

AP Literature and Composition Summer Reading 2021

Dear student:

First of all, thank you for choosing this challenging, engaging class. I'm looking forward to your insights during the 2021-22 school year.

In fact, I'd like to hear those insights to start our year.

As you read both the novel *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines and the novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* by Mark Haddon, you will write **nine** (five free responses from one book, four specific questions from the other) responses using the following parameters:

- Each of the nine responses must be word processed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1" margins. Each response **must be** at least one half page in length, but may be longer if needed. (Responses need not be written on separate pages.) Responses that do not follow these parameters will not be accepted.
- **Five free responses** must be written while reading *A Lesson Before Dying*. **One of the five** should be a response after reading the entire book. Be sure to label each with the corresponding chapter. Although responses may occur at any point in the book, there should be a somewhat similar number from the first and last halves of the book. In other words, not all of your responses should be from novel's first half. I want to see how your ideas evolve through the work.

So what's a free response? As an active reader, you make many (unwritten) responses as you read a work. The response may be a personal reaction: "This section reminds me of the time that I ...," "I don't understand why ...," "I don't care for the way that the author ...," or a response may be literary analysis: "The *character* of xxx seems to be hiding something because ...," "One of the *themes* of this novel seems to be ...," "I didn't expect the *plot* to take this turn as ..."

As you can see, your response can be just about anything, even that you hate the work, as long as it demonstrates a basic understanding of the piece.

- Also, **four** specific higher-level questions must be answered after reading *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*:
 1. After Chapter 41, predict who killed Wellington or what circumstances could have brought about his death. (1 or 2 sentences will suffice.)
 2. After reading the letters from Christopher's mother and making inferences from them and other details from the story, write a short prequel chapter about Christopher's life with both his parents. Use first person point of view from Christopher's, his father's or his mother's perspective. This chapter should be double-spaced and at least 1 ½ pages long.
 3. Provide a poem that seems to represent a theme, character, or event in the story. (One handy site to find a poem is poetryfoundation.org.) In a sentence or two, explain the relationship between the poem

and the story's element. You need not retype the poem: feel free to print it out. If it's longer than two pages, print the section that is most representative of the story's element.

4. Haddon's award-winning book has been turned into a hit play that won the Tony in 2015 for the best play on Broadway. Search on-line for a clip of the play. Evaluate some aspect of the play – characterization, difficulties of staging, presentation of autism, for example – in relation to the book. Use details from the book when possible.
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- Following the curriculum of AP Literature and Composition, ALL reading must be done without audio or other aids. Students who find the need to listen to the novel are advised to take Academic English 12. (That being said, both books are quite readable and engaging.)
 - All responses should be your own. There should be no need to turn to a study guide or other resource. Responses found to be plagiarized will not be accepted.
 - **Printed responses are due on the first day of school for seniors.** No work will be accepted after that date. No exceptions. This assignment is 40% of your test grade.

Note to students: Both digital and print copies of works are acceptable in this class.

Sincerely,

Mrs. K. Schall

English Department Head

