

Section 6 Separate Peace Topics

I. Jess, Bryan, Bernardo, Jake (W)

TOPIC QUESTION: Who is Gene really angry at? Does the anger get resolved? Why or why not?

SUB QUESTIONS

- Where does Gene's anger really come from?
- Is Gene's jealousy what caused him to push Finny? Or was it something deeper?
- What is Gene's overall goal? How does it effect what he does to Finny?

PASSAGES TO USE

- The conversation with Gene and the doctor on page 63 and the conversation with Finny and Gene on page 65. (starting at "finny I-). The reason this is helpful is because between their conversation, Gene narerates how he feels about Finny and what happened when he pushed him, and a little bit about why
- The first paragraph of chapter 9 (page 123) this passage does not help in terms of quotes, but it shows Gene imagining himself as Finny, and seeing things from Finnys perspective (which is a possible cause to what he did to Finny.)
- The first paragraph of chapter 4 (page 49) because its foreshadowing Finnys death.
- Page 62 at the beginning of the second paragraph, specifically when Gene talks about being in Finnys clothes. This is important because it shows how in a sense being Finny how it affects Gene.
- Also on page 62 he talks about how he wants to get away from everything and to forget where he is and WHO he is. This foreshadows him in the end "being" Finny. This is important because it shows the way being Finny or acting like him, effects the outcome of his actions.

II. Sophie and the Boys: Sophie Laruelle, Andrew Goldberg, Rahul Shah, Jake Levine

Essay Question:

Is Phinny aware of Genes actions against him? If he is, why does he choose to ignore them? Provide meaningful character analysis for why Phinny would choose to ignore Gene's faults and focus on the relationship between the two to provide a sensible explanation.

Sevans suggestion:

- Add, "if he isn't aware, why not, especially when Gene tries to tell him twice?"
- Add something like, "once he's forced to be consciously aware, why does he deal with it the way he does?"

Our background info (how we led up to this question):

At first when Gene was trying to tell Finny that he did it, Finny wouldn't let him speak. Later on when Leper and all are questioning Gene, Finny storms out of the room saying he doesn't want to hear anymore. But when he's at the hospital, Finny asks if Gene wants to break anything else of his, which that he knew all along. This shows that Finny has been internally conflicted throughout the book and raises the question as to why he didn't speak up.

Passages/chunks of the book that are useful:

pg. 67-71

pg. 175-177

III. Jesse Brandt, Rachel Brief, Megan Katz, Tom Varghese

In the beginning, Gene couldn't maintain a healthy relationship with Finny, and was always envious/scared of Finny. But now, as Gene "took" the soul of Phineas, has he finally learned how to have a healthy friendship?

Sevans notes/concerns:

- When exactly does the 'taking' happen? How do we know?
- If it doesn't happen until the end, how will we be able to answer this question if we don't see him interacting with anyone
- Might it be clearer to ask something along the lines of, "does the act of becoming 'Phineas-filled' affect Gene positively? Why/why not?"

IV: Lauren Silberberg, Chris Katchis, Elle Eckman, Amelia Porco

How was Finny's death related to his relationship with Gene? Or what are the main attributes of relationship and how does it affect Gene and Finny? [Sevans note: these questions seem pretty different—not mere rewordings. Is that intended?]

We chose this question because we are interested in the bond between Gene and Finny and the underlying loyalty between them. We don't believe that his death was related to bone marrow and we want to explore the different causes of his death. We are also interested in the difference between Gene and Finny's character and Gene's perspective

Chunks:

1. Competition- the beginning of the book (50-60).

Specific lines "you are even in enmity. You are both coldly driving ahead for yourselves alone"

"I was not of the same quality as he"

2. Qualities of Finny (112-120)

Specific lines- " phineas I know had been even more startled than I to discover this bitterness in himself"

"Because I've suffered"

3. 182-187. About Finny admitting that he knew all along and it hurt him internally.

Specific lines- "you want to break something else in me!"

V. Adam, Miwa, Cliff and Jon

Throughout the novel, competition constantly resurfaces between many of the boys at Devon. Much of it is between Gene and Finny, and even most of this is [Sevans note: replace "is" with "may be"] in Gene's mind. This even escalates to what seems like a war at points. Is competition [Sevs note: add "in the book"] good or bad? Why?

Competition is good sometimes, but, when escalated, it can lead people to do terrible, awful things.

Competition leads to hurting people physically– pg 59 (last sentence) and pg 60 (Gene pushes Finny)

Competition leads to hurting people emotionally – pg 70 3rd to last paragraph (Gene says that he has made an even bigger wound in Finny than before)

Competition leads to inner wars and creating enemies – pg 204, last paragraph

Sevans notes and suggestions:

- Avoid pushing writers to a thesis before they start looking for themselves
- Maybe consider the possibility that competition is good for some and bad for others, which would then lead to the question, **why?**