

Close read and annotate this passage (pp. 46-48 of *You are NOT Special*).

Day after day being a kid, being a person, is an exercise in trial and error. This is learning, which is growing, which is an incremental evolution into a new person—who will continue to try and err, try and succeed, ever to evolve, right through to the end. All, then, is flux. Which can be more than a little frightening. Being a kid, even a big one, is investigation, tentative experimentation and assessment; it’s looking around and trying things on to see how they fit. No matter how you phrase it, the question is always “Am I the kind of person who...?” And because you haven’t been yourself all that long, nor free to make your own choices, you don’t know the answer, not for sure...

...you study your friends and the other kids at school to instructive effect. You watch television, flip through magazines, explore the web, hear what your parents and siblings and aunts and uncles and grandparents and teachers and coaches have to say. You have maybe kind of an idea what things are about, enough evidence is all around you, but you don’t *know*. So you investigate, maybe give them a little try. Each experience, then, is not just an experience but an experiment, a lesson in life, a lesson in identity. Am I the kind of kid who stays up until three A.M. studying for a physics test? Well, how can you know unless you try it? Am I the kind of kid who wears skinny jeans and red Chuck Taylors? Try them on and see. Am I the kind of kid who gets a job after school? The kind who sings in the shower, blames everyone but myself, marches right up to a teacher and demands an explanation, posts a hundred and one pictures of myself on Facebook, lets my parents do the deciding, cannot be seen sitting by myself in the cafeteria, lies to protect a friend, watches what I eat, says screw it to a curfew and deals with the fallout when I get home, has a fantasy football team, writes poetry, gets a petition going to right an injustice, punts the homework to watch reruns of *The Big Bang Theory*, tweets my every passing thought, plays COD for four straight zoned-out hours, observes the five-second rule, takes pages and pages of detailed notes in World Civ class, refolds the T-shirts after I pull one from the bottom of the pile? Well, how can you know unless you know?



Write three statements about yourself in this format: I am the type of _____ who _____.

Examples: I am the kind of person who likes to work in groups. I am the sort of kid who gets up two hours before school starts so I’ll have time to do my hair. I am the type of wizard who casts spells on students who can’t stop giggling. I am the kind of secretary the boss’s spouse would not want the boss to hire. I am the kind of teenager who needs more boundaries than I have. I am the type of psychologist who can diagnose everyone’s problems but my own.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Now ask the teacher three questions phrased this way: Are you the kind of teacher who....?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Share! Inquire! Discuss!

Okay, now you are on your own. Fill up the lines that follow with information about yourself that will help the teacher make this class as educational, engaging, enriching, challenging, worthwhile, and painless as possible for you.

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____