

ENGLISH 10 HONORS

Summer Reading Assignment

Your assignment over the summer, prior to enrolling in English 10 Honors, is to read a novel and complete an approach paper. The approach paper has specific requirements so be sure to follow all directions below. An example of this assignment is included for the novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. ***This assignment must be typed!**

The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane

****Please DO NOT consult Sparknotes for this assignment. Responses similar to those found online will receive a zero.**

Writing an Approach Paper:

- I. **Proper Heading:** name, date, class, and novel title
- II. **Summary Paragraph:** A detailed paragraph which explains the ENTIRE novel using as much description and detail as possible. Focus on your writing style and work on sentence beginnings. Do not begin every sentence the same way. Be creative and precise. It is sometimes difficult to condense an entire novel summary into a few sentences. Make sure you use proper grammatical structure in each sentence.
- III. **Character Descriptions:** Choose three or four main characters in the novel. Next to each character's name, write 4-5 words which describe the character distinctly. Use vivid vocabulary words and check a thesaurus for ideas. If you use a particular word to describe a character, you **may not use that same word to describe another character**.
- IV. **Discussion/Essay Questions:** Write three questions that a teacher might ask you about the novel either in class or for an essay. These questions should be thought-provoking and almost always take more than one line to type because they ask readers to combine more than one idea. Just *writing* these types of questions helps you to anticipate what questions might be asked of you during class discussion and encourages you to think more insightfully about the book.
- V. **Key Passage:** Choose the most important passage in the novel (in your opinion). Type it word-for-word in the approach paper. Make sure you identify the speakers.
- VI. **Key Passage Explanation:** In a fully-developed paragraph (6-7 sentences), explain why your chosen passage is important to understanding the novel. In your explanation, make sure you integrate quotes (actual words or phrases) from the key passage to strengthen

your explanation. Often, this selected passage will offer clues to the novel's themes. Explain any themes connected to the key passage.

Sample Approach Paper

To Kill a Mockingbird

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee is the story about three years in the childhood of Scout and her brother, Jem. As an adult narrator, Scout recalls a series of loosely connected episodes which occur in Maycomb, Alabama, in the 1930s, a time of racial segregation and extreme prejudice. Weaving two strands of narrative, Lee presents Boo Radley, the mysterious and reclusive neighbor whom the children find both intriguing and frightening, with the trial of Tom Robinson, a hardworking, innocent black man who is being defended by Scout and Jem's just and courageous father, Atticus Finch. The two strands of narrative tie together in the end when Boo Radley emerges from his seclusion to save Scout and Jem from a cowardly attack on them by Bob Ewell, who vowed vengeance on Atticus after the trial.

Scout Finch: strong willed, intelligent, tomboyish, loyal, quick-tempered

Jem Finch: thoughtful, steadfast, imaginative, maturing

Atticus Finch: just, courageous, insightful, determined

Boo Radley: reclusive, lonely, simple, protective

1. *To Kill a Mockingbird* deals with the issue of racial equality, but Harper Lee also includes the strong story line of Boo Radley. How does the Tom Robinson trial combine with the Boo Radley story thread to make a novel that speaks powerfully of more than just racial equality?
2. What do Jem and Scout finally understand about their father in terms of what he stands for in their own lives and in the lives of many of the townspeople?
3. Discuss the three different views of Tom Robinson's trial and its outcome as seen by Atticus, Jem, and Scout, and the townspeople.

Key Passage from Chapter 3, page 30:

Atticus: "First of all," he said, "if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb into his skin and walk around in it" (Lee 30).

Atticus' entire philosophy of life seems to be summed up in his words to Scout. To be an objective and just community member, one must be able to "climb into" another person's "skin" and "walk around in it" or be able to see issues from another person's perspective. Atticus offers these words to Scout after her first day of formal schooling in the first grade when she is upset that the teacher does not understand her efforts to explain Walter Cunningham's financial situation. These words from Atticus begin her first lessons in life. Through the course of the novel, Atticus will show the children his compassion for people different from their family. He will show them his attempts to "climb into someone's skin and walk around in it" when he defends an innocent black

man, Tom Robinson, against a town's wishes. He also instructs his children to be respectful and compassionate toward Boo Radley, a neighborhood outcast. One of the main themes of the novel is understanding and accepting people different from oneself.