



AP Literature & Composition Cornell Notes

This is a way to take notes during class discussion or for specific outside reading. It follows the conventions of Cornell note taking but the expectations are based on AP Literature and Composition skills. The first page shows how to set up your notes. The second is a model that refers to John Updike's "A&P." Use it as a guide for your own note taking.

TOPIC HEADING

Label the discussion or reading section and date.

Theme/Tone/Characterization

Identify the larger issues at stake in the text based on the notes in the "ideas, concepts and questions" section. Think author's theme/motif, characterization, tone, qualities human nature revealed, etc.

Be specific and watch out for clichés.

IDEAS, CONCEPTS, QUESTIONS

START with this side of the page. Treat it as a place to collect notes, thoughts, ideas and questions. Keep your notes brief and clear. Write down what is most important in the reading or class discussion.

Analysis

*Choose one of the key points and discuss its importance within the context of the text. This section should be a written analysis of theme, tone or characterization identified above. Consider this brief response as the **most important conclusion** from the reading or discussion.*

AP® is a registered trademark of the College Board.

The College Board was not involved in the production of and does not endorse this product.

© 2012 by Aubrey Ludwig. All rights reserved.



AP Notes Sample

Below is a model of how to use the Cornell model in AP Literature and Composition for discussion or reading. Use it as a guide.

Class Discussion: 9/12/12

John Updike: "A&P"

Theme/Tone/Characterization

- Following societal norms (behavior, clothing choices, etc.) is an expectation.
- Youthful choices (i.e. bathing suits, Sammy's quitting) have the potential to define character and life experience.
- Sammy's character is one of ultimate "gestures" right or wrong.

IDEAS, CONCEPTS, QUESTIONS

Story starts in the middle (in media res)

The narrator assumes you'll understand what he's talking about.

Narrator's voice is youthful, irreverent, informal—lots of slang. Talks to you like you're his friend. He's nineteen so not quite a kid and not quite an adult.

Simile: "like a dented sheet of metal"

- Doesn't necessarily sound pretty but it seems like the everyday is the narrator's point of entry to beauty

Girls are totally out of place. A&P customers/manager vs. them

Use of the word "bare" is repeated. The narrator can't help himself. He's completely taken with these girls.

Sheep=metaphor to describe customers

What makes the narrator move from calling the girl a "queen" to making her name "Queenie?"

Why don't we know the narrator's name until the end of the story?

Why does Sammy quit his job? It doesn't get him anywhere.

What is the importance of fancy pickled herring and that the girls only want to buy one thing at this A & P?

ANALYSIS

Sammy, the narrator in Updike's "A&P," proves that even the smallest interactions can have significant outcomes. As a narrator, Sammy is funny, likeable and observant. But his reaction to the girls in the story is much more than just that of gawking boy. While they remind Sammy of his age and represent desire, they make him forget his status. While his "gesture" of quitting is motivated by his desire to be with "his" girls, he is still a grocery clerk with or without his apron. Forgetting his place suggests that he is right. Life in this world will be "hard."

AP® is a registered trademark of the College Board.

The College Board was not involved in the production of and does not endorse this product.

© 2012 by Aubrey Ludwig. All rights reserved.