

This summer you will have to complete the following tasks:

1. **Choice Novel** - Choose ONE novel from the list of Seven titles provided. (you will have to purchase your own copy) Please email me your choice by July 10<sup>th</sup>. Read and Annotate your novel. (review the attached A Reader's Guide to Annotation) Then, complete the attached Prep Sheets. Bedetailed – providing specific textual support - while making sure that you write in present tense, avoid passive voice, and keep an academic tone with precise literary language. ***Your finished prep sheets and annotated book will be turned in on the first day of school.***

1. 1984 by George Orwell
2. The Hand Maid's Tale by Margaret Atwood
3. All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr
4. There There by Tommy Orange
5. Beloved by Toni Morrison
6. Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte
7. Great Expectations by Charles Dicken
8. Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen's

2. Purchase and read **Invisible Man** by **Ralph Ellison**.
  - a. Begin reading chapters 1-6 (**only**) before the start of school.
  - b. annotate the novel while reading and complete a guided reading packet.
  - c. Your finished questions and annotated book will be turned in on the second day of school.
3. ASAP Sign up for **Remind** text @dodts128 to the number 81010
4. You will also need to purchase at least three other books during the school year. Frankenstein by Mary Shelley (1831edition), The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini, and The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien.
5. Other supplies needed for 2025-2026 school year:
  - a. A small packet of lined paper
  - b. Black or blue pens (required for AP essay writing)
  - c. A two-inch binder

**Note:** To receive full credit on the study guides and essay, avoid using outside sources and/or working excessively with other students. An answer copied from the internet –whether right or wrong- is not as impressive to me as reading your detailed interpretation of the novel. **The Advanced Placement Literature** exam does not stress a correct interpretation of the literature, but an interpretation that is supported with specific examples from the text. Please strive to interpret the text on your own and to support your answer with details from the text.

**Any plagiarism or use of A.I. (however small) will result in a zero on that assignment**

# A Reader's Guide to Annotation

As you read your novels, think about ways that you can connect with what you are reading. The following are some suggestions that will help with annotating.

## 1. Instincts & insights (your internal thoughts + personal connections)

- a. *These are your personal thoughts, questions, connections, or emotional reactions – anything that jumps out at you or sparks your interests*

## 2. Character Development & Dynamics Between Characters

- a. *Keeping track of characters. Pay attention to how characters grow, clash, connect, change, and how their relationships shape their journey and or the plot.*

## 3. Shifts in Tone & Mood

- a. *How does the story feel?*
  - i. *Track the shifts in tone and mood – whether it's sunny, tense, stormy, playful, or eerie – you're trying to understand the emotional landscape of the text*

## 4. Literary Tools & Devices Used by the Author

- a. *Highlight or label literary devices that the author is using to tell the story. ( i.e. metaphors, imagery, symbolism, irony, diction, figurative language... etc.)*

## 5. Big Picture Views (theme development)

- a. *Look for recurring ideas, questions, or messages the author wants you to think about – look at the big picture – this is how you find theme*

~Beginning to annotate.

Use a pen, pencil, post-it notes, or a highlighter (*although use it sparingly!*)

- o Summarize important ideas in your own words.
- o Add examples from real life, other books (especially those read in school), TV, movies, and so forth.
- o Define words that are new to you; this will help to build your vocabulary.
- o Mark passages that you find confusing with a ???
  - (Remember to get your questions answered during class discussions)
- o Write questions that you might have for later discussion in class.
  - (Remember to get your questions answered during class discussions)
- o Comment on the actions or development of characters.
- o Comment on developing themes
- o Comment on things that intrigue, impress, surprise, disturb, etc.
- o Note how the author uses language; paying particular attention to how literary devices are used.
- o Feel free to draw picture when a visual connection is appropriate
- o Explain the historical context or traditions/social customs used in the passage.
- o Highlight/underline passages that are referred to on your study guides.

~Suggested methods for marking a text:

- o \*If you are a person who does not like to write in a book, you may want to invest in a supply of post it notes.
- o \*If you feel really creative, or are just super organized, you can even color code your annotations by using different color post-its, highlighters, or pens.
- o \*Marking important, and significant quotes that are meaningful to you will help you to prepare for the AP exam in May
- o \*Marginal Notes: Use the space in the margins to make comments, define words, ask questions, etc. (Remember to get your questions answered during class discussions)

# Choice Novel Prep Sheet

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Choice Novel: \_\_\_\_\_

Publication date: \_\_\_\_\_ Publication Company and/or place of publication: \_\_\_\_\_

The goal is to read and understand your book on a thematic level. Please completely fill out this sheet considering the most important events that inform the theme. Use complete sentences. Due the first full day of school.

**Summary:** Please compile the ten most important events of plot here. Then highlight the climax.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

## **Thematic Concept**

Explain the author's message to his/her readers about ONE topic of theme presented in your novel - on the AP Literature test they call this "the meaning of the work as a whole." What is the unifying message in the story? What does the author want the reader to understand about life/ the behavior of humans after reading this novel? Use at least three specific events of plot to support your claim.

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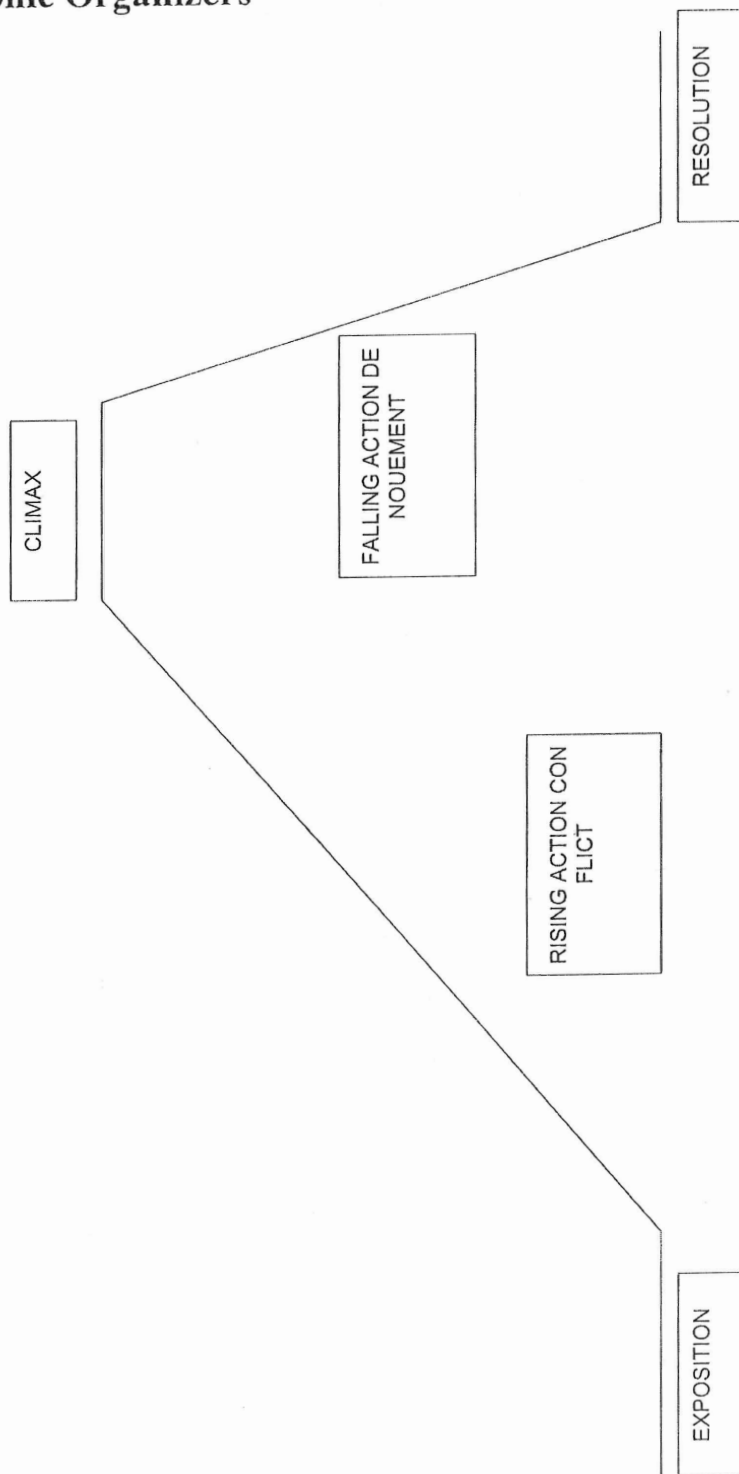
**How does the author use characterization to enhance the thematic concept?**

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

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

## ***Choice Novel Graphic Organizers***

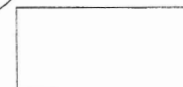
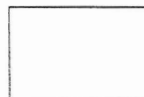
Plot graph for \_\_\_\_\_



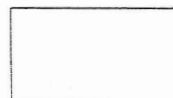
Different perspectives on the situation which initiates the action in the novel  
(write Character Names in the Boxes Provided, and explain in the quadrants how they fit into the plot or problem)

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

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



Problem/Plot  
(write what you think it is)



## Invisible Man

Ralph Ellison

Name:

- Prereading: Author Information/Notes: After reading the following article, record the ten facts you find most interesting.

