



THE KNOX SCHOOL

Always Toward the Light

Summer Assignment
English II, Ms. Peucker

Sula, Toni Morrison

Part One: Dialectical Reader-Response Journal

As you read, complete a dialectical response journal. See the sample below. There should be AT LEAST 20 entries and they should cover important details about the text. Generally, each response to a quotation should be 2-5 sentences and should include your analysis of the literary and rhetorical techniques present in the quotations, the author's attitude, purpose or tone, and relation to personal experience.

| QUOTE | RESPONSE |
|--|--|
| "It was on that train, shuffling toward Cincinnati, that she resolved to be on guard—always. She wanted to make certain that no man ever looked at her that way. That no midnight eyes or marbled flesh would ever accost her and turn her into jelly" (Morrison, 23). | When traveling with her mother on the train, Nel is disgusted by the woman's behavior towards the white conductor. Even worse are the scornful stares that Helene receives afterward from her fellow black passengers. In this moment, Nel promises herself never to be the target of such hateful male gazes. |

Part Two: Essay

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.

Question: What do the characters and their lives illustrate about the identity and choices of African American women? Explain what you think *Sula* communicates about the African American feminine experience.

Guidelines:

1. Proper MLA Format
2. 4 pages, double-spaced

3. 12 pt. Times New Roman, 1-inch margins
4. Avoid using the words "I" and "You"
5. Include a strong thesis
6. Incorporate textual evidence to support your thesis
7. Avoid simply summarizing the book

Due Date: A paper copy of your assignment will be due on the **first** day of your English II class, and will be given an essay grade. All late assignments will be subject to grade deductions and penalties.

Have a great summer: Happy Reading!
Ms. Peucker