Freshman Honors English | Summer Project

Welcome to Columbia High School! We are excited that you have elected to take Freshman Honors English for the 2017-18 school year and look forward to working with you.

This summer project is designed to strengthen your reading and analysis skills so that you are academically prepared for the upcoming school year and to allow us, as your teachers, to better gauge your ability to read, analyze, and write about literature at the start of the school year. The summer project will influence instruction, especially at the beginning of the year, and the novel you read will also be part of other in-class assignments and discussion in first semester.

If you have any questions over the summer, do not be afraid to email and ask your question—there are NO dumb questions. Additional resources for the summer read will also be posted online at http://columbiabhigh.nsd131.org/Parents_Students/freshman_summer_read.

We can't wait to meet you!

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1. Read *To Kill a Mockingbird*

*To Kill a Mockingbird*, written by Harper Lee, is often available at retailers such as Walmart and Target. You can also locate this popular novel at the Nampa Public Library, new and used bookstores (such as Bent Corners or Barnes & Noble), and online. If desired, you may mark up the text as you read.

2. Answer Questions

Carefully provide complete, thorough, and original answers for the questions listed below using the RACE method – outlined on page 3. Be sure to cite text evidence to support your response to each question. Type your response in MLA format (12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced, 1” margins).

**Part One**

1. Based on the details provided in chapter 1, how would you describe Atticus?
2. Why does Scout stand up for Walter in chapter 2?
3. Atticus says, “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view ... until you climb into his skin and walk around in it” (33). How is this advice taken or ignored in chapter 3?
4. Scout, as the narrator, ends chapter 9 by saying: “It was not until many years later that I realized [Atticus] wanted me to hear every word he said” (101). Why might Atticus want her to hear every word?
5. Atticus says, “Remember it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird” (103). Put this statement in your own words. What does Atticus really mean? How do you think it relates to the title? How does Miss Maudie help this explanation?

**Part Two**

6. In chapter 16, Scout learns that her father was appointed to defend Tom Robinson. She observes, “The court appointed Atticus to defend him. Atticus aimed to defend him. That’s what they didn’t like about
it. It was confusing” (186). What does the reader understand about why the townspeople are upset that Scout doesn’t?

7. Why do you think Atticus speaks so formally to Mayella during her testimony in chapter 18? What is your impression of Atticus based on Lee’s descriptions during Mayella’s testimony?

8. Atticus declares, “This case is as simple as black and white” (231).
   a. How is this case literally about black and white?
   b. Irony: words that express something different from and often opposite to their literal meaning. Describe the irony of Atticus’s statement. How is this case black and white, figuratively speaking?

9. In chapter 9, Atticus says, “Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win” (87). Now that you have read the whole text, what do you think? Does it make sense for Atticus to take a stand to defend Tom Robinson?

10. What does Scout mean when she says, “Atticus was right. One time he said you never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them. Just standing on the Radley porch was enough” (321)?

3. Reflect

In the book, Scout, Atticus, and Boo: A Celebration of To Kill a Mockingbird, author Mary McDonagh Murphy writes:

“Reading To Kill a Mockingbird is something millions of us have in common, yet there is nothing in common about the experience. It is usually an extraordinary one. To Kill a Mockingbird leaves a mark. And somehow, it is hermetically sealed in our brains—the memory of it fresh and clear no matter how many decades have passed. If you ask, people will tell you exactly where they were and what was happening to them when they read Harper Lee’s first and only novel. It may be the first ‘adult’ book we read, assigned in eighth or ninth grade. Often it is the first time a young reader is completely kidnapped by a novel, taken on an enthralling ride until the very end. After half a century, To Kill a Mockingbird’s staying power is remarkable: still a best seller, always at the top of lists of readers’ favorites, far and away the most widely read book in high school.” (McDonagh Murphy 3)

Now that you have experienced To Kill a Mockingbird, what are you overall reflections, reactions, responses, etc. to the novel? What have you learned from To Kill a Mockingbird? Do you think the book deserves the acclaim it has received – why or why not? What questions about the novel are lingering in your mind?

Your response should be two to three pages in length, typed in MLA format (12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced, 1” margins). Draw on evidence from the text to support your response.

**Deadlines and Expectations**

The summer reading project must be completed by THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASS. You will submit your answers and reflection to your Freshman Honors teacher. You are also expected to bring your copy of To Kill a Mockingbird to class for further discussion of the text.

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1 **Hermetically** (adv.): in a way that is completely airtight
RACE: Writing a Superior Short Answer Response

When writing a short answer response, it is not enough to simply answer the question. Readers and graders are looking for

- evidence that you understand
- analysis (thinking)
- support for your answer with evidence from the reading(s)
- clarity

Using the RACE Method will help you to focus your response in a clear and concise manner.

Restate the question asked
Reread and restate the question in your topic sentence. For example, what’s your favorite color? My favorite color is...

Answer (main idea)
Answer the question that is being asked and that ALL the questions are being answered. Use your answer to write your topic sentence.

Cite evidence from the text
Cite evidence from the text means to return to the reading and find at least one quote, direct or indirect, which supports your answer. Direct quotes are often better and having both is best! All quotes need to start with a quote starter, or signal phrase. For example: The author stated... X explained... according to X...

**Direct Quote:** A direct quote is a quote in which you copy an author's words directly - word for word. Direct quotes will be surrounded by quotation marks.

Example: The author stated, "I couldn't laugh; I couldn't applaud; it filled me with bitterness to have others do it and to have people make a hero of Hicks and the people around him" (Twain 659).

**Indirect Quote:** An indirect quote is a quote in which you paraphrase, put into your own words, what the author is saying.

Example: Twain was unable to laugh or applaud, because he was so angry that Hicks could be mesmerized and he could not (659).

Explain and Elaborate on your answer and the evidence
Explain how the evidence from the text supports your answer. A good response will carefully analyze the text, offer textual evidence from the piece or pieces that will directly support your answer, and explain how this evidence supports your answer. Do not just say something is true – prove it. Show how the evidence supports the answer, and supply reasons your answer is correct.

Consider using the following sentence starters: these quotes show that... this supports the statement because... in other words...