HANDOUT 7.1A   Who's the Best Role Model?

Each of the following scenes features someone who could be considered a role model. Read each scene carefully and then rank them from the one who you think is the best role model (1) to the person who is the worst role model (4). Make sure you can support your decisions. You'll be talking about your rankings in small groups, and then we'll be sharing them as a class. Make sure that you're ready to explain the evidence on which you are basing your judgments and why that evidence affected your ranking.

1. Marissa was one of the first women to make it big in reggaeton. She was a real inspiration to both women and men trying to break into the business. She started with nothing, and now she has a worldwide following. But with fame and money came problems. Lots of them. Her marriage failed because she was so devoted to her music that she had time for nothing else. She's in the midst of a drug rehab that seems to be working but it's early yet. She's alienated from her family because they think she should be doing more good, not to them (she's always been very generous to her family with her money) but to the community. But the music keeps getting better and more and more young women are trying to follow her lead.

   Ranking for Marissa _____

2. After 50 years with the same company, James is finally retiring. He didn't advance very far in his career, but he found a niche that suited him and kept at it. Never late for work, never sick. James was the kind of guy people tended not to notice. He didn't do anything flashy or spectacular. But he worked hard and everyone who worked with him knew that they could count on him to do his part. At his retirement party, the president of the company said that she wished there were more like him, but that kind of loyalty was very rare these days. His kids appreciated all the kind words but wondered why there had been so few recognitions and raises during such a long career. "Don't worry," said James. "What matters is showing up and doing your job, not what others think."

   Ranking for James _____

3. Zoey always had a knack for talking with high school kids. That's why she was such a great high school English teacher. She was the kind of teacher who inspired others. The kids in her class learned to love to read novels and write about them. Every year she would receive a handful of letters from former students saying that she changed their lives, and every year she was voted outstanding teacher. Zoey loved to teach but doing it right took so much time. And while she made a good living, she didn't make the kind of salary that the doctor and lawyer friends she went to high school with made. It gnawed at her, especially since her 10-year reunion was coming up. At that reunion she ran into a former classmate who was starting up a new line of vaping products. He needed someone who could talk to kids and develop a social media presence to make them try his brand. He was so impressed with Zoey that he offered her a job right there and at 50% more than she was making, with promises of an ownership stake if the products took off. Zoey decided to take the risk. After all, she was young. It was time to put her skills to use and make some real money.

   Ranking for Zoey_____

4. If there was an injustice in the city, you could be sure Miles knew about it. And he didn't just learn about it, he always tried to do something. He started a campaign to try to get the city to provide more housing for the homeless by staging a one-person sit-in outside the mayor's office. He got some press coverage and a promise to study the issue, but no tangible results yet. His latest cause was trying to get the school district to adopt an explicitly anti-racist curriculum that focused on how America itself and the city were built on White supremacy. He was booed when he spoke at a school board meeting and even threatened by some who called him anti-patriotic. He knew he had little chance of prevailing in his politically conservative city. But while winning from time to time would have been nice, what mattered, thought Miles, was fighting the good fight.

   Ranking for Miles _____