Table of Contents

Instructional Letter .................................................................................................................. 3
Important Terms and Characters ............................................................................................... 4
Vocabulary ................................................................................................................................ 5
Study Guide Questions ............................................................................................................... 7
Character Analysis Directions .................................................................................................. 14
Character Analysis Rubric ......................................................................................................... 15
Summer Reading Packet Rubric ................................................................................................. 16
Instructions

This summer, you are expected to read *October Sky* by Homer Hickam and complete this Summer Reading Packet. You will find a rubric on the last page of this packet that will guide you in how this assignment will be scored. **Know that this assignment will be 20% of your first nine-weeks grade. It is due on the first day of the semester.**

*Please use the following as a guided checklist while completing this assignment:*

- _____ Print out Summer Reading Packet
- _____ Sign PLAGIARISM pledge (below)
- _____ Handwrite answers to Characters and Terms, Vocabulary, and Study Guide
- _____ Type and print out Character Analysis
- _____ Combine all work in neatly in a folder

**PLAGIARISM** involves using or stealing ideas from somebody else and using those ideas as if they were your own. Anytime you use material found on the Internet or other media without citing that source, you are plagiarizing. It is considered cheating, and it is absolutely unacceptable. **Plagiarizing on any part of this project will result in an immediate grade of zero.** Copying or sharing answers with another student is also considered plagiarizing. For help on citing sources or further information about plagiarism, visit http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/.

**Pledge Against Plagiarism**

I, _____________________________ (print name), testify that I did not plagiarize while writing my essay or completing any work in this Summer Reading Packet and that the project that I am turning in is my own work.

______________________________  _________________________
(Signature)                      (Date)
Important Terms and Characters

Directions: List as many traits as you can find for each of the terms and characters. You may be adding information throughout the entirety of your reading.

1. Sonny Hickam
2. Reverend “Little” Richard
3. Jim Hickam
4. Reverend Josiah Lanier
5. “Doc” Lassiter
6. George L. Carter
7. “Captain” William Laird
8. Elsie Lavender
9. Roy Lee
10. Sherman
11. O’Dell
12. Sputnik
13. The Dugout
14. Homer Hickam
15. Red
16. Chipper
17. Dorothy Plunk
18. Mr. Turner
19. Dr. Wernher von Braun
**Vocabulary**

**Directions:** Define each vocabulary word using context clues and/or a dictionary. Each definition should be in your own words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters 1-2</th>
<th>Chapters 5-6:</th>
<th>Chapters 7-8</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Memoir</td>
<td>1. Expound</td>
<td>1. Reverie</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Precipitous (ly)</td>
<td>2. Salacious</td>
<td>2. Exasperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Incredulous</td>
<td>5. Preamble</td>
<td>5. Mollified</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chapters 3-4</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Coy (ness)</td>
<td>11. Lathe</td>
<td>11. Admonish</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Impotent</td>
<td></td>
<td>17. Redolent</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19. Reiterate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chapters 9-10
1. Transient
2. Discordant
3. Notorious (ly)
4. Impromptu
5. Entropy
6. Doleful
7. Infinity
8. Coalesce
9. Meander
10. Impish
11. Dubious
12. Primordial

### Chapters 11-12
1. Derisive
2. Amiably
3. Fracas
4. Aperture
5. Peruse
6. Audacity

### Chapters 13-14
1. Dawdle
2. Coalesce
3. Elliptical
4. Overt

### Chapters 15-17
1. Dourness
2. Ebullience
3. Ingenious
4. Sardonic
5. Rote
6. Vehemence
7. Morose
8. Syncopate

### Chapters 18-20
1. Stoic
2. Colloquial
3. Emote
4. Dulcet
5. Undaunted

### Chapters 21-23
1. Volatile
2. Covert
3. Belatedly
4. Furtive
5. Adamant
6. Peruse
7. Ingrain
8. Askew
9. Contrite
10. Parabolic
11. Surreptitious
12. Effusive
13. Boisterously
14. Intrepid
15. Ablative
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Study Guide Questions

Directions: Answer each question as you read through the book.

*Answer questions while you read each chapter grouping, not after.
*Use textual evidence to prove your answers.

Chapters 1-2

1. What is the setting for this autobiographical memoir?

2. How old is Sonny at the beginning of the book?

3. Who owned all of the houses in Coalwood?

4. Is this a segregated community? What is the name of the small community where the black residents live?

5. Describe how Coalwood came into existence. (What caused people to come to this area to live?)

6. Who is the “Great Six”?

7. List some of the books Sonny enjoyed reading during his childhood.

8. At the end of chapter one the author states that at an early age he recognized that his mother was different from the other people in Coalwood. However, how she is different is not yet directly stated in the text. From what you have read, why do you think she is different?

9. Sonny states that his life changes after October 5, 1957. Why was this date so important to Sonny?

10. Describe the relationship between Sonny and Jim.

11. Why did Roy Lee have his own car?

12. Who is Sonny’s idol? Why is he so interested in this person?

13. What happens at the very end of chapter two?
Chapters 3-4

1. What do we learn about Elsie Hickam in chapter three? How does she feel about Sonny’s interest in rockets?

2. What does Elsie say will happen to Coalwood?

3. Why does Elsie have such a strong desire for Sonny to succeed with his interest in rockets?

4. Who is Pooky Suggs?

5. What happens to the football team at the end of the season?

6. What does Homer decide to do to help the football team realize its goal of playing in the state playoffs?

7. Does Sonny feel that his father is more supportive of Jim? Provide examples from chapter 4.

8. Describe the different types of conflict you have identified in this memoir.

9. Who is John Dubonnet?

10. What causes the argument between Dubonnet and Homer?

11. Chapter 3 is titled “Mom.” However, in this chapter, Sonny gives the reader insight into his relationship with his father. Please describe this.

Chapters 5-6

1. Describe Quentin. What does he look like? What is her interested in? What type of personality does he possess?

2. Why is Quentin an important person in Sonny’s life?

3. What is scrip?

4. What does Mr. Dubonnet believe will happen to Coalwood?

5. What does Quentin discover about the first two samples of rocket fuel?

6. Who is Mr. Bykovski? Why is he an important person in this story?

7. Who is Miss Riley? Why is she an important person in this story? How does she help the rocket boys?
8. What about the conversation between Junior and Sonny upsets Junior? (This answer is not directly stated in the text; however, it is implied.)

9. What is an Auk?

10. How well did Auk I perform? How well did Auk II-IV perform?

11. What happens at the end of chapter 6?

**Chapters 7-8**

1. What does Homer Sr. do to Mr. Bykovski for helping Sonny? Do you feel this punishment is fair? Why or why not?

2. What is the “gossip fence”?

3. How do the “Great Six” help Sonny overcome the opposition he receives from Mr. Van Dyke and Homer?

4. When and why was NASA established?

5. What was Mr. Turner’s shocking announcement?

6. Do you think Mr. Turner’s answer about the fairness of life is sufficient? Why?

7. At the end of chapter 8 Sonny states that his home is often filled with frustration and loneliness. What is the source of this loneliness and frustration?

8. What is the BCMA?

**Chapters 9-10**

1. Who is Jake Mosby? How did Sonny first meet Jake? Describe this encounter.

2. Why did the miners carry medal with them into the mines?

3. Did the “company” take care of the families that were impacted by tragic accidents in the mine? What did the company do?

4. Is Sonny’s father now helping the BCMA?

5. What is the source of Jake’s drinking problem?
6. What does the author imply about the emotional separation between Homer and Elsie?

7. According to Sonny, what is the key to learning?

8. What does Mr. Van Dyke do to punish the boys for stealing the telephone?

9. Describe Miss Riley. Describe her teaching abilities and her influence on Sonny.

10. Who is Billy? Why is he allowed to join the BCMA?

**Chapters 11-12**

1. What is ironic about the group of men calling the boys stupid?

2. Why do you think Homer Sr. wants Sonny to be an engineer?

3. List the things Homer loves about the mines.

4. What emotional need (Sonny’s) does Homer Sr. meet?

5. What scares Sonny as they leave the mine?

6. Who is waiting for them when they reach the surface? How does she react?

7. Why does Elsie hate the mine so much? What does she want for Sonny?

8. What does Sonny do to gain his mother’s forgiveness?

9. What does Elsie threaten to do to Sonny if he goes in the mine again?

10. What does Mr. Bykovski say about Dr. von Braun’s past?

11. How does Sonny personify or embody perseverance?

12. What does Leon Ferro want in return for his help with the nozzle? What does Mr. Bykovski want?

13. Why is Sonny hesitant to enter the science fair?
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**Chapters 13-14**

1. Why is chapter 13 called “The Rocket Book”?

2. Describe the bet between Roy Lee and Sonny.

3. Dialect is the particular way a group of people speaks. Give at least 3 examples of West Virginia dialect in these chapters.

4. How do Sonny’s views of his father change in chapter 13? What even precedes this change?

5. What subject must the boys learn to understand the “rocket” book?

**Chapters 15-17**

1. Two themes developed throughout this book and in these chapters are hard work and perseverance. Discuss these themes and provide examples.

2. What does Mr. Hartsfield mean when he says, “Whoever told you boys life was fair?”

3. Why are there state troopers at the school?

4. What is ironic about Homer’s attempt to get in a calculus class?

5. At the end of chapter 16, Sonny states he is becoming like his father. What does he mean?

6. Who is Ed Johnson?

7. Who did Dorothy go to the dugout with?

**Chapters 18-20**

1. What is a “bump”?

2. Why is it impossible for Sonny to feel the same about Sonny?

3. How did Mr. Bykovski die? In your opinion, is Sony responsible?

4. What does Doc say to Sonny? What do his comments reveal about the open display of emotion in this community?

5. Who finally convinces Sonny to continue his pursuit of a career in rocket science?
6. What is the new fuel the boys decide to use?
7. Describe the mood of the Hickam family in chapter 20.
8. Does Homer’s eye completely heal?
9. Who does Jake Mosby show a romantic interest in?
10. What do the boys plan to dig up in order to earn money?
11. How does Sonny hurt himself (p. 308)?
12. Why does Sonny refuse the numbing agent?

Chapters 21-23

1. What passage of scripture did Reverend Richard quote and why is it important?
2. How does the company plan to sell the houses to the miners?
3. What is the name of the moonshine man?
4. What is the legend of old John Eye?
5. What is the name of the new rocket fuel?
6. How does the town react to Mr. Fuller’s attempt to shut down the “rocket boys”? Do you think people in small towns are usually this supportive of their own people?
7. Why do you think Homer suggests that Sonny go to college and then return to Coalwood (p. 334)?
8. Why does Quentin think it is important to “do the math” (p. 340)?
9. What is Sonny’s math mistake?
10. What is O’dell’s new plan to get money?
11. What shocking revelation does Elsie make in chapter 23?
12. What does Sonny learn about Mrs. Riley?
13. Why is Sonny the only member of the group to go to the science fair?
14. Why can’t Mr. Caton work on the rockets anymore?
15. In your opinion, why does Mr. Caton decide to work?

16. A stereotype is a fixed idea about a group of people that does not allow for individual differences. What stereotypical view does Sonny discuss on page 367? How do you think most people in other parts of the United States characterize us?

17. Why does Calvin offer to help Sonny rather than fight him?

18. Why do you think Sonny is anxious to tell his father he has won the McDowell County Science Fair in Welch? (This is a major theme in the book.)

