Artifact Connections to **The Unidentified**

Franny Freshman

**Name**  
_______________________________________________________________

**Brief overview of the artifact (describe it):**

The artifact I found was an infographic on a website called **Education Funding Partners** on their page called “In the News” – you need to scroll down the page until you reach it. It was originally published as a brief story on the Harvard Business Review’s website Alumni page under the heading, Five Bright Ideas in June of 2013. I am including a snapshot of it at the end of this page.

**Source Info:**

Format: Infographic on a website

Date accessed: May 14, 2014

Publisher/author/producer info (Who created it or is responsible for it?):

Harvard Business School originally produced it for an article entitled Five Bright Ideas about Harvard Business School Alumni who are “influencing the way education does business”.

**Connection:**

Write one paragraph explaining a significant connection you see between the artifact and the book. Back up your ideas with textual evidence from the book and the artifact. (Feel free to use the back of this paper or another piece of paper if you need more room.)

The connection I see between my infographic artifact and The Unidentified is that in the book corporations sponsor various aspects of the school environment and the students vie to become spokespeople or get “branded” by corporations. To quote part of the story that runs along with the infographic, “For-profit EFP matches Fortune 500 companies with large public school districts that agree to accept financial compensation in return for allowing marketing programs through school websites and on campus, including on-premise signage, naming rights, and branded items.” The infographic, along with the quote, seems to somewhat eerily echo (on just a slightly smaller scale) what is going on in the book.

Write one paragraph substantively commenting on the significance of the connection. What is the significance of the connection in the context of a contemporary teen’s world? Think about how the connection illustrates implications the book makes about where our culture is headed.

This is a significant connection because corporate sponsorships and branding are not unusual for a contemporary teen to see in their high school environment in a variety of ways these days. There are pop and vending machines in the hallways, there are advertisements on scoreboards, sports teams often require their athletes to have a specific type/brand of shoe, at prom time some of the formalwear companies hire “student reps” to help them get tuxedo rentals or dress purchases—to name but a few examples. This seems to be only a hint of things to come for teens and their schools according to how the book describes its school environment and the students who attend it. After all, the school itself is located in a former mall and, from the very first few pages, the narrator describes the extreme interest sponsors have in the students there: “We know the sponsors care. They invest in the schools because they care about what we wear, what we listen to, what we watch—and what we’re saying about what we wear, listen to and watch. The cameras aren’t there for surveillance, they’re there for market research.” The book seems to be implying that education in our culture will soon be driven almost entirely by corporate interests and market research. It made me think twice about whether the toehold these current commercial interests have will one day morph into the culture described in the book. (Infographic on next page)
sponsorships that are sanctioned by each participating school district. Public education is thus able to benefit from corporate America’s annual $150 billion in advertising expenditures. It’s a positive marriage of the corporate sector and public education.

With public education budgets tighter than ever, school districts are looking to new funding models involving corporate partnerships. EFP brings together major companies and school districts, with the districts accorded final approval.

By supporting computer labs and programs, high-tech companies can draw from a well-trained hiring pool.

With the arts a frequent target of cutbacks in schools, marketing opportunities abound.

A healthy cafeteria menu speaks volumes, but so can advertising on school and district websites.

Everybody loves a winner. EFP can pair a corporate brand’s excellence with a high school’s excellence in athletics.