**ACTIVITY: The Outside-the-Box T-shirt ~ Make You Own Motto**

**Chapter 3. Better than Stoopid** (From *The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle* by Leslie Connor)

In this chapter Ms. Blinny, the school social worker, helps Mason out by taping over the word STOOPID on his T-shirt. She redesigns the shirt with her Sharpie pen and gives Mason a new motto he can live by: *Thinks Outside the BOX*

A motto is a short sentence or phrase that sums up the beliefs or ideals that guide a person, family, or organization. For example, an athlete might live by the motto, “Work hard, play hard.” A school’s motto might be, “Where great minds grow greater.” The police union’s motto is, “To protect and serve.” You might have heard this one: “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.”

Here’s what to do:

Think of your own personal motto and design a T-shirt (it can be a paper cutout) with the appropriate words on it.

Helpful hints:

\*Mottos can range from serious, to practical, to humorous.

\*You might think of a motto as a way to:

-STATE your intentions

-DEFINE a goal

-EXPRESS your world view

-SUGGEST how you would like others to think of you

\*Often a motto includes:

-alliteration or other attention to word sounds

-a play on words

-repetition or rhyme

Get together (virtually!) and share your T-shirts. It can be challenging, but try be ready to talk about why you think your motto is the one for you.

**Extra challenge**: Imagine that you are a writer about to begin a story. Well-drawn characters are a must! They drive the plot! Some great questions to ask yourself are:

1. What kind of person is my main character?
2. What goes on inside their heart and mind?
3. What does this person care about?

Imagine a motto that fits your character. (You can even design them a T-shirt!)

Think of a scene for your story where we might see your character display the traits that informed their motto.

Try writing a few sentences from that scene. Now build those sentences into a paragraph.