### **RALPH ELLISON Biography**

Ralph Waldo Ellison was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on March 1, 1914. His father, Lewis Ellison, was an adventurous and accomplished man who had served in the military overseas and had lived in Abbeville, South Carolina and Chattanooga, Tennessee before moving to Oklahoma.. In Oklahoma City Lewis Ellison worked in construction and started his own ice and coal business. Ellison's mother, Ida Millsap Ellison, who was known as "Brownie," was a political activist who campaigned for the Socialist Party and against the segregationist policies of Oklahoma's governor "Alfalfa Bill" Murray. After her husband's death, Ida Ellison supported Ralph and his brother Herbert by working at a variety of jobs while making sure Ellison and his brother did not have poor childhoods.

Ellison benefited from the Oklahoma public schools but took odd jobs to pay for supplemental education. His particular interest was music, and in return for yard work, Ellison received lessons from Ludwig Hebestreit, the conductor of the Oklahoma City Orchestra. At nineteen, with the dream of becoming a composer, he accepted a state scholarship to attend Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

Unlike the protagonist of *Invisible Man*, Ellison was not expelled from Tuskegee, but like the character he later created, Ellison did not graduate. Instead, he travelled to New York City in 1936 to find work during the summer between his junior and senior years, intending to return to Tuskegee in the fall. Soon after his arrival in New York, however, Ellison happened to meet Alain Locke and Langston Hughes, major literary figures of the Harlem Renaissance. Through his acquaintance with Hughes, Ellison was introduced to Richard Wright, who encouraged Ellison to write and published his first review in *New Challenge*, a journal that Wright edited.

Ellison supported himself with a variety of jobs during his first years in Harlem. In 1938, he joined the Federal Writer's Project where he and others employed by the Living Lore Unit gathered urban folklore materials. This experience provided him with a wealth of folklore materials that he used effectively in *Invisible Man*. In the early 1940s Ellison published several short stories. During World War II, Ellison served as a cook on a merchant marine ship. At the war's end, he travelled to New Hampshire to rest, and there he began work on *Invisible Man*.

*Invisible-Man* was controversial, attacked by militants as reactionary and banned from schools because of its explicit descriptions of black life. Literary critics, however, generally agreed on the book's significance. In 1965, a poll of literary critics named it the outstanding book written by an American in the previous twenty years, placing it ahead of works by Faulkner, Hemingway, and Bellow. Ellison received many awards for his work.

In 1958 Ellison accepted a teaching position at Bard College. In subsequent years he taught at Rutgers University, the University of Chicago, and New York University from which he retired in 1979. He has accepted numerous honorary doctorates and published two collections of essays. Since the 1960s Ellison has worked on a second novel that he reputedly plans to publish as a trilogy. His work on the novel was disrupted when about 350 pages of its 1,000 page manuscript were destroyed in a house fire in 1967. Several selections from the book have been published in journals.

The central theme of Ellison's writing is the quest for identity, a quest that he sees as central to American literature and the American experience. He has said that "the nature of our society is such that we are prevented from knowing who we are," and in *Invisible Man* this struggle toward "self" is applied to individuals, groups, and society as a whole. The particular genius of *Invisible Man* is Ellison's ability to interweave these individual, communal, and national quests into a single, complex vision.

Facts:

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As you read, consider how the following motifs/symbols function in the novel to justify the author's message. Take notes/ write examples and page numbers and/or annotate important information in your novel (**Some ARE NOT introduced in the summer reading.**)

- blindness
- invisibility
- the Liberty Paints plant
- **Sambo doll on strings**
- **the coin bank**
- the briefcase
- **the taboo of interracial relationships**

## Prologue

1. How would you describe the **tone** of the first two paragraphs? **Provide at least two examples from the text to support your choice.**
2. What is **ironic** about the narrator's encounter with the blond man? (How is the narrator's interaction with the man the opposite of what each expect?) Provide **textual** support for your answer.
3. **A. What is the effect** of using the same words in a different order (called **chiasmus**) in the following quote?: "The truth is the light and the light is the truth"  
**B. What do you THINK** the author means by this phrase?  
  
A.  
  
B.
4. Explain the narrator's desire for light in his hiding place in the basement. How is the light used **symbolically**?

## Chapter One

1. In your own words, summarize the first paragraph.
2. Explain the advice that the narrator's grandfather gives him: "Let 'em swoller you till they vomit or bust wide open." How is the advice representative of interactions between whites and blacks within the time frame of the novel?

3. **Why do you think** the grandfather referred to himself as a traitor? Who is he a traitor to? Explain your thoughts.
4. Explain the symbolism of the white cloth covering the eyes of the ten boys who are fighting?
5. How does this chapter show the limits of assimilation?
6. What is the "prize" the narrator is given at the end of the chapter? Explain the symbolic qualities of this object?

