Pre-AP Socratic Seminar

***A Separate Peace***

**Summerville High School**

*“There are no great limits to growth because there are no limits of*

*human intelligence, imagination, and wonder.”*

*–Ronald Reagan*

**Assignment:** In lieu of participating in our Socratic seminar on *The Glass Castle*, you will be responding to **one of the questions below**, in a 750-word essay, responding to the text directly and including at **least two quotes** from the memoir. The seminar was worth 50 points, as this will be as well.

**Questions:**

1. Trace Gene and Finny’s relationship from the summer of 1942 up to Ch. 6.  Give examples of incidents Gene would later remember as “shining moments” in their friendship.  Include incidents which brought about change in one or both characters and events that changed their relationship.
2. Describe the setting of *A Separate Peace* and explain the significance of that setting. How does the tone of the story change as the story progresses, from Devon in summer to Devon in winter? How are the boys insulated, initially, form world events? Could the story have taken place just as easily in another time and place?
3. War, broadly defined as conflict, exists on several levels in the novel.  How are the various characters affected both by World War II and by a personal “war” within himself and/or with another character?
4. How do breaking the rules/rebellion, competition/games, and betrayal/envy/resentment evolve as themes in the novel?  What is their significance?
5. John Knowles uses war terminology throughout *A Separate Peace*. What ***affec*t** do you think this has on the reader? Why?
6. Sophocles, a Greek poet and playwright, suggests that we never reach a full realization of who we are as individuals until we find another human being with whom we can share ourselves. Using specific examples from the text, explain how Gene’s relationship with Finny brings the narrator to a fuller understanding of himself
7. Create one question on your own that you **may** be asked to present to the class. Your question should elicit a response that will discuss the theme of the novel thus far, and further, how can we apply the theme to the human condition and ultimately, our lives? The leader of the seminar will call on one student at a time to share their question, we may not get to all, but it is best to be prepared ☺