

HONORS AMERICAN LITERATURE

SENIOR YEAR

Mrs. Hernandez
Honors American Literature Senior Year

Sula Summer Reading Assignment

Sula is a rich and moving novel that traces the lives of two black heroines from their close-knit childhood in a small Ohio town, through their sharply divergent paths of womanhood, to their ultimate confrontation and reconciliation. Nel Wright has chosen to stay in the place where she was born, to marry, raise a family, and become a pillar of the black community. Sula Peace has rejected the life Nel has embraced, escaping to college, and submerging herself in city life. When she returns to her roots, it is as a rebel and a wanton seductress. Eventually, both women must face the consequences of their choices. Together, they create an unforgettable portrait of what it means and costs to be a black woman in America.

Please read *Sula* by Toni Morrison, complete the assignment below, and turn in the first day of school. This will be your first grade for your senior year; please work hard to start your year on a good note. I will grade this assignment based on accuracy. There are 63 questions so each will count as 1.5 points.

I am a huge advocate of hand written work; it improves memory, creativity, reading fluency, and focus. When we engage the body by writing with our hands it creates a holistic experience and allows us to slow down and fully engage with our thoughts. With that said, we will write a lot with pen and paper this year! You are required to use a composition notebook for your Summer Reading Assignment, which you will use as a journal to answer the questions listed below.

Directions: Please read *Sula* by Toni Morrison and answer each question using complete sentences in your composition notebook. Please label your answers by section and number your answers. After each answer, write the page number where you found the answer.

Section One (Untitled)

1. How is the town of Medallion described?
2. How is the Bottom described? How is the Bottom different from the rest of Medallion?

3. Explain the story of the slave and his master and the land of the Bottom.

Section Two (1919)

1. What is National Suicide Day and who celebrates it?
2. How is Shadrack's character described?
3. How long has Shadrack been in the hospital? Why is he released?
4. What is the new "struggle" that Shadrack has?
5. What seem to be the details and purpose of Suicide Day?
6. How has the reaction of the town changed over time? Why do you think the town has changed in this way?

Section Three (1920)

1. Why does Helene's grandmother want her to stay away from the Sundown House?
2. Where does Helene move to? Describe her life there.
3. Why does Helene travel back home?
4. Why is the train trip stressful for Helene and her daughter, Nel?
5. What do Helene and Nel discover after their journey?
6. Who does Nel meet, and what does she think of her?

Section Four (1921)

1. Describe Sula's home.
2. Describe Sula's grandmother, Eva.
3. What happened to Eva after 5 years of marriage?
4. Why does Eva leave her children? How is she changed when she returns to them?
5. Who else lives with Sula and Eva?
6. How is Sula's mother Hannah described?
7. What happens to Eva's son Plum when he comes back from war?
8. Why is Eva frustrated with Plum? What does she do to him as a result of her frustration?
What is your reaction to her action?

Section Five (1922)

1. Describe Nel and Sula's new friendship.
2. What roles does Sula seem to have in the friendship?
3. How do Sula and Nel regard the men in town?
4. What happens to Chicken Little, a young neighborhood boy? What is your reaction to this?

5. How do Sula and Nel react to what happened to Chicken Little? What do you think of their reaction?

Section Six (1923)

1. What does Hannah ask her mother, Eva?
2. What does Eva see happen to Hannah? How does Eva react?
3. What later happens to Hannah? What is your reaction to this?
4. Why is Eva suspicious of Sula?

Section Seven (1927)

1. Why does Jude marry Nel?
2. What is Nel's friendship with Sula like at this point in the novel?
3. What does Sula do to Nel at the end of the chapter? What is your opinion of her action?

Section Eight (1937)

1. How is Sula described when she returns to Medallion?
2. Why is Eva upset with Sula?
3. What does Sula do to Eva?
4. How does Nel decide to help Sula?
5. What does Nel catch Sula doing? What is your reaction to this?
6. What happens to Nel's marriage with Jude? 7. How does Nel feel at the end of the chapter?

Section Nine (1939)

1. What sort of rumors are circulating about Sula?
2. How are things changing in the Bottom?
3. What do people in town think of Sula?
4. How is Sula different from other people in town?
5. What sort of trouble is Sula having at home?
6. Describe Sula's relationship with Ajax.

Section Ten (1940)

1. What does Nel decide to do for the first time in 3 years?
2. What is Sula like now?
3. Describe the conversation between Nel and Sula.
4. What does Nel realize after speaking with Sula?

Section Eleven (1941)

1. Describe Sula's funeral.
2. How does life in the bottom change after Sula's death?
3. Describe the ice storm and its effects on people in the Bottom.
4. What does Shadrack recall about Sula? 5. What tradition does Shadrack continue?

6. What happens to Tar Baby, the Deweys, and others as Shadrack rings the bell?

Section Twelve (1965)

1. What changes does Nel see in the town? How does she feel about them?
 2. Who does Nel visit?
 3. What does Eva accuse Nel of?
 4. What does Nel realize about her feelings regarding Chicken Little?
 5. What does Nel realize about Eva?
 6. What does Nel realize about her feelings regarding Sula and Jude?
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