**English 1 Honors**

**Summer Assignment**

**Directions**

Choose **two** novels listed below.

♦ Read the novels.

♦ Complete the tasks outlined on the following pages for **both** novels.

♦ Your assignments are due on the first day of school.

**Novel Choice 1**

*Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens

“*Great Expectations* follows the childhood and young adult years of Pip a blacksmith's apprentice in a country village. He suddenly comes into a large fortune (his great expectations) from a mysterious benefactor and moves to London where he enters high society.”

**Novel Choice 2**

*Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson

*“Brown Girl Dreaming* tells the story of my childhood, in verse. Raised in South Carolina and New York, I always felt halfway home in each place. In these poems, I share what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and my growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. It also reflects the joy of finding my voice through writing stories, despite the fact that I struggled with reading as a child. My love of stories inspired and stayed with me, creating the first sparks of the writer I was to become.” ~Jacqueline Woodson

**Novel Choice 3**

*A Separate Peace* by John Knowles

In `*`A Separate Peace* “Gene Forrester, a man in his 30s, returns after 15 years to the preparatory school he attended as a teenager, the Devon School in New Hampshire. While attending the school, Gene becomes close friends with Finny. Finny prods Gene into making a dangerous jump out of a tree into a river, and the two start a secret society based on this ritual. However, a single moment changes everything leaving an emotional aftermath that drives the narrative.”

**Understanding Characterization in Literature**

A *bildungsroman*, or coming-of-age novel, recounts the psychological [the way a character thinks or state of mind] or moral [sense of what’s right and wrong] development of its protagonist from youth to maturity, when this character recognizes his or her place in the world.

As you read the novels keep the above definition of its genre—*bildungsroman*—in mind and outline the following information about **both** novels:

a) Identify the protagonists of the novels.

b) Write down passages in which the authors characterize the protagonists through **direct** and **indirect** characterization. [see explanation below]

c) Describe at least three pivotal moments in the novels—a pivotal moment is a particular event or action that signals a change in the character’s ways of **thinking** or **acting**.

d) Explain what those moments reveal about the characters’ views of themselves, others, or the world around them.

e) Describe the changes you see in the characters based on those pivotal moments.

Below you will find definitions of direct and indirect characterizations from the novels, examples of each, and a suggested way to set up your outline for parts A and B above. However, feel free to organize your information in a way that suits your understanding.

You will also find a sample of how to set up parts C, D, and E above.

**Direct v Indirect Characterization**

Authors characterize the people they create by including details that allow **direct characterization**. With direct characterization, the author identifies such details as physical traits, specific thoughts the character might have, and other explicit details needed to understand motivation—why a character does what he or she does.

Here are some examples of directcharacterization as they appear early in the novels you can choose to read. Notice how each example provides **physical** details that help **visualize** something about the characters. Suggested graphic organizer for parts A and B.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| In this column write the quote. | In this column, explain what the author **tells** you about the character directly. |
| Protagonist: PiP  “My father’s family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.”—*Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens | Here, although limited in scope, the detail provides something key about the character—his name. Ironically there is no other physical description of the protagonist throughout the novel. Later you see him at different stages of his life, but the focus of the novel becomes more about the psychological and moral development of the character. |
| Protagonist: Gene Forrester  “I felt fear’s echo, and along with that I felt the unhinged, uncontrollable joy which had been its accompaniment and opposite face, joy which had broken out sometimes in those  days like Northern Lights across black sky.”—*A Separate Peace* by John Knowles | The author, through the narrator’s own words, tells the reader directly that the narrator feels conflicting emotions of fear and joy not only as he visits the school now but also as he experienced them when he attended Devon fifteen years ago. |

**Indirect Characterization**

**Indirect characterization** means just what it says—the writer provides information from which the reader **infers** what the author wants to convey about the character— speech, thoughts, effects on other characters, actions, motivations, intents, and other inward character traits in order to understand the character with respect to the conflict(s) that arise in the work of literature.

Here are some examples of indirectcharacterization as they appear on the first pages of each of the novels you can choose to read. Notice how each example provides details from which you infer more than just visualizing something about the characters.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| In this column write down the text. | In this column write down any inferences you might draw from details. Throughout the novel, your inferences will be more in-depth as the character interacts with others. |
| “On the present occasion, though I was hungry, I dared not eat my slice. I felt that I must have something in reserve for my dreadful  acquaintance, and his ally the still more dreadful young man. I knew Mrs. Joe’s housekeeping to be of the strictest kind, and that my larcenous researches might find nothing available in the safe. Therefore I resolved to put my hunk of bread and butter down the leg of my trousers.”—*Great Expectations* | Possible **inference**: this character feels a sense of responsibility to the person he met on the marshes just a short while ago and also feels guilty for disobeying his sister. |
| Protagonist: Gene Forrester  “Now here it was after all, preserved by some considerate hand with varnish and wax. Preserved along with it, like stale air in an unopened room, was the well known fear which had surrounded and filled those days, so much of it that I hadn’t even known it was there. Because, unfamiliar with the absence of fear and what that was like, I had not been able to identify its presence.”—*A Separate Peace* by John Knowles | Possible **inference**: The narrator is very introspective and now consciously recognizes that all the while at Devon he never really understood his own unconscious fears about his ability to conform. He recognizes how time and distance alter perceptions of internal reactions and external events. |

Suggested graphic organizer for parts C, D, and E

Novel Title 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Describe three pivotal moments in the novels—a pivotal moment is a particular event or action that signals a change in the character’s ways of **thinking** or **acting**. | Explain what those moments reveal about the characters’ views of themselves, others, or the world around them. | Describe the changes you see in the characters based on those pivotal moments. |
| 1 |  | this moment cannot show a change…just describe character as is at this moment |
| 2 |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |

Novel Title 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Describe three pivotal moments in the novels—a pivotal moment is a particular event or action that signals a change in the character’s ways of **thinking** or **acting**. | Explain what those moments reveal about the characters’ views of themselves, others, or the world around them. | Describe the changes you see in the characters based on those pivotal moments. |
| 1 |  | this moment cannot show a change…just describe character as is at this moment |
| 2 |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |