Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Hour \_\_\_\_\_\_

Close and Critical Read Directions

1. Show Confusion

2. Comment, Question and Connect

3. Write a one sentence summary

**Are we really raising spoiled,**

**work-averse kids?**

Marguerite Kelly, Lifestyle Expert

I’m the mother of three boys — the first one just turned 13 — and questions have been whirling in my head ever since I read a scary article about teenagers.

Do teenagers really want their lives to be different from ours? Do they watch us working long hours and dealing with work’s distractions at home, and then say to themselves, “No way am I going to do that”? Do they think that working harder for longer is just “too much”? And are they burned out by our demands to get top grades and to take part in extracurricular activities so they can get into college?

And now, for my most important question: Is it true that teenagers want more stuff than ever, but they don’t want to work for it? I know that we give our children more than our parents gave us, but are we giving them the work attitude to go with it? If not, how can we make them more aware of their responsibilities?

If you want your children to be more responsible, you have to give them more responsibilities. A toddler can get the morning paper and bring a fresh diaper to his mom or dad when he needs to be changed; a grade-school child can make his bed and his school lunches; and a teenager can mow the grass and wash his own clothes.

Unfortunately, many parents aren’t giving small jobs to their small children because parents can do the jobs quicker or better themselves, and they don’t give their school-age children many chores because, as they say with pride, “school is their job.”

If you’re one of those parents, you should know: This is fallacious reasoning. You and your husband run errands, buy groceries, cook meals, clean the house and the gutters, too, and yet both of you probably go to work every day. Your children should do chores because school is part of their lives, just as work is part of yours. Chores not only make children feel needed, but they teach survival skills as well as time management. This will give them the self-confidence they need to get the most out of college and of life.

It’s hard to make your children do their chores, of course — and for you to endure their many mistakes — and it’s especially hard to deal with children who moan and groan, which they all do. Nevertheless, you still should make your children do whatever chores they can do at their age.

If you want them to do these jobs better or more quickly, take the TVs out of their bedrooms so they can’t watch when they should be asleep, and don’t let them watch TV on school nights, either. You also should ban the use of cellphones while your children are doing their homework, and have them do this work in an area where you or your husband can see what’s on the computer screen as you pass by. It’s amazing how fast a teenager can write a paper if he’s not trying to text his friends, update his Facebook status and watch TV at the same time.

To answer your other questions: Relax. Even the best-behaved teens want as much stuff as they can get during puberty — a stage that lasts about three years and makes teens as self-focused as they were in pre-K.

Your teenagers may tell you that they’ll never be like you, or do what you do, or work as hard as you work, because adolescence is the age when they are supposed to pull away from their parents, and this is one way of pulling.

They’ll pull better — and do their chores better, too — if you always respect their minds and if you encourage their altruism rather than chastise their errors. This will help them develop a purpose in life that centers on something bigger than themselves, especially if they know that their character matters much more to you than their SAT scores or their extracurricular activities. These are the lessons that will keep your boys from burning out as so many young adults are doing these days.

Summary:

**Close and Critical Response**

**1. From what point of view is this piece written? Cite a sentence as evidence.**

**2. What tone do you feel the author is using throughout this piece? Explain.**

**3. What do you believe Kelly’s purpose was in writing this article?**

**4. Do you agree with what Kelly is suggesting to parents? Explain.**

**5. Respond to Kelly’s question:** Is it true that teenagers want more stuff than ever,

but they don’t want to work for it?