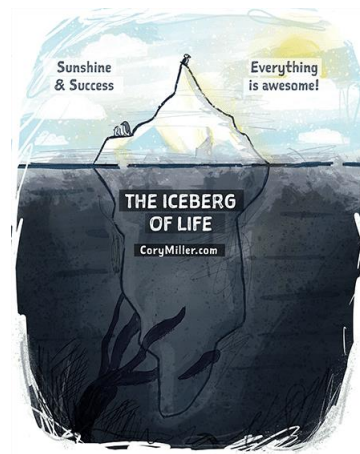


## The Person Below the Surface: A Thematic Study of Empathy

### GETTING INTO THE MINDSET:



### Task 1: Quick Write

Respond to the photos above in a quick-write on loose leaf (about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a page hand written and single-spaced). What message do you think these images aim to send? What are some ways you can relate to this message in your experience (text-to-self connection)?

### Task 2: Word Study

Write your own explanation of what “empathy” is (you may need to look it up or watch videos to help you understand the concept before explaining it in your own words). Then, in a paragraph, explain how the concept of “empathy” relates to the photos above.

#### RATIONALE FOR OUR THEMATIC UNIT ON EMPATHY:

This quarter you will be completing a character study of the protagonist from your novel. Before we delve into that, however, we will take some time to discuss and practice empathy. We will learn how to look beyond a person’s outward appearance or the mask they hide behind to see the REAL person beneath the surface. At the end of the study, you will take the skills you have learned about how to dig deeper into a person’s real self and apply them to study your novel’s main character. This will hopefully result in a deeper analysis of your character that goes beyond the surface.

### Task 3: Digging Deeper into Character

What does it mean to be human? How do we really learn to understand each other? How can we shine a light on what matters?

“Humans of New York” began as a photography project in 2006. Brandon Stanton had a goal of photographing 10,000 residents of the city. The project grew into something quite different. He asked them about moments in their lives: the sad ones, the happy ones. He asked them about their struggles and their fears. He asked them about their guilt and anger and regrets. He asked them about their hopes and their dreams. He asked them to give advice to others. But most of all, he made them human.

1. Take some time to examine some of the pictures and stories from the website [www.humansofnewyork.com](http://www.humansofnewyork.com) and choose TWO of your favorites.
2. Summarize what you learn about each of the subjects.
3. List two other questions that you would ask each subject to further explore his/her character. Then, answer each question from his/her perspective.