

English 3

Summer Reading Project - 2009

Titles: The Catcher in the Rye - J. D. Salinger
The Secret Life of Bees - Sue Monk Kidd

You are to read two novels this summer and complete the following written assignments. This Summer Reading Project is due the day of our first class meeting in August, 2009. You must turn it in on the due date to receive credit. It is worth a possible 100 points. Failing to complete this project will have a severe negative effect on your first semester grade. No exceptions due to computer problems or forgotten or lost work will be allowed.

All responses must be TYPED (12 font and double-spaced). Have a cover page that identifies the project with the novel's title, your full name and the date. You do not need to put work in a folder or binder, but it is acceptable to do so.

Do not plagiarize by using outside sources such as Spark Notes without fully referencing and acknowledging the sources. Save your work in order to submit it to Turnitin.com.

1) The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger is an American classic written in the early 1950s. Its main character and first person narrator is Holden Caulfield, a troubled sixteen year old, who has just been kicked out of another private boarding school. The novel's story line deals with the few days that Holden spends on his own in New York City before he actually goes home do deal with his problems. In fact, the novel is a flashback that Holden is narrating to the reader from the hospital he is in, in California.

The author presents Holden, both as an individual and as one who is representative of the age he lives in--Post World War II, the urban America in the 1950s--when youth your age first began to be known as "teenagers."

READ CLOSELY.

Answer the following # 's 1-3. There is no exact length required for your responses, but they should be accurate, thorough, and thoughtful. Your answers will be assessed for their content as well as for their correctness. Follow all rules of Standard Written English.

1. In an essay, defend, challenge or qualify the following statement: All of the adults in Holden's life fail to help and keep him from having his emotional breakdown. Your essay should have an introduction that establishes the topic and clearly states the position you are taking in this argument. You should use at least two, but no more than four adults from the novel as supports for your argument. Your essay will be best if you give a separate paragraph to the discussion of each separate adult. You may consider Holden's parents together as one.

You must use specific examples, quotes, and extensive commentary in this response. Think carefully about Holden and what has happened to him before you take a position. Do not use the pronoun "I" in your essay/argument. Instead of writing, "I think that all the adults in Holden's life fail him," write, "All the adults in Holden's life fail him." or "None of the adults in Holden's life fail him." Again, organize your thoughts and paragraphs and follow all rules of correct standard written English.

2. Allie is Holden's brother who died. Even though Allie is dead, how important does he remain to Holden, and how does Allie influence Holden's life? Support your answer with detailed examples and quotes from the novel.

3. Creative Response:

Were Holden living in 2009 rather than in the early 1950s, and were he in the same situation regarding his school failures and relationships with others, what would be different about his experiences after leaving Pencey Prep and his days living on his own in New York City? Think about what things, customs, societal norms etc. are like today vs. the 1950s. Again be specific.

Summer Reading Assignment 2009

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

The first four pages of this book contain excerpts from many reviews that were written about this novel. Certain words and phrases among them truly capture the value of Sue Monk Kidd's first novel. The following are examples of the praise given to this work: "...filled with hope...", "{reveals} the sacredness of living...", "...magical place where you find love...", "...stunning metaphors..." "...lushly written...", "a splendid novel...", "Dazzling...", "...a lovely style...", "...wonderfully humorous...", and finally, "an absolute joy to read."

The Secret Life of Bees is a story set in South Carolina in 1964. Lily Owens is the narrator and protagonist of the novel. She is fourteen years old.

You must type your responses to this following questions. Your responses will be assessed based on their thoroughness, accuracy of comprehension, creative insight and commentaries, and your ability to express your thoughts following the Standard Rules of Written English.

1. Settings: This refers to the "time and place" of a work of literature. Choose two specific times/places within the novel that you believe to be particularly important to and influential on Lily's understanding of life. What historical events were happening in America's southern states, which included South Carolina in 1964. Research this if necessary and reference your sources.
2. Character: Describe three characters from the novel that you identify with and understand best. Include two citations from the novel for each character that reveal the most important and closest truths about each of the three characters.
3. What has been your personal experience with bees? Explain and be specific with details.
4. At the beginning of each chapter in this novel, there is an italicized quote that reveals some information and/or wisdom about bees. Choose Your Favorite--the one that sparks meaning in your mind. Then write a paragraph or two that explains your understanding and appreciation of the quote. How does the quote relate to the chapter that it precedes? Does it relate to the chapter's plot? Does it connect with characters and their development in the chapter? Does it provide additional understanding of the author's message (theme)?
5. The protagonist, Lily, is running from something (s) and to something in this novel. Identify and discuss your understanding of the conflicts that most affect Lily. Is there resolution to the conflict(s) confronting Lily? In other words, by the end of the novel, what has Lily learned about life that helps her with her conflicts and fears?
6. What do you think the title of this novel means in relation to the story and its characters? What is "the secret life of bees?" Also, reveal two facts about bees that you never knew before reading this novel.

We will review this novel together at the beginning of the first semester. There will be additional assignments and testing. Your responses to all questions for this reading must be your own. Do not plagiarize using Spark Notes or any other sources. You will be asked to submit your work into Turnitin.com in August.

The Secret Life of Bees is a wonderful experience.
The truth of our lives gives us nothing sweeter than honey!