**Response Journal Assignment for Independent Reading:**

**Assignment:**. Use the template below for each response entry.

Title of the Text:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Author:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Section (which chapters or pages did you read out of total):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Summary:** Summarize the important aspects of the reading section in a **minimum** of **five** sentences. Use main points only, avoid including your personal opinions.

**Literary Response:** Referring to one of the attached essential questions for literature, write out the question and a thoughtful response/answer to the question as it relates to this section of your novel:

**Two favorite quotes** or important/powerful sentences (write them out with the page numbers. Avoid huge chunks of text. Add two sentences explaining why you picked them and why they matter):

1. Page:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Quote:

Explanation:

2. Page:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Quote:

Explanation:

**Personal Connection**: Respond in **3–4** thoughtful sentences about how this incident/character/statement/book connects to another text, something that has happened in your life, or how it relates to a historical or current event. What parts of the reading make you think of a text to text, text to self, or text to world connection?

**Essential Questions for Literature**

**Decisions, Actions, and Consequences**

* What is the relationship between decisions and consequences for one or more of the characters?
* How do the decisions and actions of the characters reveal their personalities?
* How do decisions, actions, and consequences vary depending on the different perspectives of the people involved?

**Conflict and Change**

* How does conflict lead to change for the characters?
* What problem-solving strategies do the characters use to manage conflict and change?
* How does a character’s point of view affect the way s/he deals with conflict?
* What personal qualities help a character to deal with conflict and change?

**Constructing Identities**

* How do one or more characters form and shape their identities? How do they define who they are?
* How does what others think about a character affect how s/he thinks about him/herself?
* Ina culture where we are bombarded with other people trying to define us, how do we make decisions for ourselves?

**The Human Condition**

* In the face of adversity, what causes some people to prevail while others fail?

**Culture: Values, Beliefs and Rituals**

* How does family play a role in shaping one or more characters’ values and beliefs?
* To what extend do belief systems shape and/or reflect culture and society?
* When a person’s individual choices are in direct conflict with his/her family or society, what are the consequences?
* What role or purpose does religion/spirituality serve in the culture of this work?
* How do values and beliefs shape who characters are as individuals and influence their behavior?

**Social Justice**

* How does power or the lack of power affect individuals in this work?
* How are prejudice and bias created? How do characters overcome them?
* What does power have to do with fairness and justice?
* Is it ever necessary to question the status quo?
* How do labeling and stereotyping influence how characters look at and understand the world?
* What are the causes and consequences of prejudice and injustice, and how does an individual’s response to them reveal his/her true character and his/her morals, ethics, and values?

**Chaos and Order**

* What is the importance of civilization and what factors support or destroy its fabric?
* What are the politics and consequences of war, and how do these vary based on an individual or cultural perspective?

**Utopia and Dystopia**

* What are the ideals (e.g., freedom, responsibility, justice, community, etc.) that should be honored in a utopian (“perfect”) society?

**Freedom and Responsibility**

* What is the relationship between freedom and responsibility in this work?
* When does government have the right to restrict the freedoms of people?
* What sacrifices do the characters make for freedom?

**Good and Evil in the World**

* Is humankind inherently good or evil?
* What is the function of human will in relationship between good and evil?
* How do different cultures shape the definitions of good and evil?

**Heroes and Sheroes**

* How do the attributes of a hero change and/or remain the same over time?
* When does a character’s positive personality trait become a tragic flaw?
* What is the role of a hero or “sheroe” (coined by Maya Angelou) in a culture?
* How do various cultures reward/recognize their heroes and sheroes?

**Language and Literature**

* How is a character’s understanding of culture and society constructed through and by language?
* How is language used to manipulate people in this work?
* How does language influence the way characters think, act, and perceive the world?
* How does the author use the resources of language to impact an audience?
* What universal themes emerge in this work that are of interest or concern to all cultures and societies?

**Love and Sacrifice**

* What are the boundaries of love and sacrifice, and where does one draw the line between them?
* What are the factors that move individuals, communities, or nations to great sacrifice, and what are the consequences?

**Nature in the Balance**

* What are the responsibilities of the individual and/or society in regard to the health of the environment?
* How do different world views lead to different views toward nature?
* How does nature inspire a character in this work, or even the author?

**Our View of Ourselves and the World**

* How do we know what we know?
* How does what we know about the world shape the way we view ourselves?
* How do personal experiences shape one or more characters’ view of others?
* What does it mean to be an insider or an outsider?
* What does it mean to “grow up”? What turning points determine our individual pathways to adulthood in this work?
* Are things fated no matter what, or does a character believe his/her actions can change the course of his/her life?

**The Pursuit of Happiness**

* What is happiness, and what is the degree of importance in one’s life?
* Why does happiness seem to be so elusive for one or more characters in this work?
* How much does a culture or society shape a character’s understanding or concept of happiness?

**Relationships and Community**

* What are the elements that build a strong friendship in this work?  
  What do the characters learn from different generations?
* How is conflict an inevitable part of relationships in this work?
* How do we know if a relationship is healthy or hurtful?
* What personal qualities help or hinder the formation of relationships for one or more characters?
* How are characters transformed through their relationships with others?
* What are the individual’s responsibilities to the community as well as the community’s responsibilities to the individual?