

English 2A Summer Reading Assignment
Reading:

The Secret Life of Bees, Sue Monk Kidd

The Alchemist, Paulo Coelho

Thank You for Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion, Jay Heinrichs

“When adults look back upon their teenage years it is not unusual for them to have a mixed reaction of pleasant and painful recollections. For the most part many adults are glad that their adolescence is over and few would ever want to repeat it. The reason that so many people react in this way is because of the total unsettledness in this period of their lives. Adolescence is the human metamorphosis from child to adult. It involves a variety of changes. Our bodies change. Our social status changes as we accept more responsibility. Most importantly, our attitudes change. In less than two years we become very different people. In this complex period of development, our identity is challenged in crisis proportions. As a person changes, his identity reflects these changes. Your identity consolidates your values, personality, sense of the physical self, and other characteristics, which make you an individual. For the adolescent who has previously had fewer challenges presented to his identity, this is a period of great instability, which manifests itself in what is generally referred to as the adolescent identity crisis. An adolescent who cannot adapt himself quickly enough to the many changes in this period of his life will often behave erratically, with moods ranging from depression to rebellion. There isn't much that we as adult instructors can do to change this fact of life. As much as we might like to place some of our students in a state of suspended animation until their twenties, we know that when they awoke they would still lack the experience needed to complete this rite of passage. So since we cannot stop or delay this growing process we might as well involve ourselves in it to help soften its blow.

What the adolescent needs at this time is guidance from those who have been there before him. But this guidance should not interrupt the natural process of self-discovery, which is so important to the uniqueness of the individual. At this time the adolescent needs guidance that is simply supportive, and encouraging, and will lead him toward a self-definition.” (<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1980/3/80.03.08.x.html>)

Part 1: Essay

In an essay of approximately 2,000 words (7-10 pages) describe how each of the main characters in the novels *The Secret Life of Bees* and *The Alchemist* conform to the Yale description, above. You may include references to other works you have read, or to personal experiences you may have had in your own “coming of age” process. Note: This should not be a book report. Do not give a plot summary or literary analysis unless it relates directly to the topic.

As always, be sure to cite sources and include a word count on your Works Cited page.

Part 2: Rhetoric

Using *Thank You for Arguing*, make a list of the 25 rhetorical devices the author gives (the titles of his chapters) and come up with your own example for each one. Your examples may come from history, literature, or personal experience. Be sure to briefly explain each device in your own words.

These assignments are due on the first day of class and will count as your first assignment for that class, worth 200 points.