

# A Separate Peace

Content Area: **English Language Arts**  
Course(s): **Language Arts Literacy I Honors**  
Time Period: **February**  
Length: **3-4 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

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Students will be able to connect literature to life by analyzing what *A Separate Peace* suggests about human nature, and how literary elements such as characterization, point of view, conflict and theme relate to current-day issues and WWII. (**Note: Students will read the novel independently, reading 1 chapter per night and taking character analysis notes for each chapter as they read.**)

## Transfer

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Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Understand the role of historical context and its importance in a novel's meaning.
- Identify examples of internal and external conflicts that exist in adolescents' lives
- Understand the consequences of certain decisions
- Understand how literature can transcend its genre and become a symbol of a historical time, event, an aspect of pop culture, or a group of people
- Understand how literature reflects and affects societies
- Identify and explain how decisions and actions can influence the consequences a person will face
- Explain how developmental assets could be used positively by characters in literature
- Understand how and why a Christ-like figure is used
- Understand how *A Separate Peace* fits into the literary genre, naturalism
- Understand how and why an author uses foils
- Analyze characters and their similarities and differences
- Use textual evidence to support an opinion or theory about a character or theme in the novel.

## Meaning

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## Understandings

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Students will understand...

- literature often deals with decisions, actions, and consequences.
- the connection between decisions and consequences.

- individuals must think about the consequences of their decisions; making good decisions is a life skill that gets better with more life experiences.
- individuals must discover how decisions, actions, and consequences affect personality.
- one cannot control the actions of others.
- the different effects of war on individuals
- what a Christ-like figure is and the effect the Christ-like figure has on other characters and the overall meaning of the novel
- what a foil is and how the use of the foil allows readers to more deeply understand characters
- the characteristics of naturalism and how the author uses these elements to develop characters and advance the theme and plot
- the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and how they are presented in a character

## **Essential Questions**

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Students will keep considering...

- What conditions characterize war and peace?
- How do humans strive for peace in times of conflict?
- What is the human response to war?
- What causes war in society?
- What characterizes a coming-of-age experience?
- Is competition healthy or unhealthy?
- How do people choose between honesty and dishonesty? What are the consequences?
- Does a person's action reveal who he/she is?
- Is conflict necessary?
- Is it normal to be jealous of your friend?

## **Application of Knowledge and Skill**

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### **Students will know...**

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Students will know...

- Historical context of novel
- Plot details
- Character development
- Themes
- Definition of a Christ-like figure
- Definition of a foil

- Definition of naturalism
- Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- The significance of the title
- The story of the Garden of Eden

### **Students will be skilled at...**

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Students will be skilled at...

- Reading with fluency and comprehension
- Identifying and examining literary elements (symbolism, internal and external conflict, characterization)
- Identifying and explaining the use of the Christ-like figure
- Identifying the novel's use of the characteristics of naturalism
- Comparing and contrasting characters

### **Academic Vocabulary**

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- \* Christ-like figure
- \* Naturalism
- \* Foil
- \* Allusion
- \* Stream of Consciousness
- \* Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- \* Co-dependency
- \* Direct Characterization
- \* Indirect Characterization

### **Learning Goal 1:**

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Students will analyze the development of 2 or more themes or central ideas over the course of *A Separate Peace*.

### **Target 1**

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Students will learn about bipolar disorder and codependency and use textual evidence to determine if Gene suffers from either of these.

### **Target 2**

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Students will learn about the homosexual theory and use textual evidence to show whether or not one of Gene's internal struggles is that he's sexually attracted to the antagonist Finny.

### **Learning Goal 2**

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Students will analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact over the course of *A Separate Peace*.

### **Target 1--(Level of Difficulty 1, 2)**

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SWBAT:

\*Identify aspects of WWII Era United States

\* Gain background information on the author, John Knowles, and how his life experiences impacted the writing of the novel

LA.RL.9-10.9

Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from mythology or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

## **Target 2- Character, setting development (Level of Difficulty- 2)**

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SWBAT:

- \* Identify and describe major characters, setting, mood, tone, style, and diction of the novel.
- \* Analyze the major characters and their motives

LA.RL.9-10.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details and provide an objective summary of the text.

LA.RL.9-10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

## **Target 3- Vocabulary--(Level of Difficulty 2)**

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SWBAT:

- \* Use context clues to determine meaning of new words
- \* Use knowledge of word parts to define new words

LA.RL.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

LA.RL.9-10.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create specific effects (e.g., mystery, tension, or surprise).

