

## **2016 Summer Reading for Incoming Freshmen (9th Grade)**

### **Liberty Charter High School**

Choose the right assignment for you:

1. An essay for those planning to take standard or college prep English.

OR

2. A reading and essay assignment for those planning to take honors English.

Both assignments are in this packet--**only do one**.

Make sure you do the following:

1. Read the assignment all the way through.
2. Complete all parts.
3. Contact Mrs. Samuels at [pam.samuels@lfcinc.org](mailto:pam.samuels@lfcinc.org) if you have questions.
4. Type your final essay using MLA formatting. Make sure it has your first and last name.
5. Share through googledocs or email final essay to Mrs. Samuels at the email address above.
6. Do not delete your essay from your computer until you have seen your grade in gradebook.
7. Bring a stapled hard copy of your essay (no folders) to Room R2 on Student Orientation Day August 18th and place it in the box for your grade level.

For last minute registrations, the "Reading History" essay is due two weeks after registration.

## 2016 LCHS Freshman Summer Reading Project for Standard and College Prep English 9

Welcome to Liberty Charter High School. You are launching into an exciting journey where you will grow to embody our school values: responsible community leadership, effective communication, values-conscious thinking, self-directed learning, and literate citizenship. Reading is a useful tool in all these endeavors. When it is your turn to launch into the post-high school world, you want to be not only well-skilled at reading, but also well-read.

This project will help you (and teachers who read it) to evaluate your past and present skills. It will help both you and your teacher chart a course for learning. Finally, it will serve as documentation of your experiences and thinking. Integrity is a must. It is when we take an honest look at ourselves that we can move forward to become who and what we want to be.

**Due: At student orientation August 18th.** This document will become a part of your high school portfolio. This piece is necessary for your reading goal-setting project which we will begin immediately at the beginning of the year. For any student who enrolls after August 4th, the assignment is due 2 weeks after enrollment date.

### Directions for submitting the writing:

1. Type essay in a google doc, if you have access to a google account, or as a Word document.
2. Title it "Grade# Lastname Firstname" (For example "9 Scheaffer Alissa")
3. Share it with Mrs. Samuels ([pam.samuels@lfcinc.org](mailto:pam.samuels@lfcinc.org)) by August 18 at student orientation or within 2 weeks after enrollment. If you are turning it in later than August 18, bring a note from the office with your enrollment date as proof that your essay is on time..
4. Print it out. Staple. Do not put it in a folder. Upon arrival at school for student orientation, place the hard copy of your essay in the appropriate grade level box outside of room R2 (Mrs. Samuels' room)--1st row of classrooms. Sign your name verifying you turned it in and that you have a copy that you are keeping until your grade is posted.

**Writing product:** An MLA-formatted typed narrative essay (informational). Title your paper: The Reading History of (followed by your first and last name). Use a subtitle for each section. Each section can be multiple paragraphs. Show off your best writing.

See <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> for MLA format particulars.

**Grading:** You will receive 4 grades for this assignment--Make it count!

50 points--Be thorough (follow all directions, include all parts)

20 points--Use your best academic writing style (paragraph and sentence structure, grammar and punctuation)

20 points--Be thoughtful, show insight, elaborate, name books!

10 points--Look up MLA and type it following the guidelines

**Second language students:** Please include information about learning to read in your first language, if you did. You may have to make some adjustments with the outline to fit your circumstances. If you do not have enough English skills to write this essay, find someone who can write down your information for you in English while you tell it to them in your native language. Add a note in the project that says that's what you did.

## Here's What to Write:

**Writing prompt:** Write an essay that describes your early memories about reading. Include specific best and worst memories, as well as general information, and any positive or negative feelings associated with those experiences. Title it: The Reading History of (followed by your name).

- Subtitle: INTRODUCTION (Write the introduction last. That way you will know best how to set up what you wrote for the rest of the piece.)
  - Background information: Summarize your schooling experience (what schools you attended and where).
  - Thesis: Summarize your overall thoughts and feelings about learning to read.
- Subtitle: EARLY YEARS
  - early memories of learning to read before school and in the first couple years of school
  - if parents or others have told you about reading experiences you had when you were little, include those
  - include any attitudes or feelings you had about those experiences
- Subtitle: JUNIOR YEARS
  - memories of reading experiences 2nd or 3rd-5th grade. First chapter books
  - books you remember reading during this time Distinguish between books read in class and books read on your own. What do you remember about them. How did you feel about reading them?
  - how much/how often did you read on your own?
  - include any attitudes or feelings you had about those experiences
- Subtitle: MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS
  - memories of reading experiences during 6th through 8th grade.
  - books you remember reading during this time. Distinguish between books read in class and books read on your own. What do you remember about them. How did you feel about reading them?
  - how much/how often did you read on your own?
  - include any attitudes or feelings you had about those experiences
- For students who are entering LCHS after some high school experience Subtitle: HIGH SCHOOL YEARS
  - memories of reading experiences during 9th grade up until the present.
  - books you remember reading during this time. Distinguish between books read in class and books read on your own. What do you remember about them. How did you feel about reading them?
  - how much/how often did you read on your own?
  - include any attitudes or feelings you had about those experiences
- Subtitle: CONCLUSION
  - Overall, how have all of these experiences shaped you as a reader? In this concluding paragraph, make some judgments and give some opinions about the success of your reading training and accomplishments so far and how it has prepared you for the future.

**Length:** 5 sections (6 if you already have had high school experience). Several of these sections will have multiple paragraphs. This paper will probably run several pages.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Due: August 18, 2016

## **Freshman Honors English 9- Summer Reading Assignment**

***A Separate Peace* by John Knowles**

**Liberty Charter High School**

**Mrs. Nicole Allen**

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For the 2016 – 2017 school year, students will read the novel *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles. THE SCHOOL WILL NOT PROVIDE THE NOVEL. It can be found at local libraries and bookstores, as well as from online resources. Students are expected to read the novel, complete ONE (1) of the following essays, and take a test on TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2016. Failure to complete the assignment will most likely result in an automatic removal from honors English, and plagiarism is not tolerated. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mrs. Allen at [nicole.allen@lfcinc.org](mailto:nicole.allen@lfcinc.org).

Along with any pre-writing you may do, you will be required to write a first draft by hand and then type your final draft. Both drafts are due, in hard copy form, for credit during the 2016-17 Student Orientation currently scheduled for Thursday, August 18, 2016. You will turn them into Mrs. Allen.

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### ***A Separate Peace* Essay Topics**

**You will be answering one of the following questions for this essay.**

**\*Read each of the questions carefully then choose your question for the essay. After you choose your question, reread the question a few times and synthesize the ideas being asked into a single thesis statement. It is not necessary to answer each question in the big question. They are there to make you think about the topic, the thesis, and what the larger significance will be in the essay.**

1. Throughout the novel, Finny seems to force himself to remain in the innocent moment, denying both his accident and the war until Brinker and the trial force him to come face to face with his injury and Gene's role in it. Yet, it is this knowledge that ultimately destroys him. What comment is Knowles making about people like Finny in the novel? Is it possible to stay youthful and free or is that simply irresponsible? Was it Finny's naiveté that destroyed him or Gene's jealousy? Why can't we remain forever young? Is it dangerous?
2. Throughout the first part of the book Gene is in a constant battle with himself about the nature of his friendship/rivalry with Finny. At times he feels that they are bonded by competition and deep enmity. Other times he feels that Finny is sincere, honest, and a true friend. After Finny's injury and return to school, Gene feels it is his duty to protect Finny and enforce Finny's ideas and beliefs even if it means not following through on his plans to enlist or personal goals.

Considering Gene's descriptions of the events in the novel, his descriptions of Finny, and his descriptions of their relationship, argue whether or not Finny is a good friend to Gene or would Gene be better off without Finny in his life. What statement is Knowles making about friendship? Were they ever really friends?

3. At the end of the novel Gene says, "Wars were made instead by something ignorant in the human heart" (Knowles 201). Considering these lines, what was the war that Gene waged in the novel and why was it based on ignorance? Consider how usually ignorance is attributed to the mind and not the heart. Why would Gene attribute it to the heart? What does he learn from his war and ultimately how is it resolved?

4. Competition and rivalry play a large role in the novel. Considering the relationship between Gene and Finny, discuss whether or not competition between peers is a healthy or unhealthy thing. What are the dangers of competition/rivalry? Consider the last lines in the novel about constructing Maginot Lines against imaginary enemies in formulating your thesis.

5. Throughout the book, Gene is associated with bitterness, rivalry, complicity, and competence. In contrast, Finny is associated with strength, power, goodness, and excellence. Considering both characters write an essay about the strengths and weaknesses in both boys arguing who is the weaker character. Consider the statement Knowles is making about strength and survival through these young men. What does it take to survive in a modern world?

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## Requirements

Your essay will be evaluated on the following:

### I. Content/ Organization

#### A. Introduction

- You will need an introduction that clearly introduces the topic and novel in a creative, specific way.
- Your thesis sentence will be the last sentence of the introduction. It needs to answer the question you have chosen, address what the paper is about, and **answer the larger question of “so what?”**

#### B. Body – Minimum of 2 body paragraphs

- The body of the essay should prove your thesis.
- **You will use a minimum of three quotations from *A Separate Peace* to support the thesis.**
- Each quotation should have a proper lead, followed by explanation and analysis.
- Quotations will be analyzed and linked back to the thesis. Connections will be made.

#### C. Conclusion

- Your conclusion will tie all the ideas in the essay together.
- Your Restated Thesis should be the first sentence in your conclusion.

### II. Word Choice/ Fluency/ Conventions

- Proper attention to spelling, grammar, and punctuation will be evident.
- Run-on sentences and fragments will be avoided.
- Quotations will be properly cited in the essay. **Please use MLA format.**

3. Your essay will be between two and three pages. Your essay will be typed, doubled spaced.

4. All prewriting is required on the day it is due and must be handed in with the final essay. It is your responsibility to keep it until you hand in the final paper.

***Handwritten 1<sup>st</sup> Draft and  
Typed Final Copy - Due August 18, 2016***

***Turn in to Mrs. Allen***

**Late work will receive ½ credit if turned in by Tuesday, August 23.**

**After August 23, no credit will be given, and students will be  
dropped from Honors English to CP English and required to complete the CP  
English summer reading assignment.**

***A Separate Peace Study Guide***

**Honors English 9**

**John Knowles - Author**

**Background Information**

- Born in 1926 in Fairmont, West Virginia
- Attended public school until age 15, when he left for Phillips Exeter Academy, an elite prep school for boys in New Hampshire
- Experiences at Exeter inspired *A Separate Peace* and *Peace Breaks Out*
- Graduated early from Exeter in Aug. 1947 because of his participation in the summer Anticipatory Program, a special wartime term, like Devon's Summer Session, meant to prepare boys for military service
- Graduated from Yale University in 1949 with a Bachelor of Arts in English
- Occasionally wrote theater reviews for the newspaper
- Wrote a novel that was never published
- Wrote short story "Phineas," published in *Cosmopolitan* in 1956
- Short story "Phineas" contains the story that was the basis for *A Separate Peace*
- Knowles's agent sent the manuscript for *A Separate Peace* to American publishers, but they all rejected it.
- More than 9 million copies have been sold
- Published 10 other books since 1960, including *Peace Breaks Out* (1981), a sequel to *A Separate Peace*.

**Historical Context**

- World War II Began on September 1, 1939, when the German army invaded Poland
- After occupying Poland, the Germans moved west, occupying the countries of Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, and France.
- By June 1940, only Great Britain held out against Hitler, and Italy joined the Axis powers.
- America became involved in WWII in Dec. 1941, when Japan attacked military bases at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
- *A Separate Peace* is written through an extended flashback that begins in the summer of 1942
- 15 million American men joined the military during WWII
- All young men 18 and older who stood taller than 5 ft tall and weighed 105 lbs or more were accepted.
- 2/3 (10 million) of the men serving were drafted. Most of those were sent to the infantry, where they saw the worst of the war, and endured the highest casualty rate.
- 5 million enlisted and could choose the branch of service they would join.
- The boys in the novel in Devon School, mostly choose enlistment in relatively prestigious (and safer) training programs in preference to the draft.
- War ended in Europe on May 7, 1945, when Germany surrendered.
- Japanese forces did not surrender until atomic bombs were dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- Japan surrendered on Aug. 15, 1945

**Setting:** The work is set at Devon, a private boarding school in New Hampshire on the Atlantic Coast during World War II. Two rivers run through the school's campus, one is the Devon River (fresh water) and the other is the Naguamsett River (salt water, swamp like consistency). Some of the work's action revolves around a predominate oak tree overhanging a creek.

**Background Information:** The novel begins with the main character, Gene and Finny, at Devon for a summer session. The school hopes that this session will allow the students to receive a diploma before they are drafted on their eighteenth birthday. Gene and Finny are roommates and friends at the school. Finny is a natural athlete who also acts as a leader for the other boys in the school; devising games like Blitzball, and organizing the Winter Carnival. However, Gene is more academically oriented in his interests and is jealous of Finny's natural ability in sports, a quality he lacks in academics.

**Major Characters:**

**Gene Forester** – Narrator - This character is the protagonist whose envy of Finny eventually leads to his untimely demise. He is also suspicious of Finny's motivations since his cynical attitude causes him to think that no individual could be as completely pure as Finny. So, he projects his own devious nature on other people.

**Phineas** – Finny -He is a nonconformist who fails to acknowledge school regulations and tradition. This behavior is illustrated in his consistent lateness to dinner, wearing the school tie as a belt, wearing a pink shirt, and organizing the Super Suicide Society of the Summer Session.

**Brinker Hadley** – Yellow Peril -This character is an elitist student leader that is concerned about losing his power to Finny's popularity.

**Edward Lepellier** – Leper - He is an isolationist that was ridiculed by his classmates. He is important in the events of the novel since he was present when Finny "fell" from the oak tree. Leper surprises his classmates by choosing to enlist in the paratroopers after watching an army recruiter video, although he later deserts the army and returns to his Vermont home suffering insanity.

**Plot Summary:** The novel begins with Gene revisiting Devon several years after graduating to reflect on the incidents that occurred during the summer session. The first incident that Gene recounts indicates his dislike of Finny's attitude toward authority is when they attend a tea. Finny wears the school's tie as a belt and dresses in a pink shirt. Gene remarks that Finny is the only person who could "get away" with such an outfit. Later in the novel, Finny creates the Super Suicide Society of the Summer Session and places Gene and himself as the leaders. In addition he conceives of the idea that he and Gene should jump from the tree at once. This is a very dangerous action because they must jump outward to land in the water or else they hit the ground. During the first jump, Gene loses his balance and Finny grabs his arm to steady him without thinking. During another jump, Gene jounces the limb and Finny reaches out to him for help; yet Gene allows him to fall, causing him to break his leg. Gene begins to feel guilty for his actions and realizes his own jealousy of Finny. Finny refuses to acknowledge the fact that Gene pushed him out of the tree, because it conflicts with his idea of everybody being innately good. Yet, at the end of the novel Finny begins to accept the truth after being questioned by Brinker.

**Key Issues:**

1. Gene is jealous of Finny's natural athletic ability and fluid walk, but believes he compensates for this lack of ability by

excelling in academics. Gene leads himself to believe that Finny is attempting to sabotage his academic success with nights at the beach, and the Super Suicide Society. Yet the reader learns later that Finny thought Gene possessed a natural academic ability when he told him to study and not come the Super Suicide Society meeting. This incident further annoys Gene since he realizes he is lacking in a way Finny is not.

2. Another issue involves Finny's denial of the events surrounding his accident. He refuses to believe that Gene caused him to fall from the tree. However, when Brinker begins to question Finny about that day he runs from the room instead of

acknowledging the truth. Another manifestation of this denial of reality is Finny's inability to admit that the war exists. Instead, Finny claims it is a fabrication of fat old men to stop the young people from enjoying themselves. This provides a convenient excuse since he cannot participate in the conflict. He refuses to accept the loss of his athletic ability by forcing Gene to train for the 1944 Olympics.

3. Gene's insecurity is one of the key factors in the development of the novel. He doubts his own abilities, and believes that

Finny is attempting to destroy his academic success. Yet the reader learns that it is actually Gene's paranoia over his own lack of talent that leads to his distrust of Finny, and eventually to taking the opportunity to destroy Finny's unique nature.