***NIGHT OF THE SPADEFOOT TOAD INTERPRETIVE ESSAY***

***DUE WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3RD***

***Keep in mind that a theme or a big idea in literature is a controlling idea or message that is prevalent throughout the piece; you will write our first literary essays that discuss at least one dominant theme or big idea from the Night of the Spadefoot Toad. You will explore this theme in depth and cite evidence from the story that supports the theme. (Please revisit the two powerpoints that were uploaded to the reading section of the class website to assist you).***

**Part One: Choose a theme. There are several. You may choose one of these or another. Just make sure you have enough evidence to support your theme.**

**Kids Can Make a Difference in the World**

**It Takes Time to Fit In**

**People Grow and Mature in their Lives**

**It Takes all Kinds of Friendship to Make the World Go Around**

**We Never Stop Changing and Transforming**

1. **First paragraph: DISCUSS YOUR BIG IDEA IN GENERAL TERMS: In your first paragraph, describe for example, what does it mean to grow up or mature? Remember you can explore this in a noun like maturation, transformation, making a difference, fitting in, etc. Try to put this in your own words. You may use a dictionary, thesaurus, book of thoughts or internet resources like quotegarden.com or brainyquotes.com to assist you. You may wish to begin by posing a question to your reader but it should be catchy. Your first paragraph should be at least three or four sentences long. Do not mention the book yet.**
2. **Second paragraph: LINK THE BIG IDEA TO THE TEXT: Here is where you will connect the big idea to the book. (For instance, in the novel, *Night of the Spadefoot Toads* the big idea of friendship is very important). You would then explain how this theme is obvious in the book. Explain it in your own words. You may life a line or two from the text. (For instance, the author says that…) This paragraph should be at least three to four sentences.**
3. **Third paragraph: ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE BIG IDEA: Give another specific example of evidence from the text that supports your theme or big idea and add a transitional phrase. (For example, the theme of friendship is also apparent when…) This paragraph should be three to four sentences long.**
4. **Paragraph four: THE KNOCK ‘EM IN THE STOMACH PUNCH EXAMPLE: This is the most powerful example of how the theme is evident in the story. This is the strongest example from the story. Knock em dead with this powerful punch where you really show the importance of your theme. This is at least three to four sentences long and make sure you use specific textual evidence. But don’t forget to add a transitional phrase at the beginning of the paragraph.**
5. **NOT OPTIONAL—DO IT! Paragraph five: CONNECT THE BIG IDEA OR THEME TO ANOTHER STORY, POEM, SONG, ETC). You may wish to use o poem, story or song we discussed in class or read your own. You connect the theme of this book to another text. But make sure you are specific when explaining how the two texts are related. Give evidence from both texts that support.**
6. **Paragraph Six: TA-DAH CONCLUSION: Wrap it up. Re-state your theme and big idea. But leave us with an interesting idea, QUOTE or question to think about. This should be about three sentences long. Fully explain it.**

**Don’t forget—re-state idea in a topic sentence. Add evidence and then present insight.**