I’d like to begin by thinking about some of your favorite books that have been turned into movies. *Harry Potter. The Hunger Games.* Can you think of more?

These books have been so successful in connecting with readers that multiple movies have been made about each series. Many of the actors who play these popular and meaningful characters will go on to play other roles, but they will always be Harry Potter and Katniss Everdeen.

If you read the book before you saw the movie, the way you pictured these characters in your head might have been different from the way you saw them on screen. When you think of iconic characters like these, do you picture the movie version, or the version you had when you read the book? Maybe you saw the movie before you read the book, so you never had the chance to come up with your own idea for what Hermione Granger looks like.

As you think about these questions, also think about the purpose of a movie. What are some reasons someone might want to make, or watch, a movie about a story they already know? Do you like coming up with your own version of the character? Write your ideas below:

Now, choose a book that you have read, one that hasn’t been made into a TV show or movie (that you know of). Take your time. When I was in middle school, it might have been *Heat* by Mike Lupica. Think of your favorite character, or characters. Do their faces come to mind? What do they look like?

In the space below, write:

The book you chose:

The name of the character(s):

Is this character your favorite? Why do you think you picked this one? What qualities do they have?

Describe how you imagine this character to look. Does the image you came up with remind you of anyone in your life, or anyone you have seen before? Do they look like anyone you’ve ever seen before? Where do you think this image came from? Pick 2 of these questions and write your answers below:

As you are thinking about this, you might start to think of other characters from books whose appearances you have imagined. They may look like people from your actual life, or they may not. If you think of any, write about them. If not, don’t worry about it.

If you are having trouble, think about the idea that any character you are thinking of has been imagined differently by every person who has read the book. Even though the words are the same on the page, your version of them is unique to you. How does that make you feel about the books/characters you are writing about?

There is no one purpose of this exercise. One is that it lets students think about the power of imagination to create a visual world out of words on a page.

Another might be that we connect characters from the book to people from our lives.

Yet another lesson is that the inner voice that reads us these books varies for every reader, and for some people, that same voice might be narrating their thoughts even after they’re done reading.

Ultimately, every person who reads a book, whether it be *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* or *Romeo and Juliet*, will experience the book differently because they are unique people who have lived vastly different lives, even if they grew up in the same town. To end the lesson, please think about some other things that on the surface look like they are the same for everyone, but in reality might be very different. Interpret the question in whatever way you find most appealing. Discuss your thoughts below: