

## Independent Reading Unit for English III

*Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott  
*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie  
*The Awakening* by Kate Chopin  
*The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger  
*Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury  
*Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller  
*A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines  
*Ordinary People* by Judith Guest  
*The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway  
*Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston  
*Sula* by Toni Morrison  
*The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath  
*The Color Purple* by Alice Walker  
*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry  
*A Death in the Family* by James Agee  
*The Ox-Bow Incident* by Walter Van Tilburg Clark  
*The Chocolate War* by Robert Cormier  
*The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald  
*Catch-22* by Joseph Heller  
*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey  
*The Learning Tree* by Gordon Parks  
*The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair  
*The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells  
*Native Son* by Richard Wright

Students will complete an Independent Reading Unit in their English III class this year. Students will have the opportunity to read during class time (and should check their current agenda to see which days they must bring their book to class.) Students will also be expected to read their individual book at home. You will complete ten journal entries while you are reading. Below are twenty questions and students will select ten questions to which you will respond in detail. I will *not* be conducting journal checks. As juniors, you are responsible for ensuring that you keep up with this long-term assignment. I recommend that you respond to one journal question for every 15/20/25 pages that you read (depending on how many pages are in your IRU book.) Your journal is due the date of your presentation. Be sure to review the syllabus for my policy regarding absences on scheduled presentation dates. Students will know their presentation dates a month in advance so schedule your appointments accordingly.

Your responses must be typed, in MLA format, using Times New Roman font size 12. Be sure to include the correct heading. The title of your journal will be the title of the book. Notice that above, I have italicized all of the books' titles. I followed MLA format, which states that when typing, one must italicize book titles. Each response must be a minimum of seven complete sentences. Remember to start each paragraph with a topic sentence.

You are now in the third month of your junior year in high school. We have learned and reviewed correct grammar, spelling and punctuation rules. Students have also been exposed to new vocabulary words. Because everything in my class is related, you are expected to demonstrate your mastery of the English language by correctly typing your detailed responses. Again, I suggest that you respond to one journal question for every 15/20/25 pages you read.

Your individual presentations will be between four to six minutes in length. Points will be deducted for presentations that are longer or shorter. In addition, I will have to stop your presentation if you reach the six-minute mark. Time management is another skill you will learn by completing this assignment.

You will create a PowerPoint or a Prezi presentation, with a minimum of seven slides, including a title slide, which should include the title of the book and your correct heading. Include pictures, graphics and other elements to make your presentation appealing to the audience. Remember, the goal of the PowerPoint or Prezi is to enhance *your* discussion. If there is too much text, and audience members can simply read the content off the slides, then they are not listening to you. Effective speakers keep their audiences engaged. Your PowerPoint or Prezi will guide the audience, providing a skeleton or outline of what you are discussing. Ultimately, we should be drawn into the presentation because of *you* and your graphics, pictures, etc.

**Below are your journal questions. Remember, you will select 10 to which you will respond.**

1. Choose a character and describe why you do/don't like him/her. This is characterization. Cite two examples from the text.
2. Summarize and evaluate a decision or two that a character made after struggling with an internal conflict. Cite two examples from the text.
3. Select an important quote from the book and explain how it relates to the rest of the book. Cite this quote using MLA format.
4. Write from a character's perspective and show what you think he/she would be feeling and thinking in a particular section you read. Describe how this section relates to the rest of the book. Cite an example from the text.

5. There is usually at least one symbol in a book, play, movie, poem or short story. What is one symbol in your book? What does this symbol represent? How often does the author mention or include this symbol in your book? Cite two examples from the text.
6. Every book, short story, play, poem and movie is told from a particular point of view. From which point of view is your story being told? Is this effective? Why or why not? Cite two examples from the text.
7. Describe the climax of your book. How did the protagonist feel before the climax? How did the protagonist feel after the climax occurred? Using analysis, why do you think the protagonist's behavior, attitude, outlook or opinions changed? Cite two examples from the text.
8. Describe the resolution of your book. What life lessons did your protagonist learn? Did he/she change his behavior, attitude, outlook or opinion as a result of these lessons? Describe how he/she changed. Cite two examples from the text.
9. Every book, play, movie, poem or short story has at least one theme. Pick a theme from your book. This should be a complete sentence and should clearly include the actual life lesson you learned as a result of reading this book. Describe which events took place in the plot to help you learn this lesson. Cite two examples from the text.
10. If you could sit down and have dinner with the protagonist of your book, what three questions would you ask him/her and why do you want to know the answers to these questions?
11. Pick a character in your book who reminds you of someone you know. How are the character and the person similar? How are they different? Cite two examples from the text.
12. If you did not like the end of the book, describe how you would have ended it. What kind of resolution would you like to see for the characters and the plot? Why is your resolution better? What will the characters and the readers learn from your alternate ending?
13. If you could sit down and have dinner with the antagonist of your book, what three questions would you ask him/her and why do you want to know the answers to these questions?
14. If you could sit down and have dinner with the author of your book, what three questions would you ask him/her and why do you want to know the answers to these questions?
15. Would you recommend this book to other high school juniors? Why or why not?
16. Describe the author's tone regarding the subject matter. How did his/her tone affect you as the reader? Cite two examples from the text.
17. Identify three components of the text which surprised you. Were these good surprises or were you angry that the author was taking the reader in this direction? Cite three examples from the text.
18. Do the characters seem real and believable? Can you relate to their predicaments? To what extent do they remind you of yourself or someone you know?
19. How do characters change or evolve throughout the course of the story? What events trigger such changes? Cite two examples from the text.
20. In what ways do the events in the books reveal evidence of the author's world view? Cite two examples from the text.

**Ms. Robbins, what information should we include in our presentation?**

Students are required to respond to 10 questions in detail. For your 4-6 minutes presentation, you will do the following:

1. Tell the audience the title of your book and a few facts about the author.
2. Who are the main characters? What happens to them? What are the major conflicts? What do they learn?
3. Every book, play, movie, poem or short story has at least one theme. Pick a theme from your book. Describe which events took place in the plot to help you learn this lesson. What does the reader learn about life by reading this book or play? (You must discuss the theme of your book.)
3. You responded to ten journal questions. You will select three of your responses and share them in detail with the class. Be sure to clearly identify the three questions to which you are responding.

Practice, practice, practice! I suggest you practice in front of a mirror and you time yourself each time you do the presentation.

**Write the date of your Independent Reading Unit presentation here:** \_\_\_\_\_

Review the syllabus for my policy regarding absences on scheduled presentation days.