adults with superpowers. John Smith and his guardian Henri learned that Number Three is killed by the Mogadorians, who has been killing every Number one by one. In order to outrun the chasers, they moved to Paradise, Ohio and thought they would be safe. However, the Mogadorians had searched John by his traces and finally found him at Paradise. During the run, John and Henri met Number Six, who is fully aware the abilities of the Mogadorians. They strive to battle along, but soon found out the Mogadorians aren’t ordinary villains.   
 I Am Number Four is a complicated novel filled with the relationships of parents, peers, and enemies. John hasn’t had the full knowledge of his own powers until late in time. While time passes he has to deal with the pressure of the hunters, and the development of his own relationships. The self-identification is very important in John; he cannot fight or battle if he has nothing to defend himself.

Grahame-Smith, Seth. Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies.* , 2009. Print.

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies (PPZ) is a parody novel mash-up with the popular classic Pride and Prejudice. The story takes place in 19th century England where a zombie plague has spread across the country. Elizabeth Bennet lives with her parents and her four sisters. Her father gave his daughters intense weapon training, but her mother only strive to find her daughters the best and the wealthiest husbands. By entering the ball, Elizabeth meets Mr. Darcy, who’s a noted zombie killer. As the relationship of Jane Bennet and Mr. Bingley grows, Elizabeth befriends with one of the zombie soldiers, Whitman, and learned that Darcy wasn’t completely honest with his past. Soon after Mr. Bingley’s sudden departure, as Darcy and Elizabeth’s relationship grows complicated, the zombie outbreak become more severe, threating the Bennets directly.

PPZ is actually an interesting read. Despite the love for Pride and Prejudice, PPZ is adding some exciting and thrilling details along the finding for love. In extreme situations such as being chased by zombies, the fear of the outbreak and losing loved ones are required high intelligence. Young adults will encounter situations that are not controllable, such as moving away, or a sudden departure, the circumstances allow them to go through different scenarios and figure out which is more beneficial.

Watson, S.J. *Before I Go To Sleep.* , 2011. Print.

Before I Go To Sleep is a psychological thriller describing a woman named Christine Lucas, who has no memory whatsoever prior to the past 20 years of her life. Christine learned from her husband, Ben that she was married to him and have been together since then. Christine then found her journal and realizes she could not remember anything after she goes to sleep at night. She learned that she has routine appointments with Dr. Nasch, and she soon found out that “Ben”, is not the Ben she recalled.

Before I Go To Sleep is a very realistic thriller. When there’s nothing to rely on, even the memories and the person close to you are not once you believed; it feels like there are no safe grounds. Young adults are easily distracted and sometimes hard to distinguish between the right and the wrong, they often follow what they think is right, but having memory loss needs bravery to adapt the situation. There are a lot of young adults that suffer under domestic abuse and have no idea how to escape, this book taught young adults how to survive in extreme conditions, even though the odds are not on their sides.