

Summer Reading Guide

A Separate Peace

Annotate *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles analyzing the following elements of fiction. Use the questions as a guide.

Character

- How are the characters revealed?
- Are the characters flat, round, dynamic, static or a combination of those?

Plot

- What is the narrative order? (chronological, flashback, memory)
- What are the conflicts of this story?

Setting

- What is the significance of the setting to the elements of the story?

Theme

- What is the theme of the novel? Are there multiple or secondary themes?
- Is it revealed implicitly or explicitly?
- How do the other elements of fiction contribute to an understanding of the theme?

Point of View

- From what POV is the novel told? (1st person, omniscient, etc.)
- Is the narrator reliable? How is it revealed?

Literary Devices

- Identify the symbols. What is the significance of the key symbols?
- Identify the tone. What is the significance?

Assessment

The summer reading assessment for *A Separate Peace* is divided into two parts. Part one is a comprehensive test that requires you to analyze the significance of certain characters, places and events from the novel. Part two is a timed essay.

Study Card for Honors/AP/IB reading

You will need to put all of the following information on one or two large note cards. The aim is to have a set of notes that will be useful in the last few days of review before you take finals and other exams and to prepare for open essay questions. You should have on your note cards references to page numbers of significant passages so that you can reread specific scenes that are crucial to the novel.

Include the following:

- Title, Author (with relevant information that pertains to themes and events), Genre, Publication Date, what period of English, World, or American Literature it reflects.
- List of Major Characters--spell the names correctly and provide solid information and connections with a significant quote or two.
- List of Minor Characters--with significance and maybe one quote.
- List of Place Names and settings. For example, Verona and Mantua in *Romeo and Juliet*; in *The Odyssey*, the various places Odysseus travels and Ithaca.
- List of Major Events, Scenes, Speeches/Conversations. Give page numbers for quick reference. Mark these passages in your book, if you have not already done so. In many cases this list will be chronological. In some cases you will need two lists: the order of appearance in the structure of the book--including flashbacks, and the order of appearance in time. Or, you may need to explain the book's narrative frame.
- List of major short quotations to memorize as a possible opening or to show close reading.
- List dominant motifs and symbols, and provide a short explanation of their importance to the themes of the text.
- Address the author's use of language (diction), giving examples. Describe the mood of the novel.
- Social/Political/Philosophical Agenda(s) of the Author. Why was this book written? What insight into society or human nature (the human condition) does this book offer?
- Technical, Structural, and Stylistic strategies and achievements of the author. You should be able to convey a strong sense of (and appreciation for) the author's artistic achievement. Describe *how* the book is put together/written, as well as what it is about. Relate style/structure to meaning, for example how Shakespeare's use of oxymoron helps to develop the thematic topic of young love's confusion.
- List of significant critical problems. Examples: the injustice of Tom Robinson's trial in *To Kill A Mockingbird*, or, Okonkwo's choice of suicide in *Things Fall Apart*.