

St. Raphael Academy  
Summer Reading  
English 9  
A Separate Peace



DIRECTIONS: As you read *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles keep a literary journal. Read the following prompts and respond to them in your journal. Please note that several questions have multiple points. This journal will be due the first week of class.

Ch 1-3

1. How does Finny “practically” save Gene’s life?
2. How does Gene respond when Finny tells him that Gene is his best pal? Why doesn’t Gene reciprocate? Do you think he should have forced himself to say something-even if he didn’t quite mean it?

Ch 4-5

1. Why does Finny want Gene to jump with him? How does Gene feel about the idea?
2. The author describes Chet as “weakened by the very genuineness of his interest in learning.” Is there a difference between learning for the sake of learning and doing what needs to be done to get top grades? In the long run, which types of student do you think comes closest to meeting the true goals of education? Explain
3. Imagine you are Finny. Write a letter to Gene after his visit and confession.

Ch 6-7

1. How can you tell that Gene has a lot of insight into why Quackenbush is so nasty? If Gene understands Quackenbush’s problem, why does he rise to the bait? Is it accurate to say that the argument arises from deeper resentments? Is that true of most of arguments?
2. Why does Finny tell Gene that Gene has to play sports? Does he have the right to say that? How does Gene feel about this expectation that Finny has for him?
3. What does it mean that at Deven the students had “many public faces”? How does this apply to life?

## Ch 8-10

1. What is Finny's strange explanation for the war? Do you think that he believes what he says? Why would Finny deny the war? Have you ever denied anything that everyone else around you accepted? Explain.
2. How does the tone change at the end of chapter 9? To whom is the telegram addressed? What is in it?
3. Why do you think Gene is so upset and angry with Leper? If Finny had come how do you think he would have responded to Leper's problems?

## Ch 11-13

1. What happens to Finny as he is leaving the building after the inquiry? Do you think this would have happened if Leper had not returned to campus? Would Gene have admitted the truth at the inquiry?
2. Does Finny forgive Gene? How would the lives of both be different if they had never had that last talk?
3. Do you agree that "*part of friendship consists in accepting a friend's shortcomings, which sometimes includes his parents*" (page 192)? How can you tell that Gene considers Brinker a friend?

## Locating Examples

Describe examples of the following emotions and attitudes from the novel.

1. Friendship
2. Pride
3. Confusion
4. Peace
5. Anger
6. Envy
7. Self assurance

