



## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading Assignment

Hello,

My name is Kelly Kanetkar, and I will be teaching 10<sup>th</sup> grade English next year. The summer reading assignment for 10<sup>th</sup> grade is *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines. There are two parts to the assignment: an essay and a creative visual. Be sure to leave yourself ample time to finish both parts of the assignment. Both assignments are due on the first day of class in August. You may reach me this summer either through email: [kkanetkar@evansvilledayschool.org](mailto:kkanetkar@evansvilledayschool.org) or via text: (340) 690-2385. Please do not wait until the week before school starts to ask me questions; get started early so that you are not rushed.

One of the English department's expectations is that you will annotate the books you read, including your summer reading book. I will grade your annotations (10 points), so be prepared to turn in your book on the first day of class. Here is a list of guidelines to help you with annotation:

- Write out important plot events at the end of each chapter. Remember you are only annotating significant elements or important facts.
- Mark words and phrases that describe each character's physical appearance, personality, weaknesses, strengths, motivations, etc.
- Mark descriptions of setting and abbreviations that might have a significant meaning.
- Mark unfamiliar words and define them in the margins.
- Mark any conflicts that take place. Write down if the conflict is man vs man, man vs nature, etc.
- Identify and explain any symbols or motifs that are present throughout the text; any themes or lessons that are learned.
- Write down any comments or questions in the margins of your text. At the end of each chapter, jot down a short summary and your feelings.
- Mark significant quotes and why they are significant.
- Mark and label literary devices.

I am looking forward to working with you next year! Have a great summer, and I hope you enjoy reading *A Lesson Before Dying*.

Sincerely,

Kelly Kanetkar

**Directions:** Choose ONE of the topics below and write an essay per the guidelines below, then create a visual that also demonstrates your analysis of the topic.

1. Many novels use contrasting places (for example, two countries, two cities or towns, two houses, or the land and the sea) to represent opposing forces or ideas that are central to the meaning of the work. *A Lesson Before Dying* contrasts many such places. Write an essay explaining how the places differ, what each place represents, and how their contrast contributes to the meaning of the work. Avoid mere plot summary.
2. Writers often highlight the values of a culture or a society by using characters who are alienated from that culture or society because of gender, race, class, or creed. In *A Lesson Before Dying*, chose a character in which alienation plays a significant role and show how that character's alienation reveals the surrounding society's assumptions or moral values. Do not merely summarize the plot.
3. Many works of literature deal with political or social issues. In *A Lesson Before Dying*, what political or social issue is dealt with? Analyze how the author explores this issue and explain how the issue contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.
4. In *A Lesson Before Dying*, the relationship between two (or more) people is a major focus of the story. Choose a relationship from the novel. Discuss if the relationship is negative or positive and whether this relationship allows the people to be their best or causes them to succumb to destructive impulses. What does the author want us to learn from this? Do not merely summarize the plot.

**Essay guidelines: (50 Points)**

- For the essay response, you should write at least 500 words (approximately two pages, double-spaced).
- Your essay should include a clear introduction with thesis statement, supporting body paragraphs with evidence from the text, including direct quotes, and a compelling conclusion.
- You should type your responses in MLA style and title your essay with the novel's title and the essay prompt you chose. For example, *A Lesson Before Dying: Prompt 2*
- You should include the word count at the end of your essay.
- Due on the first day of school.

**Creative Visual: (50 Points)**

Sticking with the same topic as your essay, create a visual that demonstrates your analysis of the topic. It could be a collage, a painting or other art piece, a video, a scrapbook, or a poster. If you have another great idea, feel free to run it by me! Be prepared to present your visual on the first day of class.