

A Separate Peace

PORTFOLIO PROJECT

Choose ONE in each category

Creative Writing Activities

<p style="text-align: center;">POINT OF VIEW "Back in Time"</p> <p>Imagine that the story is being lived by the teenager Gene rather than being told fifteen years later by a narrator. Select a long incident from the book, one that is dramatic and important to the story, and rewrite it from the perspective of Gene as a teenager. Do not write it in Gene's voice; as the author of this piece, give yourself room to make comments and to inform the reader of your view of the incident.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ALTERNATIVE ENDING "It Doesn't Have to End This Way"</p> <p>Assume that Finny does not die. Write a new ending for the novel; begin at the point when Finny comes back to school with his leg in a cast and take the story through to the end of the school year. Remembering that Gene has confessed his guilt and Finny has forgiven him, create an ending that is logical and does not alter the characters.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EXTENDING THE TEXT "A Letter from Brinker"</p> <p>You are Brinker. Two years have passed since you and Gene Forrester left Devon school; you haven't seen Gene since then. Write a letter to Gene in which you express your feelings about what you did to expose the truth of Finny's accident. Include an explanation for your actions. Preface your letter with an aside that explains where you, as Brinker, are at this point in your life.</p>
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Critical Writing Activities

<p style="text-align: center;">EXAMINING STRUCTURE "Picture This"</p> <p>The structure of a novel can be discovered by looking at the main turning points of the story and examining the order in which they occur. On a large sheet of paper, list the major events of the story. Then, draw arrows to indicate which event follows which. Is the arrow path circular, zigzag, or linear? Write several paragraphs that discuss what you have discovered about the structure of the novel.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ANALYZING LITERATURE "Words with Punch"</p> <p>A reviewer at the <i>San Francisco Chronicle</i> said that this book is "...a beautifully written story. For style and imagery, <i>A Separate Peace</i> ranks with the work of the very best young American novelists..." From each chapter, select one example of imagery and discuss in depth. How do the words contribute to the impact of imagery? How do imagery and figures of speech contribute to the exposition of the theme?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EVALUATING A TITLE "A Book by Any Other Name"</p> <p>The book's title comes from Gene's description of the Devon Winter Carnival. In view of the brevity of the carnival incident and its relative importance compared to other events of the novel, defend or refute Knowles's choice of this title as the most appropriate one for the novel. Then, create a new book jacket for the novel.</p>
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Cross-Curricular Activities

<p>WORLD HISTORY <i>"More Than Just a Game"</i></p> <p>Research the Olympic games and write a report. What is the basic idea behind the Olympics? Explain why this athletic event is particularly applicable to the themes found in <i>A Separate Peace</i>. Is it fitting that Gene and Finny should be so caught up in the idea of participating? Explain.</p>	<p>SOCIOLOGY <i>"Breaking Down"</i></p> <p>How society treats the mentally ill varies greatly from one group to another, even changing within groups as time passes. Investigate American attitudes toward those who are "nervous in the service," to quote Leper. Research what course of treatment would be used in the same situation today and present your findings in an essay.</p>
<p>SCIENCE <i>"High Tide"</i></p> <p>References to the ocean, in particular the phenomenon of tides, are found throughout <i>A Separate Peace</i>. Locate some of these references in the text. Research tides; explain how they function, using drawings to explain this natural occurrence. Illustrate one of the instances in the novel where ocean imagery appears and explain its relevance to the story's theme.</p>	<p>MUSIC <i>"Soundtrack"</i></p> <p>The background music laid down on the soundtrack of a movie establishes emotional tone and helps the viewer follow the action. Put together a minimum of ten pieces of existing music to create a soundtrack for the major events and/or themes in <i>A Separate Peace</i>. The music should match the emotional tone of the novel. Write a brief rationale for each song.</p>