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.

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| --- | --- |
| 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.