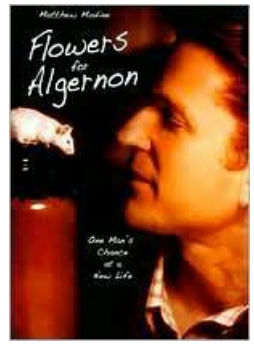


Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs. Denson  
English 8, Period \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## “Flowers for Algernon”

“Flowers for Algernon” was originally written as a short story but was rewritten into a novel in 1966. At least two movies have been produced from this story.

Charlie Gordon, who is mentally impaired, undergoes experimental surgery to improve his intelligence. The procedure had already been tested on a mouse named Algernon. After surgery, Charlie's intelligence radically improves to the point at which Charlie becomes a genius. However, Charlie cannot adjust socially; he loses his job and his friends. Seeing Algernon's decline and death, Charlie recognizes that the effects of his own operation will not last. As his condition deteriorates, Charlie tries to return to his old life but fails. He decides to leave New York and start a new life.

### **Assignment #1: Pre-reading Journal Prompt**

1. BE SURE YOUR WRITING IS LEGIBLE—I NEED TO BE ABLE TO READ IT!
2. MLA Heading (in proper place and format!!)
3. Title: “Flowers for Algernon” Short Essay
4. Write AT LEAST ¾ PAGE on the following prompt:  
“If you could choose to be one of the following, which would you choose to be: smart, popular, beautiful, nice. What are the pros and cons for each?”
5. Put in the tray when you are finished.

### **Assignment #2: Vocabulary**

There are terms used throughout the story you will need to know in order to understand what is happening. Using a dictionary, define the following terms. Be sure your writing is legible!

1. misled
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. tangible

3. refute

4. invariably

5. regression

6. verified

7. obscure

8. deterioration

9. hypothesis

10. introspective

11. consciousness

12. opportunist

13. semantic

14. vacuous

15. illiteracy

16. naiveté

17. Photostat

18. accelerate

19. syndrome

20. obscure

21. senility

**Preview of Final Essay Prompt:**

After reading "Flowers for Algernon," you will respond to the following prompt using MyAccess. Please think about this assignment and take notes below (and on other paper as needed) as we read to help support your opinion in the essay.

**Human Engineering in "Flowers for Algernon"**

In the short story "Flowers for Algernon," Charlie is the subject of an experiment in human engineering that radically changes his life. As the story progresses, the readers learn of great joys as well as great heartaches that Charlie experiences as a result of this experiment.

In a well-reasoned essay, analyze the impact of Charlie's experience with human engineering. Overall, do you think the experiment was positive or negative for Charlie? Why or why not? Be sure to support your interpretation with specific details from the text.

### **Assignment #3: “Flowers for Algernon” Journal**

What is it?

This reading journal is a place to record and discuss your reading, to think and learn about yourself as a reader, and to learn about yourself and other people through books. You can also use it to describe your ideas, memories, and observations about your reading and thinking.

How do you do it?

Throughout our reading, you will choose two (2) different prompts, from the list below, to write a response. One will be done about mid-point through our reading; the other toward the end. Each journal should be written on your own paper. Begin each you're your MLA Heading and the title: “Flowers for Algernon” Journal. After the title, write the prompt you've chosen on your paper. Your entry must be at least one hundred words long. Entries will be graded on content (how much thought you put into your journal) and form (how well you write the journal). Entries will be worth fifteen points each. Make sure you indent each new paragraph.

Reading Journal Jumpstarts:

1. Offer a character advice about his/her problem.
2. Interview a character. Ask questions to a character; write what you think the character would say in response to the questions.
3. From what you've read so far, make predictions about what will happen next and explain what in the text makes you think it will happen.
4. Pick one character and explain why you would/would not like to have him/her as a friend.
5. Explain why you like/dislike this story/character.
6. Discuss something that confuses you about what you have read.
7. Recommend this story to a friend. Write a letter to him/her as to why he or she should read this story.
8. Write about what would happen if you brought one of these characters to school or home for the day.
9. Pick a scene in which you disagreed how a character handled a situation/person. Explain the scene and how the character should have handled it differently.

**Assignment #4: Report Summaries Part 1**

Directions: As we read, summarize the action in the following progress reports. Be sure to use well-written, complete sentences. Summaries will be graded on content (how much thought you put into your summary) and form (how well you write the summary).

Progress Report 1: March 5, 1965

Progress Report 2: March 6

Progress Report 3: March 7

Progress Report 4: March 8

Progress Report 5: March 10

Progress Report 6: March 15

Progress Report 7: March 19

Progress Report 8: March 23, 25, 28

Progress Report 9: April 3, 6, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20

Progress Report 10: April 21, 22, 25, 27, 28

Progress Report 11: April 30

**Assignment #5: After You Read Response and Analysis Part 1**

Answer the following questions in thoughtful, complete, well-written sentences.

