

Directions: Read through the questions and then answer the questions as you watch the movie. Questions 12, 13, and 14 can be answered after the movie. Your writing must be legible and neat.

1. Why aren't Ms. Gruwell's students motivated to succeed in school? What outside factors affect their ability to learn?
2. Ms. Gruwell is the first teacher to show trust and respect for the "at risk" students at Wilson High. How does Erin Gruwell demonstrate this? Why are some students more resistant to trusting each other?
3. Describe how the honors English students are treated differently from the "at risk" students. Why?
4. What are some of the inequalities among students in the classrooms in Wilson High School?
5. Why is trust such an important component of a teacher-student relationship?
6. Why do some of Ms. Gruwell's students believe they won't live past age 18?
7. How do the classmates learn to trust one another? How does reading and writing initiate this change?
8. Miep Gies, the woman who hid Anne Frank, is a hero to Ms. Gruwell's students. What does Miep Gies mean when she tells Ms. Gruwell's students, "You are heroes everyday."?

9. Why is Eva so affected by the ending of Anne Frank's diary?

10. What makes Eva choose to "go against her people" in the courtroom? Do you think this was a good decision? How does her family and friends react?

11. Do you think it's more important to "protect your own" or do what's right? Explain your answer.

12. Describe the transition in Mrs. Gruwell's classroom from the first day of freshman year through the end of the year – how have the students changed? How has Ms. Gruwell changed?

13. Describe how writing in journals helps transform the lives of the students. How does writing "free" the students from their pain?

14. Ms. Gruwell gives her students the opportunity to find success and graduate. Do you think the students continued along the path of success without the help of Mrs. Gruwell by their side? Why or why not?

