

Eighth Grade English

Summer Reading Pre-Writing Assignment

Name: _____

Title of Book: _____

Author: _____

Directions: Use the space provided to **answer the questions** below, writing **neatly and legibly**.

- Write your answers in **complete sentences**.
- Give **page numbers** where possible.
- **Highlight** and **tab** your book, particularly where you locate responses to questions.
- Turn in this assignment to your English teacher on the **second day of class, 8/23**.
- Do your best!

Character

- A **character** is a person or animal who takes part in a literary work.
- Almost every book revolves around one or more main characters, called **protagonists**.
 - The protagonist changes from the beginning of the novel to the end.

Who is the **protagonist** of this novel? (If perhaps there is more than one protagonist, pick!)

Characteristics and Traits

- A **characteristic** or **trait** is a feature that helps identify or distinguish a character from the other characters in the story. In a story, the characteristics of the protagonist are what set him or her apart from the other characters in the story.
- Characteristics can be **external**, like a character's appearance.
 - External traits can be anything from height and hair color to abilities and talents.
 - Some external traits are more important than others! Choose one that is important to the story!

Identify one of the protagonist's important **external traits**.

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- *Why is this trait important in the novel?*
-

- *Write down a sentence or passage from the novel where this trait is described:*
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Characteristics and Traits

- Characteristics can be also **internal**, like a character’s personality.
 - Internal traits are a character’s emotions, beliefs, attitudes, or fears; internal traits are what make a character’s personality unique.
 - Some internal traits are more important than others! Choose one that is important to the story!

*Identify one of the protagonist’s important **internal traits**.*

- *Why is this trait important in the novel?*

- *Write down a sentence or passage from the novel where this trait is described:*

Goal

- In most stories, the protagonist has a **goal**—something that he or she wants to accomplish.
- A character can have more than one goal, and a character’s goals can change throughout the story.
 - Most protagonists have one main (most important) goal.
 - A goal isn’t necessarily something external or internal!

*What is the protagonist’s **goal**?*

*Why is the **goal** important to the protagonist?*

*What is stopping the protagonist from reaching this **goal**?*

Note: This document is also available on the EdLine homepage!

Conflict

- Most protagonists have a main (most important) **conflict**: an enemy, obstacle, or problem that he or she has to overcome. Many stories have more than one conflict.
- The main conflict of the story is usually what stops the protagonist from reaching his or her goal.
 - Just like the goal, the main conflict isn't necessarily something external or physical!

What is the main **conflict** of this novel?

How does this **conflict** stop the protagonist from reaching his or her goal?

Resolution

- In most stories, the protagonist's conflicts and experiences cause him or her to change or learn a valuable lesson. The part of the story where the character learns this valuable lesson or realizes that he or she has changed is called the **resolution**.
 - The resolution is the final outcome of the story.
 - It's where all the loose ends are tied up!

Describe how the protagonist changes from the beginning to the end of the story.

Does the protagonist learn any important lessons? If so, what?

Theme

- The **theme** of the story is a broad statement about life or human nature. The theme is not *what* happens in the story (that's the plot!) – the theme is *why* it matters.
 - Ask yourself what's the author's point – why did he or she write the story?
 - Consider what the protagonist learns in the story; often that's a clue to the story's theme!
 - A story can have more than one theme, but most stories have one **main theme**.

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What do you think is the main theme of this novel?

Why do you think this is the theme?

- *Write down a sentence or passage from the novel that relates to or suggests this theme:*

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*Summer Reading4
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