

AP English Language Study Questions

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass by Frederick Douglas

Eliot's Poetry by T. S. Eliot

Answers to these questions are due to your English teacher the first Friday of school.

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote

1. How does Capote color the opening section with a sense of impending murder and doom?
2. Does Capote take a stand on the death penalty?
3. What does the crime reveal about the town of Holcomb? How does the gossip surrounding the murders reflect underlying truths about the town?
4. What role does "dreaming" play in the novel, both figuratively and literally? Think of Perry's dream of the parrot and of finding gold in Mexico, and of Dewey's nightmares. How reliable is what Capote tells us about these dreams?
5. How is montage used in *In Cold Blood*? In other words, how does the back- and-forth description of events in Holcomb and events surrounding Dick and Perry make the novel more vivid?
6. Is *In Cold Blood* a creative work? Is it more than journalism? Does Capote's absence endanger the credibility of the narrative? Think of the Heisenberg Principle.

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass by Frederick Douglass

1. Is Douglass's Narrative an autobiography?
2. How does Douglass show that slavery corrupts slave owners?
3. How does Douglass describe New Bedford, Massachusetts? How does this description undermine economic arguments in favor of slavery?
4. What role do women play in Douglass's narrative? Pay close attention to when or if female characters speak, to how female characters relate to Douglass, and to the depiction of women in relation to virtue.

Eliot's Poetry by T.S. Eliot – must include "Prufrock," "The Waste Land," and "4 Quartets"

1. How does Eliot comment on the act of writing poetry? How does his perspective change over the course of his career? Is he optimistic or pessimistic about the power of poetry to influence the modern world?
2. How does Eliot use the relationships between men and women to comment on society and culture? Why is "Prufrock" a "love song"?
3. What is "The Waste Land" Eliot describes? What other kinds of physical settings does Eliot use? How do they influence the messages of his poems?