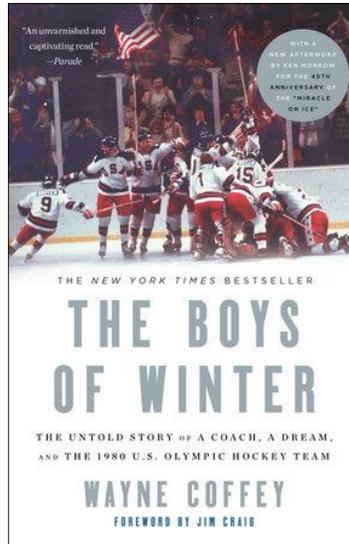


Northeast Metro Tech Summer Reading 2021

“One school, one book”



The Boys of Winter

By Wayne Coffey

“Once upon a time, they taught us to believe. They were the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team, a blue-collar group led by an exceptional coach, and engineered perhaps the greatest sports moment of the 20th century. Their “Miracle on Ice” has become a national fairy tale, but the real story is even more remarkable. It is a legacy of hope, hard work, and homegrown triumph. It is an account of everyday heroes who just wanted to play hockey happily ever after. It is still an amazing event.

Author Wayne Coffey is one of the country’s most acclaimed sports’ journalists. A former writer for the New York Daily News and author of more than 30 books, including 5 New York Times bestsellers, he is a three-time nominee for the Pulitzer Prize and has been frequently honored by the Associated Press for his sports feature writing. The Boys of Winter, is widely regarded as one of the best hockey books every written.

The Boys of Winter is a non-fiction novel, which is a different type of literature. The genre of non-fiction in literature consists of factual information presented in a format which tells a story. Non-fiction is writing based on real people, places and events.

The following describes the elements of a non-fiction novel. While you are reading The Boys of Winter, consider these elements (from *A Guide to Non-Fiction Writing*).

There are two (2) broad categories of non-fiction: Informative non-fiction and Literary non-fiction.

Informative Non-fiction

- ✓ Informative non-fiction is written to provide factual information.
- ✓ Informative non-fiction's main purpose is to inform and includes;
 - Science and History texts
 - Encyclopedias
 - Pamphlets
 - Brochures
 - Maps & atlases
 - And most articles in newspapers & magazines

Literary Non-fiction

- ✓ Literary non-fiction is written to be read and experienced much the same way you experience fiction.
- ✓ Literary non-fiction is different from fiction in that real people take the place of fictional characters, and the settings and plots are not imaginary.
- ✓ Literary non-fiction includes:
 - Autobiography – the true story of a person's life, told by that person
 - Almost always told in the first person point of view
 - Usually book length because it covers a long period of the writer's life
 - Short autobiographical writings include journals, diaries and memoirs
 - Biography – the true story of a person's life told by someone else
 - The biographer interviews the subject if possible
 - The biographer researches the subject's life
 - Contains many of the same elements as fiction (character, setting, plot, conflict, etc)
 - Essays – a short piece of non-fiction writing that deals with one (1) subject
 - Often found in newspapers and magazines
 - The writer might share an opinion, try to entertain or persuade the reader, or simply describe an incident that has special significance
 - Informal essays/Personal essays
 - Explain how the author feels about a subject
 - Formal essays
 - Serious, scholarly, and are rarely found in literature textbooks

Summer Reading Assignment

As part of your summer reading assignment (read the book), you will keep a response journal (see the attached Response Journal Guide) as you read. This journal will be collected by your English teacher and assessed when you return to school in September 2021. The following questions are required, and you must answer each in your response journal. Throughout your reading you will find multiple moments of conflict. There are four (4) primary conflicts:

- Person vs Person
- Person vs Self

- Person vs Nature
- Person vs Society

In your response journal you should identify and explain which conflict is being illustrated in the text. **You are strongly encouraged to complete multiple response journal entries for each of the four (4) types of conflict. At minimum, you should have ten (10) entries in your response journal, and at least one (1) entry for each of the four (4) conflicts.**

REQUIRED Questions and Response Journal Topics

1. How does The Boys of Winter fit the genre of Non-fiction? Please give two examples from your reading in each of these components - character, setting, plot – that support The Boys of Winter as a work of non-fiction.
2. What was happening in the world and the United States in 1979 and 1980 that is connected to this story? Hint: you may have to do a little research about these 2 years.
3. Is the book written from **a third-person limited point of view** (Coffey reveals only the thoughts of 1 character) or from **a third-person omniscient point of view** (Coffey writes from many characters' perspectives). Please be sure to include examples that support your choice.
4. Look up the term "Cold War," and explain how The Boys of Winter relates to the Cold War. Give at least five (5) examples to support your conclusion.
5. According to author Coffey's description of the Mark Johnson goal at the end of the 1st period of the game against the Soviet Union, it is the turning point in the game and this book. Why do you think the author believes this?
6. Even with their loss to the Americans, the Soviets still had a chance to win the gold medal. If the Americans beat Finland in the gold medal round, the Americans were assured the gold medal. But if the Americans lost to Finland and the Soviets beat Sweden, the Soviets would win the gold medal and the US would win bronze. If that had happened, do you think this book would have been written? Why or why not? And, do you think this victory over the Soviets would still be such a presence in American Olympic history and hockey history? Why or why not?
7. The Prologue, "The Last Reunion" is only the 2nd and then final time that the 1980 US Olympic hockey team would be united. Why do you think author Coffey chose to begin this book with the funeral?
8. Choose a quote from the book and discuss in detail why you selected the particular quote and what it means to you.
9. What do you believe the theme of this book is? Please support your choice with examples from the reading.
10. Choose a plot event, describe the event. Then choose 2 characters affected differently by the event you chose, and explain their reaction or involvement with the event.
11. Many of the players on this team had difficulty trying to "re-enter earth's atmosphere after their time at Lake Placid." As the brother of one of the players said later: "I've always thought that winning the gold medal was the best and worst thing that ever happened to him. . .He climbed the mountain at 22, and he's spent the last 40 years trying to get back there." What do you think this brother of a player means?