

The Sign Painter Close Reading Sample

General Understanding	The boy came to the deserted town and needed work. Once he completed the job of the painting the billboards with the man, why did he leave town and the job?
Key Details	<p>When the boy says, “It’s like painting a mural...but who’s going to see it here?” he gives some insight into how he thinks about his art. What does his statement tell you?</p> <p>The man’s response is “That’s not our problem.” What insight does this give you about the man? How are the two different in their approach to the art?</p> <hr/> <p>When the boy and the man were talking about why the boy paints, he says that he does it for the love of art. When the man says that he also earns a wage, the boy doesn’t answer. Why do you think? Is this in line with other responses that he’s had to these types of questions?</p>
Vocabulary and Text Structure	<p>Did you notice as you read that the author had the man and the boy use almost only single sentences when they spoke? Why do you think he did that? How does that type of exchange help you understand the characters and what they believe?</p> <p>There are 4+ times in the selection that the author says something like “the boy didn’t answer.” It seems that the author is really trying to help us understand the character of the boy, but chooses to not use many words – or no words at all! How does inference play a part in our understanding of what the boy stands for or believes?</p>
Author’s Purpose	<p>One of the things that I notice throughout the piece of literature is that the author leaves thing undone or unsaid, as we’ve talked about! How does this help us figure out the author’s purpose for writing the book? What, based upon how he wrote the text, do you believe his purpose is?</p> <p>What other ways that the text was constructed help us understand his purpose in writing the book?</p>
Inferences	<p>I want to look at the brief interaction between the boy, man and the guy in the white suit talking on the phone about the ArrowStar. Let’s read that again really quickly.</p> <p>(Read the section)</p>

	What does this man do for us as readers? How does this scene connect to the other parts of the story? What would we be missing if we never heard the conversation of the man in the white suit?
Opinions, Arguments and Intertextual Connections	According to Allen Say, we should go for our dreams and not settle for just earning a wage. Do you see the boy as the hero of the story...or is the man the hero?