Summerville Union High School

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Ms. Diehl

“*Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation*

*determines what you do.*

*Attitude determines how well you do it.*”

*-Lou Holtz*

**Assignment:** Over the course of the next few weeks, we will be starting our day out with one of the following questions and it will serve as our journal prompt for the day. In order for each any ever one of you to have a bit more ownership in our class, you will be assigned a day to choose our prompt. The calendar is as follows. Please keel this in a safe spot as we will be referring back to it often ☺ Happy writing.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 3/1 | Marie S. |
| 3/3 | Sabrina J. |
| 3/7 | Jonas G. |
| 3/9 | Neilson H. |
| 3/11 | Trinity B. |
| 3/15 | Jamie H. |
| 3/17 | Emma B. |
| 3/28 | Tami A. |
| 3/30 | Sziszi H. |
| 4/1 | Logan R. |
| 4/5 | Chloe B. |
| 4/7 | Gin O. |
| 4/11 | Sara C. |
| 4/13 | TJ B. |
| 4/15 | Grace D. |
| 4/19 | Sydney G. |
| 4/21 | Gabby M. |
| 4/25 | Mika T. |
| 4/27 | Haley W. |
| 4/29 | Britain T. |
| 5/3 | Courtney W. |
| 5/5 | Evan Z. |

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN FICTION:   
  
I   BACKGROUND  
  
1. What significance is there in the historical period in which the  
story is set or in the places where most of the action develops?  
2. To what extent are the buildings, dress, habits, and language  
different from what you are familiar with?  
3. How does the background influence the actions or personality of the  
main characters?  
4. 4.What proof is there that the author is thoroughly familiar with  
his setting?   If it required research, did he do enough?  If not, what  
error can you note?  Do the scenes seem "true"?  Give some examples.  
5. How well does the background create moods?  
6. What evidences are there that environment, chance, or other outside  
influences shaped the design of the plot?  
7. What have you learned that interests you about customs and habits of  
a culture different from yours? Which would you like to see introduced into  
your country or city?  Which would you prefer to leave where they are?  Why?  
  
  
II   PLOT  
  
8. If both are present, how well are the story lines and the subplots  
interwoven?  
9. What is the likelihood that the events could have taken place in  
real life, with or without the coincidences the author used to turn his  
plot.  
10. What is the turning point (climax) of the story?  To what extent has  
it been reached naturally by what has preceded it?  
11. How well do the incidents follow one another? authentically as they  
might in real life or mechanically as if they had been obviously contrived  
by the author?  
12. If it exists, how effectively does the author create suspense?  
13. How many loose ends are left at the end of the story?  
14. What devices used by the author seem to indicate that he depended  
too much on chance to carry his story forward?  
15. What examples are there that a minor incident influenced a  
character's whole life thereafter?  
  
III   CHARACTERS  
  
16. Who are the main characters?  Are they like real people?  Of whom do  
they remind you    friends, family, prominent people?  Why?  
17. Which are the most interesting?  Why?  Which remind you of yourself?  
How?  
18. Do some of the characters seem to develop and change as the story  
progresses, or do they all remain about the same from beginning to end?  
Support your conclusions by specific references (incidents, places, names,  
etc.)  
19. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the central characters?  
What incidents prove that your judgment is accurate?  
20. To what extent does the personality of any character determine his  
success or failure?  
21. Which character did you like the most and which did you dislike?  
Give reasons for your choice, especially if you did not like a character you  
feel the author wanted you to like.  
22. Which characters helped you understand people you know a little  
better than before?  Explain.  
23. What minor characters were interesting?  How would you describe them  
using a single sentence for each?  
24. If you had been the author, would you have developed one or more of  
the characters somewhat differently?  Why?  
25. How well does the author seem to know people and what "makes them  
tick"?  
26. How willing would you be to exchange the life you are now leading  
for that of one of the characters?  Tell why.  
27. How reasonable was the position the major characters found  
themselves in at the end of the story?  In your reply, consider basic  
personality, significant outside influences, and future possibilities.  
28. Which characters fall into one or more of these categories:  well  
adjusted to life, aimless and drifting, emotionally troubled, determined and  
aggressive, selfish and narrow minded, honest and idealistic, scheming and  
evil, unusual or improbable?  Support your conclusion with specific  
examples.  
29. In what ways would one of the characters have been able to handle  
better several of the problems you have faced?  What abilities or attitudes  
did the character have that you wish you had?  
30. Which characters prove that it is impossible to predict what some  
people will do under certain circumstances?  
31. If you were pretending to be a psychiatrist, how would you analyze  
any one of the major characters?  In your answer, try to indicate the impact  
of past experiences or lack of it to change the major drives that influence  
the future.  
32. 17.Which of the characters would you like to have as spouse?   Why  
do you think the two of you would have a successful marriage?  What  
obstacles would you have to overcome at the beginning?  
  
