

Mrs. Albers

American Studies Summer Reading Assignment: English 2015-2016 School Year

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

When you return to school, bring your work by Wednesday, August 19th.

After reading *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot, consider the following questions. You will be graded based upon the thoroughness and thoughtfulness with which you answer each of the questions below. In answering these questions, refer to specifics in the book and/or use outside resources as necessary.

You must answer ALL of the following questions in paragraph form (TYPED):

Each paragraph must contain a minimum of 10 sentences as well as where you found the answer to the question. For example, if you found the answer through research, what web site, news article, item bank, etc. did it come from. If you found the answer from the novel, on what page(s). Please be as specific as possible.

1. Was there a “success story” in this book? If so, what was it? If not, explain.
2. For whom in this book did you feel the greatest empathy and why?
3. How would you describe George Gey as an individual? Give at least 2 examples to support your response.
4. If Henrietta were an affluent Caucasian woman in 1950 Baltimore, do you think that we would have HeLa cells in our freezers today? Explain your response.
5. Henrietta signed a consent form to “...perform any operative procedures...that they may deem necessary...” [refer to the book for the verbiage of the entire consent form that was signed.]
 - a. Given this, do you believe that it was ethical to obtain a cervical sample for research?
 - b. What information should have been given to Henrietta such that she might have been able to provide *informed* consent?
 - c. If this information had been provided, do you believe that Henrietta would have given informed consent?
 - d. If you were in Henrietta’s situation, would YOU have given consent? If so, why? If not, what would have been required for you to do so?
6. Discuss the benefits that cultured cells, such as HeLa cells, contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge. Discuss some of the beneficial and detrimental effects that HeLa cells have had on Henrietta’s family. Then, discuss the conclusion you draw on whether or not such cultured cells are beneficial overall.

REQUIRED RESPONSE FOR ALL STUDENTS (TYPED): Response must be at least 250 words.

Rebecca Skloot (the author) begins the book with the following quote from Elie Wiesel: “We must not see any person as an abstraction. Instead, we must see in every person a universe with its own secrets, with its own treasures, with its own sources of anguish, and with some measure of triumph.”

- a. Analyze the book in light of this quote. Explain the various ways in which both the scientific community and the media are guilty of having viewed Henrietta and her family as abstractions.
- b. What are the consequences of this perspective? How is Skloot’s different perspective evident in the way she conducted her research and wrote the book?

Honors Students must write ONE ADDITIONAL TYPED RESPONSE

CHOICE RESPONSE: Pick ONE of the following topics – Response must be at least 250 words in length.

1. How does the author depict the repercussions of the loss of a parent in the narrative? How do you think Henrietta's life would have differed if her mother had lived? How would Deborah's life have been changed? (Language Arts)

2. Examine the theme of poverty in the narrative. What role did poverty play in the lives of the Lacks family? How does the author juxtapose this poverty with the successes of HeLa? (Language Arts)

3. Although a right to privacy is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution, the Supreme Court has established that it is inherently protected by the Constitution. Explain the numerous ways that the Lacks family's right to privacy was violated. Discuss the importance of the right to privacy. How has this right evolved over the course of American history? How have groups of people such as African Americans, women, children, and most recently, immigrants, fought for legislation protecting their right to privacy? Cite specific court cases and/or current events. (Social Studies)

4. Create a time line that begins with the removal of Henrietta's tissue sample and traces the scientific and medical breakthroughs that have been made possible as a result of HeLa cells. Explain how HeLa cells were used in each situation. (Science)

Directions for the responses

- Have a works cited page using www.easybib.com for ALL of the websites you used. MLA format
- You must have quotes to support your responses. They may be from either the book and/or from research.
- SANDWICH EACH QUOTE. SEE BELOW:
 - **INTRODUCE** the quote, then **WRITE** the “quote” (citation), then **EXPLAIN** the quote.
 - For the book use the following: (Skloot page #); (Skloot 21).
 - For the websites, make your works cited page first and put the website title in the intro phrase or parenthesis following the quote.
 - On the website “Henrietta Lacks,” it states, “quote.” Explain the quote.
 - HeLa is “quote” (“Henrietta Lacks Biography”). Explain the quote.
- **Type your response using double-spaced 12 point, Times New Roman font.**
- **Put the following heading on the top left of your paper:**

	(sample)
Your name	Sally Student
Teacher's name	Mrs. Teacher
Bell and Course	3 rd Bell Eng. 10
Date	August 19, 2

- Proofread because spelling, mechanics, punctuation, and grammar will count!
- **ANSWER THE QUESTION; DO NOT SUMMARIZE THE NOVEL.**

PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

- **What is plagiarism?**

It is plagiarism to copy word for word information from other sources and present it as your own or to paraphrase/summarize ideas from other sources and present it as your own. YOU MUST CITE ALL DIRECT QUOTES WITH THE PAGE NUMBER.

- **What will happen if you plagiarize?**

PLAGIARISM WILL RESULT IN A **ZERO FOR THIS PROJECT** AND A PARENT CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS THE INFRACTION.

Summer Assignment Rubric

Academic Content

Unsatisfactory - Does not follow the prompt - Lack of quotes and research - Some questions and/or written responses were not answered or fully completed -No works cited page 0.....27	Proficient --Follows the prompt - Includes quotes from the book and from the research -Works cited page, citing book and all research - Both the questions and written responses are fully completed and supported with evidence 28.....35	Advanced -Particularly interesting and compelling responses -Sheds original insight on The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks and medical/social advances 36.....40
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Communication

Unsatisfactory -Quotes not correctly sandwiched -The significance of the quote is not explained -There are many errors in grammar, spelling, mechanics and/or punctuation 0.....20	Proficient -Each quote is correctly SANDWICHED with correct in-text citations (last name #) OR (“title of website”) -The significance of each quote and example is explained -The are few errors in grammar, spelling, mechanics, and/or punctuation 21.....26	Advanced -High advanced commentary on examples and quotes -Quotes and smoothly embedded in the writing - No grammatical, spelling, punctuation, or mechanical errors 27.....30
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Ingenuity

Unsatisfactory -The essay fails to connect the book to medical/social advances -The essay lacks research 0.....20	Proficient -The responses have clear connections about the book to medical/social advances -The responses use plenty of research to enhance the development with a variety of sources 21.....26	Advanced -Connections to the book and current medical/social advances are sophisticated and well thought out -Uses more than enough research 27.....30
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Agency

Unsatisfactory -The assignment is late - Points will depend on how late the assignment is – no work will be taken after the first week of school 0.....6	Proficient -The assignment is turned on the second day of school 7.....8	Advanced -The assignment is turned in on the first day of school 9.....10
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Media Literacy

Unsatisfactory -Missing one or more of the following:	Proficient -The heading is on the top left:	Advanced -No mistakes in any part of the format
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-heading -last name, page number -double spaced -readable font - Several formatting issues 0.....6	Your name Mrs. Albers American Studies Date -Double spaced -Readable font like Times New Roman - Few formatting issues 7.....8	9.....10
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Global Awareness

Unsatisfactory -The responses fail in connecting <i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i> to worldly issues 0.....13	Proficient -The responses show some global awareness in the knowledge of scientific advances 14.....17	Advanced -The responses prove new insight on the scientific advances from around the world from the use of Henrietta's cells 18.....20
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_____ **140 points total**

Comments: