Task Prompt: Using the reading knowledge collected during the course of this unit, students will write a critique of their independent reading novels. Students will include a summary of the story, opinions on the story, and the theme, without giving the end away.

**Lush by: Natasha Friend**  

Will he come home tonight? Will he cut down on the drinks? Will he ever get better? Imagine worrying about your father’s life more than you even think about your own.

Samantha (13) knows her dad is an alcoholic but he will never admit it. Some nights her father never makes it home and is found passed out on the street, other nights he comes home without a clue in his head where he is. Sam has never told her best friends about her dad’s situation because she is so embarrassed; they have never been invited to her house unless her dad is out of town or in other words “stuck in rehab.” Her father really made them all believe that he was going to change and try to be a father figure. Sam truly started to have hope that her father was going to settle down but that’s when everything got out of hand, leaving her brother in the hospital in critical condition and her father stuck in rehab. The only person Sam has to look up to now is a random stranger who she shares all her life problems with; the person goes by the name A.J.K.

Throughout the book, Natasha Friend used the theme of overcoming obstacles. Overcoming obstacles was a huge part of this book because Sam had to live with the fact that her father had a serious drinking problem. “As usual I have to wonder why he bothers to show up at all. He’s so far removed from my life he probably doesn’t even know what grade I’m in.” I feel like the author included this statement in the book to show Sam’s perspective on her father’s behavior. I can relate to Sam because I am also a 13 year old girl who goes through losing
friends and trying to make up; she’s just like the rest of us but on top of everything she goes through her own life she has an out-of-control father that she has to constantly worry about. I would highly recommend this book to everyone and anyone open-minded and interested in problems and struggles in others’ lives. I would recommend people read this book because it is truly an eye-opener on how different our lives could be in a quick blink of an eye. Lush really makes you stop and think about how you would manage to make it through the day while worrying what your father would do next. I would rate this book a ten out of ten. I have never read many books that have captured my attention so well. This book changed my perspective on reading and I now appreciate reading more than ever before. Out of all the books I have read in my lifetime this was my favorite by far. I always wanted to know what would happen next. I often found myself staying up reading Lush until my eyes could take no more. This book is definitely worth the read and you won’t regret the time you put into reading this book.

Amy 6/13/2015 12:20 PM
Comment [6]: The writer directly includes herself in her critique stating clearly with an example why she can relate to this character.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:38 AM
Comment [7]: The writer makes a clear recommendation to readers and even declares the type of reader that would like the book.

Amy 6/13/2015 12:21 PM
Comment [8]: The writer continues to give reasons why she supports the positive recommendation of the book.

Amy 6/13/2015 12:22 PM
Comment [9]: Writer give a strong statement here which further entices the reader to take a chance on this book.
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<th>ON TARGET</th>
<th>ALMOST THERE</th>
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<td>RESPONSE/OPINION</td>
<td>Uses many details from the book to express opinion of the plot, characters, writing style, and other elements of storytelling.</td>
<td>Uses some details to express opinion of the plot, characters, writing style, and other elements of storytelling.</td>
<td>Uses few details to express opinion of the plot, characters, writing style, and other elements of storytelling.</td>
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<td>RECOMMENDATION</td>
<td>Gives positive or negative recommendation on the book and uses specific reasons from the text to support opinion.</td>
<td>Gives positive or negative recommendation on the book, but only uses some specific reasons from the text to support opinion.</td>
<td>Gives positive or negative recommendation on the book, but uses few specific reasons from the text to support opinion.</td>
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This is an example of an advanced 8th grade Book Critique. The writer gives a clear opinion about whether others should read the book and she makes a clear argument supported with evidence about why this is true. The writer steps beyond the skill of summarization to make a reasoned argument about things that she liked in this text and why others will like it as well. Writers have a hard time stepping beyond summary to make a short argument in critique writing, but this writer was able to do that.