

Honors English I
Summer Assignment 2026

The purpose of the summer reading assignment is for you to work through the reading independently, exercise your critical thinking skills, and ultimately prepare you for what is next. The expectation, if you elect to take this course, is that you are functioning at an advanced level and that you are capable of working through these assignments without the help of an instructor. Read the novel carefully and please be prepared.

The following assignments are due at the beginning of class on Friday, August 22nd. In addition, you will also have an objective test over the novel on Monday, August 24th. The test will cover items such as characterization, plot, theme, and setting. Read carefully and please be prepared.

SPECIAL NOTE: The completion of summer assignment is a requirement for this course. Failure to complete all or part of the summer assignment will result in removal from the course. **NO EXCEPTIONS**

TEXT:

A Separate Peace - by John Knowles

1. Actively read the novel. I expect you to actively read at all times. Good readers actively engage with the text; it is a time tested strategy to use when you are studying a literary work. Do your active reading **on the pages of the novel**, not a separate document. Merely highlighting or underlining is not active reading. Summarizing is also not active reading. You must connect with the text by questioning, reacting, predicting, connecting to your life or a character/novel you have read. This is done on the pages of the book.

2. Complete the chart "Character Analysis Chart" - **handwritten**

3. Choose one character (Gene, Finny, or Leper) and write five journal entries exploring their inner thoughts and feelings about key events and developments in the novel. (Specific directions on next page) -**handwritten**

****Remember to bring the novel with you to school in August because I will collect it on the 22nd and then we will be working with it for the first several weeks of school.**

RUBRIC:

Thorough and thoughtful active reading notes	30 points
Character motivation chart	25 points
Journals	25 points

I am expecting quality work. Please be thorough when completing your assignments. **Do not wait until the last minute to complete these assignments.**

Be sure that all of the work is YOUR OWN. Do not consult the internet, another student, or an adult. If you need clarification on an assignment, please contact me. Cheating/copying of work/sharing work of any kind will result in a zero.

If you have questions, contact me at jhigley@vermilionschools.org

Journal Entry Requirements (complete on separate sheets of looseleaf paper - **handwritten**) Choose **one character** (Gene, Finny, or Leper) and **write five journal entries** exploring their inner thoughts and feelings about key events and developments in the novel.

Each entry must include:

1. Date & Context:

- Begin with a date or time marker related to the event or period in the novel.
- Briefly describe the setting or situation.

2. Emotional Reflection:

- Express the character's feelings (confusion, guilt, excitement, fear, etc.) honestly and deeply.
- Show changes in emotions over time as the story progresses.

3. Motivation & Thoughts:

- Reveal what the character is thinking about the event or other characters.
- Include the character's motivations or doubts.

4. Foreshadowing or Insight:

- Hint at what the character suspects or fears might happen next, or reflect on past actions with new understanding.

5. Use of Textual Language:

- Incorporate some language, tone, or style consistent with the character's voice (age, personality, education).
- Optionally, include short quotes or paraphrased lines from the novel as if the character remembers or reacts to them.

Rubric for Grading the Journal (total points = 25)

Criteria	Excellent (5 pts)	Good (4 pts)	Satisfactory (3 pts)	Needs Improvement (2 pts)
Character Voice & Tone	Writing clearly reflects the chosen character's unique voice and emotions; language fits their personality perfectly	Mostly consistent voice and tone; minor lapses in character style	Some effort to adopt character voice but inconsistent or generic	Little to no attempt to write in character's voice
Emotional Depth & Reflection	Insightful and nuanced emotional reflection; shows growth and complexity	Clear emotional responses; some depth	Basic feelings described; limited reflection	Superficial or unclear emotional content
Connection to Key Events	Entries clearly connect to important novel events with thoughtful detail	Events referenced but with minimal detail or explanation	Some events mentioned but connections are weak	Events missing or unrelated
Use of Textual Evidence & Language	Incorporates relevant quotes or paraphrased ideas naturally; language is vivid and fitting	Some textual references; language mostly appropriate	Few or unclear textual connections	No textual support or inappropriate language
Organization & Clarity	Entries are well-organized, easy to follow, and polished	Generally clear and organized, some minor issues	Some organizational problems, occasional confusion	Poorly organized or unclear writing
Mechanics & Grammar	Free from grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors	Few minor errors that do not impede understanding	Noticeable errors but meaning mostly clear	Frequent errors that interfere with understanding

***A Separate Peace* Character Motivation Chart**

Character	Key Action/Decision	What Might Have Motivated This Action?	Quote & Page Number	Analysis of the Evidence
Gene	Jounces the tree limb, causing Finny to fall			
Finny	Refuses to believe there is a war			
Brinker	Confronts Gene about Finny's fall in a mock trial			
Leper	Enlists in the army but later deserts			
Gene	Visits Leper after his breakdown			

Rubric: Character Motivation Chart (total points =25)

Criteria	Excellent (5 pts)	Good (4 pts)	Satisfactory (3 pts)	Needs Improvement (2 pts)
Identification of Motivation	Insightful and accurate explanation of character motivation that goes beyond surface-level	Clear motivation identified with reasonable understanding	Motivation identified but vague or somewhat inaccurate	Motivation missing or incorrect
Use of Textual Evidence	Provides two relevant, well-chosen quotes with page numbers that strongly support the motivation	Provides two quotes with page numbers, mostly relevant	Provides one relevant quote or two weakly connected quotes	Quotes missing, inaccurate, or unrelated
Analysis of Evidence	Deep, thoughtful analysis connecting quotes to motivation and character development	Good analysis that connects evidence to motivation	Basic or unclear analysis; some connection made	Analysis missing, incomplete, or off-topic
Completeness & Clarity	All sections are fully completed with clear, coherent writing	Most sections completed; mostly clear and understandable	Some sections incomplete or unclear	Many sections missing or unclear
Grammar & Mechanics	Writing is free of grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors	Minor errors that do not interfere with understanding	Noticeable errors that occasionally hinder understanding	Frequent errors that interfere with meaning