

Name: _____

English II Pre-AP
All the Light We Cannot See
Summer Reading Assignment

Part One: Open-Ended Short Answer Questions

Directions: Open-ended questions means there is no one right answer. The purpose of them is to make you think and get you to grapple with the text. After reading the novel in whole, please answer each question in a full paragraph, explaining your thoughts fully.

1. Discuss how the radio plays a major part in the story and the time period. How do you think the impact of the radio back then compares with the impact of the Internet on today's society?

2. The narration moves back and forth both in time and between different characters. How did this affect your reading experience? How do you think the experience would have been different if the story had been told entirely in chronological order?

3. Whose story did you enjoy the most? Was there any character you wanted more insight into?

4. When Werner and Jutta first hear the Frenchman on the radio, he concludes his broadcast by saying “Open your eyes and see what you can with them before they close forever” (pages 48–49), and Werner recalls these words throughout the book (pages 86, 264, and 409). How do you think this phrase relates to the overall message of the story? How does it relate to Madame Manec’s question: “Don’t you want to be alive before you die?” (page 270)?

5. On page 368, Werner thinks, “That is how things are . . . with everybody in this unit, in this army, in this world, they do as they’re told, they get scared, they move about with only themselves in mind. Name me someone who does not.” But in fact many of the characters show great courage and selflessness throughout the story in some way, big or small. Talk about the different ways they put themselves at risk in order to do what they think is right. What do you think were some shining moments? Who did you admire most?

6. Von Rumpel seemed to believe in the power of the Sea of Flames, but was it truly a supernatural object or was it merely a gemstone at the center of coincidence? Do you think it brought any protection to Marie-Laure and/or bad luck to those she loved?

7. The 1970s image of Jutta is one of a woman deeply guilt-ridden and self-conscious about her identity as a German. Why do you think she feels so much guilt over the crimes of others? Can you relate to this? Do you think she should feel any shame about her identity?

8. What do you think is the purpose behind the last chapter being placed in the 21st century? Is it jarring to place the advanced technology of cell phones next to the rest of the story where radios were the most advanced technology? What is the reader supposed to gather from the last chapter?