19. Sonny talks about “Coalwood justice” on p. 382. What is “Coalwood justice”? 
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Character Analysis Directions

Directions: Your task is to write a five-paragraph character analysis essay about a character from *October Sky*. Once you have chosen a character to analyze, choose three adjectives or descriptive phrases which you can apply to the character – these are traits that the character possesses. You will organize the body of your essay around these three traits. Consider the following as you describe these traits:

- Physical appearance
- Words (how he/she speaks and the words in which he/she uses)
- Thoughts
- Actions
- Effects on others/Others’ perception of this character
- Morals and values
- Changes throughout the story

Guidelines: Use these guidelines as a checklist as you write, edit, and revise.

- You need an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Use textual evidence to prove your analysis of the character.
- Your direct quotations should be no more than three lines long each.
- Use an MLA heading and page format.
- The paper must be typed, 12 point font, Times New Roman, one inch margins, double-spaced.
- You must have a Creative Title. “Character Analysis”, “Sonny”, or something to that effect does not work.
- Avoid contractions (can’t, won’t, etc.) unless in a quotation.
- Don’t use slang (gonna, shoulda, woulda, coulda, etc.) or common words (thing, stuff, etc.), unless in a quotation.
- Write only in third person. Don’t use “you” or “I.”
- Do not underline or put your title in quotations.
- Use sentence variety (simple, compound, complex).
- Use specific, vivid, and detailed incidents and examples to support your thesis.
- Fix all comma splice errors, run-ons, and sentence fragments.
- Run spell check, but remember that it won’t catch the wrong use of words (hear/here).
- Write in all present tense. Books never “end” – they continue on for a new reader.
- Fix all typing errors.
- Make sure all paragraphs are indented by using the tab key.
- Do not use “get” or “got.” Use strong, vivid verbs!
Character Analysis Rubric

Content—30 points
10 points--Introductory paragraph that:
• engages the reader — “hook”
• includes a clear & compelling thesis statement with 3 character traits
• contains a relevant and properly cited quote
• includes a shore depiction of the plot, setting and characters
• names The Outsiders and S.E. Hinton

10 points—Three body paragraphs that:
• transition smoothly from one to the next
• have a variety of sentence structure
• include each of the three character traits with at least two textual examples plus at least one cited quote
• use strong and deliberate vocabulary.

10 points—Concluding paragraph that:
• restates the thesis in a unique and interesting way
• includes title, author and character name
• wraps up the essay in a “neat package” — no new information introduced – and gives the essay a sense of completeness
• satisfies and leaves a final impression on the reader

Mechanics—10 points
7 points--Follows the rules of:
• grammar
• usage
• spelling
• punctuation 1 point deducted for every three errors.

3 points—Proper formatting:
• double-spaced
• 1 inch margins
• 12 point font (legible)
• tabbed paragraphs
• centered title — be creative
• your name centered underneath title
• 1 point deducted for every two formatting errors.
### Summer Reading Packet Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>5</th>
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<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Terms and Characters</strong></td>
<td>All terms have been completely and correctly defined. <em>They show progression throughout entirety of book.</em></td>
<td>Most (at least two-thirds) terms have been completely and correctly defined.</td>
<td>At least half of the terms are completely and correctly defined.</td>
<td>Significantly less than half of the terms are completely and correctly defined.</td>
<td>No terms have been defined, or definitions are incorrect.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>All vocabulary words have been completely and correctly defined. <em>Definitions are in students’ own words.</em></td>
<td>Most (at least two-thirds) vocabulary words have been completely and correctly defined.</td>
<td>At least half of the vocabulary words are completely and correctly defined.</td>
<td>Significantly less than half of the vocabulary words are completely and correctly defined.</td>
<td>No vocabulary words have been defined, or definitions are incorrect.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Study Guide</strong></td>
<td>All study guide questions are thoroughly and correctly answered. <em>They show use of textual evidence.</em></td>
<td>Most study guide questions (at least two-thirds) are thoroughly and correctly answered.</td>
<td>At least half of the study guide questions are thoroughly and correctly answered.</td>
<td>Only a few of the study guide questions are thoroughly and correctly answered.</td>
<td>No effort to answer questions, questions are all complete but incorrect, or work has been plagiarized.</td>
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<td><strong>Character Analysis (Up to 40 points)</strong></td>
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