1. What is the operation meant to do for Charlie?
2. Why does Dr. Strauss think Charlie would be a good subject for the experiment?
3. Who is Algernon? What happens when Charlie first races Algernon?
4. What are some signs that Charlie is changing now that he's had the operation?
5. Before we began reading this story, you responded to the following prompt: "If you could choose to be one of the following, which would you choose to be: smart, popular, beautiful, nice. What are the pros and cons for each?" Read through that response and add two or three sentences connecting what you wrote earlier with your thoughts about what has happened in the story so far.



6. Go back to Charlie's March 7 entry (pages 35-36). What **context clues** did you use to figure out what "crazy tests" Charlie is taking (such as the "amazed" with Algernon)? Give some other examples of how you used context clues to figure out what Charlie is reporting.

7. Early in the story, Dr. Strauss tells Dr. Nemur that Charlie's learning to read and write is as much of an achievement as their learning a difficult scientific theory without help (page 36). What does he mean? Challenge or defend his statement.

8. Re-read the last few lines of Part 1. What do you think about people who dislike others who are different from them?

## **Assignment #6: Report Summaries Part 2**

Directions: As we read, summarize the action in the following progress reports. Be sure to use well-written, complete sentences. Summaries will be graded on content (how much thought you put into your summary) and form (how well you write the summary).

May 15

May 18

May 20

Progress Report 12: May 23, 24, 25, 29, 31

June 4

June 5

June 10, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, 30

July 7, 10, 14

July 22, 24, 25

July 27

July 28

**Assignment #7: After You Read Response and Analysis Part 2**

Answer the following questions in thoughtful, complete, well-written sentences.

1. At the beginning of Part 2, what **conflicts** is Charlie having with the doctors?  
with himself?
2. How does Charlie react when the boy in the diner drops the dishes?
3. What does Charlie's research reveal about the results of the experiment?
4. What are some of the signals that tell you that Charlie's mental state is getting worse?
5. At the end of the story, why does Charlie decide to leave New York?

6. What do you think becomes of Charlie after the story ends? Why?

7. Why is Algernon important to Charlie?

8. Charlie takes a Rorschach test twice. These two incidents can be called **parallel episodes**. What other parallel episodes can you find in this story?

9. An important **subplot** in this story involves Charlie's relationship with Miss Kinnian. What is the **resolution** of that subplot? (Be detailed in your answer!)

10. Why would some people say that Charlie would be better off if he had not had the operation? What do you think?

11. At the end of the story, Charlie writes, "Its easy to make frends if you let pepul laff at you." Do you agree or disagree with Charlie's opinion? Explain.

12. Describe your feelings about human engineering—that is, using science to change a person's intelligence or personality. (Refer to the MyAccess prompt at the beginning of this packet.)

13. Retelling from Another Point of View: This story is made up of Charlie's progress reports, which are like a diary or journal. Pick another character from the story, and write a diary entry for him or her corresponding to one of Charlie's reports. For example, what might Miss Kinnian have written the night she and Charlie had dinner? What might Frank Reilly have written the day Charlie returned to his former job at the factory? Use the first-person point of view to write from your character's point of view.

**Assignment #8: Writing an Essay**

At the beginning of this unit, you were introduced to a topic for an essay. You should have taken notes throughout the reading to help you support your opinion. Now it's time to start putting that together.

As we've talked before, writing an essay is quite easy providing you organize it well with supporting details. A 5-paragraph essay is the best way to do this.

1. Why would you choose to use the 5-paragraph essay format? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The **introduction** of an essay always tells the reader about \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
3. Think of the introduction as a \_\_\_\_\_ of what you're going to write about for the rest of the paper. Don't write anything in the introduction unless you will talk about it later in the essay.
4. An **attention grabber** should be used at the beginning of an introduction to \_\_\_\_\_ . List two examples of what would make a strong attention grabber: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
5. A **thesis statement** is \_\_\_\_\_.
6. You will also want to mention at least three \_\_\_\_\_ in your introduction. You will develop these into your body paragraphs. What are two ways to include these in your essay? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



7. The **body** of your essay equals \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_  
+ \_\_\_\_\_.

8. How do you organize the three body paragraphs in your essay?
- a. Paragraph 2: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Paragraph 3: \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Paragraph 4: \_\_\_\_\_

9. How do you stay organized while writing an essay? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

10. What are four things you can do to prove your ideas to your reader?
- a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_

11. The **conclusion** equals \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_.

12. Think of your conclusion as \_\_\_\_\_.

13. A good conclusion will restate your \_\_\_\_\_ and  
present your \_\_\_\_\_ one more time for  
your reader.

14. Make sure you DO NOT \_\_\_\_\_  
in your conclusion!

15. Always end your essay with \_\_\_\_\_ that  
\_\_\_\_\_.