## Chapter Two

1. What makes the sleeping farmer "the kind of white man [that the narrator fears]"?
2. What is the tone that Trueblood uses to tell the story of his incest? Why do you think the author choose this tone?
3. Why would Trueblood's wife bring Aunt Cloe over? What does this say about the way the family feels?
4. **Why do you think** Trueblood receives so much more charity from the white community than from his own?

### Chapter Three

1. What do you think is the author's purpose for giving such a wide range of professions to the insane men at the Golden Day?
2. **Predict** what the apocalyptic ravings of one of the patients might serve to foreshadow?
3. Why does the veteran call the narrator invisible in Chapter Three?

Choose two of the important quotations that you identified from chapters 1-3 and then write them here.

Quote/pg. #:

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Why did you choose this quote?

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Quote/pg. #:

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Why did you choose this quote?

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## Chapter Four

1. A. Why does the narrator hate Trueblood and the people at the Golden Day?  
B. Considering his own responsibility in Mr. Norton meeting these people, how does the narrator's "hate" of these characters inform the reader about the complexity of his own character?  
  
A.  
  
  
B.
2. What is the effect of comparing the campus building to an "old plantation manor house"?
3. A. Describe Dr. Bledsoe? B. How does he maintain his position of authority at the university? C. What do you think is the message Ellison is suggesting about black men in power through Dr. Bledsoe? (Be detailed and explain your answer)  
  
A.  
  
  
B.  
  
  
C.

## Chapter Five

1. Using these two paragraphs, from Chapter 5, CIRCLE words with a positive connotation and Underline words with a negative connotation. Now answer the following:
  - o The first paragraph describes the organization of the room and people; using your prior knowledge of Puritan society (*The Scarlet Letter*), what meaning is inferred from the allusion to Puritan society?

- Find the **alliteration** in the last sentence of the first paragraph. How does Ellison use the alliterative words to inform the reader about the "hierarchy in place at the school and how the narrator is feeling (at this moment) about his place in that hierarchy. Consider **cacophony** in your answer.
- Considering the last two sentences (they are bold), How do you think the narrator is feeling about his "fortune"?
- Describe the tone of these two paragraphs. Provide textual support for your answer.

Into the doors and into the soft lights I go, silently, past the rows of puritanical benches straight and torturous, finding that to which I am assigned and bending my body to its agony. There at the head of the platform with its pulpit and rail of polished brass are the banked and pyramided heads of the student choir, faces composed and stolid above uniforms of black and white; and above them, stretching to the ceiling, the organ pipes looming, a gothic hierarchy of dull gilded gold.

Around me the students move with faces frozen in solemn masks, and I seem to hear already the voices mechanically raised in the songs the visitors loved. (Loved? Demanded. Sung? An ultimatum accepted and ritualized, an allegiance recited for the peace it imparted, and for that perhaps loved. Loved as the defeated come to love the symbols of their conquerors. A gesture of acceptance, of terms laid down and reluctantly approved.) And here, sitting rigid, I remember the evenings spent before the sweeping platform in awe and in pleasure, and in the pleasure of awe; remember the short formal sermons intoned from the pulpit there, rendered in smooth articulate tones, with calm assurance purged of that wild emotion of the crude preachers most of us knew in our home towns and of whom we were deeply ashamed, these logical appeals which reached us more like the thrust of a firm and formal design requiring nothing more than the lucidity of uncluttered periods, the lulling movement of multisyllabic words to thrill and console us. **And I remember, too, the talks of visiting speakers, all eager to inform us of how fortunate we were to be a part of the "vast" and formal ritual. How fortunate to belong to this family sheltered from those lost in ignorance and darkness.**

2. What phrase does the narrator use to describe Dr. Bledsoe's position relative to the trustees around him? Why is this significant (relate to both plot and characterization)?
3. How is **allusion** used during Rev. Barbee's sermon?
4. What is the **rhetorical effect** of Rev. Barbee's blindness?  
How is it symbolic?  
Who is figuratively blind (this is more than one character/group)?  
How is blindness used in a message about society at the time of the novel's setting?
5. What images does the narrator see as he leaves chapel? Consider their symbolic significance. Why do you think the author includes these images?

## **Chapter Six**

1. Why is Dr. Bledsoe so angry with the narrator?
2. How are Dr. Bledsoe's ideas about black/white relations similar to those of the narrator's grandfather?

Choose two of the important quotations that you identified from chapters 4-6 and then write them here.

Quote/pg. #:

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Why did you choose this quote?

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Quote/pg. #:

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Why did you choose this quote?

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