IV   THEME  
  
33. What do you suppose was the author's main reason for telling this  
story    to amuse, preach, convert, criticize, shock, seek solution to a  
social problem, simply to gratify your desire for adventure, instruct?  
Explain your answer.  
34. What life experiences was the author trying to explain?  
35. What was the main point of the story, expressed in a single  
sentence?  
36. If there were conflicts in the story, how well did the author solve  
them or suggest solutions?  
37. How has the book influenced your own thinking?  What new ideas have  
you come away with?  What old ones may you consider changing?  
38. To what extent has this story influenced you to read others on the  
same theme?  
39. If you were designing a book jacket, what illustrations or symbols  
would you draw to point up the main idea?  
40. What proverbs or wise sayings do you know that are either confirmed  
or contradicted by the story's outcome?  
41. How did you feel about life in general immediately after finishing  
reading the story:  depressed, angry, hopeful, rejuvenated, uncertain,  
determined, cautious?  Be sure you refer to specific incidents that account  
for your final reactions.  
42. In what ways do you agree or disagree with the author's themes?  
What experiences in your own life either support or refute his findings?  
  
V   STYLE  
  
43. How well does the author present his scenes?  How much do you feel  
like an eyewitness?  How does he accomplish his effects    unusual word  
choices, vigorous modifiers and verbs, colorful figures of speech, dramatic  
arrangement of emphasis, striking detail, stark simplicity, sparkling  
dialogue, historical accuracy, keen insight, expressionistic flashes,  
gripping suspense?  In each instance, cite specific passages to support your  
choices of characteristics of the author's style.  
44. What do you think of the sentence structure?  Were many sentences  
too long, too short, unclear, irrelevant or were they well diversified, well  
and clearly worded, constantly moving both in pace and mood, almost always  
appropriate to background, character, and thematic development?  Again, make  
specific references to the text.  
45. What difficulties did you have with the vocabulary?  How many new  
words did you learn?  Comment on whether the author's use of words was  
appropriate to the nature of the story, excessively ornate, remarkably  
inventive or generally ordinary.  Did the author use larger than necessary  
vocabulary?  
46. How well were the emotions projected?  What devices did the author  
use to make you feel with the characters?  Were you moved to tears or  
laughter anywhere?  Why?  
47. How skillful was the author at constructing original phrases or  
whole statements?  Quote several of the ones that you would like to use in  
your own writing.  
48. What was the tone of the language    warm and friendly, intimate,  
wise and fatherly, cold and formal, dry, rough and crude, genteel, etc.?  
49. If some of the language was strong, was it offensive or necessary to  
maintain the atmosphere and the nature of the characters?  Give proof. Do  
you suspect that some bits were put in by the author to mainly to be  
sensational and help the book sell?  Why do you think so?  
50. Would you want to read more by this author because of the way he  
writes?  Why?  
51. What do you think of the choice of the title?  How well did it suit  
the story?  What would you have called it?  
52. What details of the author's life should the reader have known in  
order to appreciate more completely his style of writing or choice of  
themes?  (if any)  
  
VI   GENERAL  
  
53. In what ways did the author succeed in making you change your  
viewpoint toward certain types or groups of people?  To what extent did he  
help you eliminate any pre judgments you may be used to making?  
54. How significant was the theme in relation to world or life problems?  
55. How much of the author's life is recalled in the background, plot,  
themes, and choice of characters?  
56. How would you compare this story to another somewhat like it that  
you read previously?  
57. What chance does the story have of becoming a classic, if it hasn't  
already become one?  
  
VII   ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON A NOVEL  
  
58. How would the story turn out as a play?  a movie?  
59. How much of the book could have been eliminated if the author had  
been more economical in his writing?  
60. To what extent would this book be more interesting to some people  
than to others?  Give reasons.  
61. What did you discover was the best way to read the book    in one  
sitting or in sections, where would you advise a reader to stop at each  
point in the plot development?  (Where would you put "commercials"?)  
62. How does the book fit into the type of writing that was  
characteristic of his period?  To what extent did the author break new  
ground in approach, style, or subject?  State whether you think this book  
would have to be included in a survey of the novel as a form of literature  
and give reasons why.