

## Reading Response Journal Instructions

For the novel that you selected to read this school year, you must answer the following questions in your Reading Response Journal. Honors level students must complete all parts—I-V. Academic level students must complete parts I-III. Questions should be answered in the order listed below, and all answers should be well-written, complete sentences in a spiral notebook for submission.

### I. THE BEGINNING – 20 POINTS

- a. Name the author and title of the novel
- b. Who is narrating the story?
- c. What is the setting of the novel?
- d. Who is the main character?
- e. Who are the other important characters?
- f. What important events have happened before the novel begins?
- g. What is going on as the story begins?
- h. What is the first serious conflict or problem faced by the main character(s)?

### II. THE MIDDLE – 20 POINTS

- a. What new things or problems are added to the initial problem as the novel continues? Is there a main conflict that emerges in this part of the story or has the main conflict already been revealed earlier in the story?
- b. What new plot twists or unexpected events happen as the novel progresses?
- c. Is there a message or main theme emerging in the middle of the book? What is it and how is it shown?
- d. What other important themes do you find in the story?
- e. Is a new character or characters introduced that are important to the story? Who are they? What is their purpose?

### III. THE END – 20 POINTS

- a. What is the climax of the novel?
- b. How are the main conflicts of the story resolved?
- c. What message or moral did you get from the novel? How was this message conveyed to you?

### IV. CRITICAL ANALYSIS – 20 POINTS

- a. Include in your journal any passage from your novel which really appeals to you, in which you think the author wrote something particularly well. You might find that your author has done a fabulous job of describing something, of writing dialogue, or of using figurative language. There are many possibilities. Of course you will need to explain why the passage appeals to you. This explanation should be 1-2 pages typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font. For example, in the novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, by Zora Neale Hurston, there is a passage in which I really like the way the author describes and personifies (gives human-like qualities to an abstract idea) Death:

*“So Janie began to think of Death. Death, that strange being with the huge square toes who lived way in the West. The great one who lived in the straight house like a platform without sides to it, and without a roof. What need has Death for a cover, and what winds blow against him? He stands in his high house and overlooks the world. Stands watchful and motionless with his sword drawn back, waiting for the messenger to bid him come. Been standing there before there was a where or a when or a then. She was liable to find a feather from his wings lying in her yard any day now. She was sad and afraid too” (Hurston 133).*

Your 1-2 page explanation will address your chosen excerpt. In writing, you will explore what is appealing about your selection.

### V. CONCLUDING ACTIVITY – 20 POINTS (CHOOSE ONE)

- a. Choose an important character and analyze him/her using clues from the story: In addition to the character’s appearance, what does his/her actions, ideas (how he/she thinks), manner (how he/she acts), and reactions of other characters to this character, reveal about the chosen character? Include examples from the novel to support your view. Character analysis length should be between 1-2 pages typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font.
- b. Write a review of the novel including: good points and bad points, the message that you learned from the novel, whom it was written for, how successful the author was in getting the message across, why a friend should read or not read this novel, and what your rating of the novel would be from a scale of 1-10. Review length should be between 1-2 pages typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font.

**DAILY READING LOG – WE ARE GOING TO AVOID KEEPING A SEPARATE READING LOG BY WRITING THE DATE AND PAGES READ EACH DAY IN THE MARGINS OF YOUR JOURNAL**