

Student Name: _____ Book Title _____

English Teacher: _____ Author _____

**MHS Pre-Course Reading Assessment
Honors English Literature and Composition**

I verify that _____ completed his/her summer reading.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please read the following quotes:

Every true man, sir, who is a little above the level of the beasts and plants does not live for the sake of living without knowing how to live; but he lives so as to give meaning and a value to his own life.

Luigi Pirandello, Italian author, playwright

*Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury;
Signifying nothing.*

William Shakespeare, English dramatist, poet
Macbeth V.v.27-31

To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all.

Oscar Wilde, Anglo-Irish playwright

Assignment: Ponder the meaning of each quote, and then give consideration to the characters depicted in the books you've read. Compose **two essays** of a minimum of 400 words (typed and double-spaced) each to respond two of the following options (one option for each book).

Attach this sheet to your essay.

Option One: Do any of these characters demonstrate a commitment to creating "meaning and value" to their lives? If so, plan and write an essay in which you identify the character of person and explain how he or she gives meaning and value to life.

Option Two: If you would prefer, write about a character of person who merely "exists". Defend your supposition that he or she exists rather than "lives".

Option Three If the book you read left the impression that life is, as Macbeth suggests, meaningless, explain how the writer conveyed that message.

Regardless of which topic you choose, you should express your controlling idea in a thesis statement, support it with no fewer than four key details from the text, and write a conclusion. Be sure to provide the title and author. Avoid plot summary.

