Pre-AP English II Midterm Exam

Formal Discussion – “Barn Burning” by William Faulkner

**Format**

The class will be presented with a question selected from the bank below. Raise your hand to be called upon to respond to that question. In your response you must:

1. Make a point
2. Use a quote from the text to support your point
3. Explain how your quote connects to your point

**Grading**

You will be scored on each response, but only the BEST TWO scores will be taken into consideration for your ultimate grade. The trick to get as many points as possible is to make every effort to attempt analysis. Responses that lack substance (i.e. simple agreement/disagreement, no textual evidence, etc.) will not be scored. You will be docked points for disrupting the discussion or other members of the class during their turn to speak.

**Here is a list of topics you should review for your discussion.** In order to be fully prepared, I suggest that you read the story *at least* twice, review these questions, and respond to each before your exam date.

1. Find examples of indirect characterization for Abner and Sarty.
   1. What can we infer about the character because of these examples?
2. How does Faulkner characterize the other siblings?
   1. Why is the contrast between them and Abner and Sarty important?
3. What are the key symbols in the story, and how do they serve the thematic purposes Faulkner had in mind? Discuss each symbol’s literal meaning as well as its symbolic meaning.
4. Identify the point of view used in the story.
   1. How does it matter that the story is rendered through the point of view that it is?
   2. What were Faulkner’s options, and how would the story be different if he had exercised them?
5. How does one establish individual independence as a teenager?
   1. Do you remember any crucial moment in your own life when you realized that you had to make a choice between what your parent(s) and/or family believed and your own values?
6. How does Faulkner use Abner to appeal to the reader’s sense of logic?
7. What tone does Faulkner’s sentence structure create in the description of Sarty’s flight to the barn to save his father at the end of the story?
8. What is Sarty’s internal conflict in the story?
9. How does Faulkner characterize the Post-Civil War South?
   1. How is this characterization essential to the story?
   2. How is this characterization essential to Sarty’s internal conflict?
10. How does Faulkner use literary devices (figurative language) to appeal to the reader’s emotions? NOTE: DO NOT DISCUSS IMAGERY! ENOUGH WITH THE IMAGERY ALREADY! ☺
11. Does Sarty choose family or society?
    1. What does his choice make you think will happen to him in his future?

**This exam is worth 100 points!** *Per school administration, students who are absent on the day of the exam will receive a zero on this discussion unless their absence was excused by Mr. Thomas.*