## **Target 4- Plot development / Literary Elements--(Level of Difficulty 2)**

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SWBAT:

- \* Identify, discuss and analyze literary elements and themes and how they impact the development of the plot.

LA.RL.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

LA.RL.9-10.3	Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
LA.RL.9-10.5	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create specific effects (e.g., mystery, tension, or surprise).
LA.RL.9-10.7	Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each work (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).
LA.RL.9-10.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from mythology or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

### **Learning Goal 3**

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Students will be able to explain how *A Separate Peace* uses elements of the literary movement, naturalism.

### **Targets- Levels 1,2,3, and 4**

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SWBAT:

- \* List the characteristics of naturalism
- \* Identify the characteristics of naturalism used in *A Separate Peace*
- \* Use textual evidence to explain how the elements of naturalism aid in developing characters and advancing the plot

LA.RL.9-10.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details and provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RL.9-10.3	Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
LA.W.9-10.2.A	Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
LA.W.9-10.2.B	Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
LA.W.9-10.2.D	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.

LA.W.9-10.2.E	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
LA.W.9-10.2.F	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

## **Learning Goal 4**

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Students will be able to analyze how the author uses biblical allusions to further develop characters and advance the plot.

## **Targets- Levels 1,2,3, and 4**

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SWBAT:

- \* List the characteristics of a Christ-like figure
- \* Use textual evidence to explain which character is the Christ-like figure and how that character's death is significant
- \* Recall the story of the Garden of Eden
- \* Use textual evidence to explain how the story of the Garden of Eden relates to the incident at the tree in *A Separate Peace*.

LA.RL.9-10.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
LA.RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details and provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RL.9-10.3	Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
LA.RL.9-10.9	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from mythology or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).
LA.RL.9-10.10a	By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.
LA.W.9-10.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and

analysis of content.

LA.W.9-10.2.A	Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
LA.W.9-10.2.B	Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
LA.W.9-10.2.C	Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
LA.W.9-10.2.D	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
LA.W.9-10.2.E	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
LA.W.9-10.2.F	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

## Learning Goal 6

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Students will be able to analyze how two different works treat a similar theme.

## Targets- Levels 3 and 4

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SWBAT:

- \* Identify plot elements of the film *School Ties*
- \* Compare and contrast how the film *School Ties* and the novel *A Separate Peace* deal with the motifs of friendship and jealousy.

LA.RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details and provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RL.9-10.3	Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
LA.RL.9-10.7	Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each work (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).
LA.9-10.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.RL.2	Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
LA.9-10.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.RL.3	Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.



## **Summative Assessment**

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- *A Separate Peace* Blue Book Test
- Character Analysis Project

## **21st Century Life and Careers**

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CRP.K-12.CRP2.1

Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.

CRP.K-12.CRP4.1

Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.

## **Formative Assessment and Performance Opportunities**

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- \* Character Analysis Notes
- \* Reading Check Quizzes
- \* Teacher Observation
- \* *A Separate Peace* Study Guide
- \* Class Discussions
- \* *School Ties* Film Guide

## **Accommodations/Modification**

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- \* Extended time (provided in any IEP or 504 Plan)

- Character analysis notes
- Chunk readings and presented information into digestible bites
- Collaborative learning opportunities
- Frequent comprehension checks
- Redirect on task
- Reword and clarify as needed

## **Interdisciplinary Connections**

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- Discuss the draft
- Discuss what the Maginot line is
- Read and discuss Americans' attitudes toward WWII
- Read and discuss an article about the stages of grief
- Read and discuss symptoms of PTSD

HPE.2.1.12.C.4	Relate advances in medicine and technology to the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness.
SOC.6.1.12.7	The Great Depression and World War II (1929-1945)
SOC.6.1.12.CS11	The Great Depression and World War II: World War II: The United States participated in World War II as an Allied force to prevent military conquests by Germany, Italy, and Japan. Domestic and military policies during World War II continued to deny equal rights to African Americans, Asian Americans, and women.
SOC.9-12.1.1.2	Analyze how change occurs through time due to shifting values and beliefs as well as technological advancements and changes in the political and economic landscape.

## **Unit Resources**

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- \* Notes for *A Separate Peace*
- \* Philips Exeter Academy web site
- \* Post Traumatic Stress Disorder web site
- \* *A Separate Peace* Study Guide
- \* *School Ties* DVD