

## AP/Honors English III Summer Assignment

### *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines

Answer the following in complete sentences. Writing the question is not required. Skip one line between answers. **Answers must be typed.** Please contact Mrs. Miller ([robin.miller@cmcss.net](mailto:robin.miller@cmcss.net)) or Mrs. Joosse ([elizabeth.joosse@cmcss.net](mailto:elizabeth.joosse@cmcss.net)) if you have any questions. Summer assignments are due the first full day of school. **Warning: Plagiarism/copying from the Internet, other students, etc., will result in a zero for the assignment, an office referral, and exclusion from all honor societies per Rossview's Honor Code.**

#### Chapters 1-10

1. How is Jefferson's defense lawyer incompetent? What does he call Jefferson? How does this backfire?
2. What is Jefferson's punishment?
3. Why does Miss Emma want Grant to visit Jefferson?
4. Why does Miss Emma have so much power over the Pichot family?
5. Describe how the plantation school operates.
6. How does Pichot humiliate Grant after inviting him to his house?
7. How does Grant maintain some of his dignity in the Pichot house? Provide at least two examples.
8. Explain how the superintendent treats the children at Grant's school.
9. Who is Matthew Antoine, and what is his advice to Grant?
10. Describe the first visit to the jail.
11. Why does Grant accuse his aunt of helping the white man to humiliate him?

#### Chapters 11-19

12. According to Vivian, why does Grant stay in the quarter?
13. Why are Vivian's relatives prejudiced?
14. Why did Miss Emma hit Jefferson? Be specific.
15. What precedent does the Sheriff's wife set?
16. What decision will the sheriff let Jefferson make about future visitations?
17. What reasoning/tactics does Grant use to make Jefferson understand that he is human?
18. What is it about the Christmas play that distresses Grant?
19. Why do some of the mulatto parents not attend their children's play?

#### Chapters 20-31

20. When is Jefferson scheduled to die? What is significant about the date?

21. Grant tells Jefferson that it is up to him to break the circle. To what “circle” is he referring?
22. What does Jefferson first request for his last supper?
23. Describe Grant’s encounter with the sale’s lady.
24. According to Grant, what defines a hero?
25. According to Grant, how are we all like driftwood?
26. Why does Grant get into a fight at the Rainbow Club?
27. What does Reverend Ambrose mean when he tells Grant that he (Ambrose) is the educated one?
28. When does Rev. Ambrose lie? Give two examples.
29. What is Grant’s definition of God?
30. In Jefferson’s diary he reasons that he is not a hog. What is his reasoning?
31. What does Jefferson mean when he says, “I know y’all, every last one of y’all”?
32. How did Jefferson change his mind about his last meal? What does it indicate?
33. Who brings the news of Jefferson’s death to Grant, and what does it indicate about the future?
34. What does Grant have the children do while waiting for news of Jefferson’s death? Why is it ironic?
35. What realization does Grant come to about Rev. Ambrose? Be specific.

Discuss each of the following in at least one paragraph. Cite specific details, lines, and page numbers. Be sure to have a topic and concluding sentence.

1. Discuss the significance of the radio.
2. Grant gives Jefferson the definition of a hero. Who in this novel would qualify as a hero by this definition and how? Does Grant qualify, and if so, how?
3. Grant explains a myth to Jefferson that continues to determine life in their community. What is the myth? Are there any other references to the myth?
4. Describe the unchanging ways of the black and white communities. What details of individual, family, and community life contribute to the lack of change?
5. The title refers to lessons. Give at least three examples of who learns a “lesson” and what it is he/she discovers.