Summer Reading Assignment:

1. Read all **FOUR (4)** short stories (see RHS website to download) and PRINT THEM OUT.
   - “Eleven” by Sandra Cisneros
   - “What, of this Goldfish, Would You Wish?” by Etgar Keret
   - “A Rose for Emily” by William Faulkner
   - “All Summer in a Day” by Ray Bradbury

2. Choose **THREE (3)** stories to annotate and answer the attached questions.
   - As you read your chosen short stories, consider the following:
     - A key component of our study of literature is the analysis of how writers use fiction and nonfiction to establish cultural and individual identities. The short stories we’ve chosen for this summer all revolve around the issue of identity and the significance of relationships.
     - These authors all present stories of individuals who live in a world of mixed cultures. How do these authors use figurative language, characterization, and other techniques to establish cultural and personal identity in their works?
     - Annotation expectations: you should markup the text (looks for fig. language, characterization, questions, unknown words, interesting ideas, elements of identity) AND you should make comments in the margins.

3. Write a Short Constructed Response answering the following question: What is identity according to the author(s)?
   - Use **at least one** of the stories to explain your response, and use evidence from the text to support your claim.
   - Remember, this is the first piece of writing that your sophomore teacher will see. Take your time. Remember to read all the directions thoroughly, and follow the writing process to produce your best work.

4. When you return in August, we will collect your annotated stories and answers to the questions.
“ELEVEN” by Sandra Cisneros

Sandra Cisneros was born in Chicago, where she grew up speaking both Spanish and English. Although she sometimes had a hard time in school, she eventually became a teacher and a highly acclaimed writer. In much of her writing, Cisneros explores the feeling of being shy and out-of-place. Her childhood experiences, her family, and her Mexican American heritage all find a place in her writing.

Story:

What they don’t understand about birthdays and what they never tell you is that when you’re eleven, you’re also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four, and three, and two, and one. And when you wake up on your eleventh birthday you expect to feel eleven, but you don’t. You open your eyes and everything’s just like yesterday, only it’s today. And you don’t feel eleven at all. You feel like you’re still ten. And you are—underneath the year that makes you eleven.

Like some days you might say something stupid, and that’s the part of you that’s still ten. Or maybe some days you might need to sit on your mama’s lap because you’re scared, and that’s the part of you that’s five. And maybe one day when you’re all grown up maybe you will need to cry like if you’re three, and that’s okay. That’s what I tell Mama when she’s sad and needs to cry. Maybe she’s feeling three.

Because the way you grow old is kind of like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other, each year inside the next one. That’s how being eleven years old is.

You don’t feel eleven. Not right away. It takes a few days, weeks even, sometimes even months before you say Eleven when they ask you. And you don’t feel smart eleven, not until you’re almost twelve. That’s the way it is.

Only today I wish I didn’t have only eleven years rattling inside me like pennies in a tin Band-Aid box. Today I wish I was one hundred and two instead of eleven because if I was one hundred and two I’d have known what to say when Mrs. Price put the red sweater on my desk. I would’ve known how to tell her it wasn’t mine instead of just sitting there with that look on my face and nothing coming out of my mouth.

“Whose is this?” Mrs. Price says, and she holds the red sweater up in the air for all the class to see. “Whose? It’s been sitting in the coatroom for a month.”

“Not mine,” says everybody. “Not me.”

“It has to belong to somebody”, Mrs. Price keeps saying, but nobody can remember. It’s an ugly sweater with red plastic buttons and a collar and sleeves all stretched out like you could use it for a jump rope. It’s maybe a thousand years old and even if it belonged to me I wouldn’t say so.

Maybe because I’m skinny, maybe because she doesn’t like me, that stupid Sylvia Saldivar says, “I think it belongs to Rachel.” An ugly sweater like that all raggedy and old, but Mrs. Price believes her. Mrs. Price takes the sweater and puts it right on my desk, but when I open
my mouth nothing comes out.

“That’s not, I don’t, you’re not…Not mine.” I finally say in a little voice that was maybe me when I was four.

“Oh, of course it’s yours”, Mrs. Price says. “I remember you wearing it once.” Because she’s older and the teacher, she’s right and I’m not.

Not mine, not mine, not mine, but Mrs. Price is already turning to page thirty-two, and math problem number four. I don’t know why but all of a sudden I’m feeling sick inside, like the part of me that’s three wants to come out of my eyes, only I squeeze them shut tight and bite down on my teeth real hard and try to remember today I am eleven, eleven. Mama is making a cake for me for tonight, and when Papa comes home everybody will sing Happy birthday, happy birthday to you.

But when the sick feeling goes away and I open my eyes, the red sweater’s still sitting there like a big red mountain. I move the red sweater to the corner of my desk with my ruler. I move my pencil and books and eraser as far from it as possible. I even move my chair a little to the right. Not mine, not mine, not mine. In my head I’m thinking how long till lunchtime, how long till I can take the red sweater and throw it over the schoolyard fence, or leave it hanging on a parking meter, or bunch it up into a little ball and toss it in the alley. Except when math period ends Mrs. Price says loud and in front of everybody, “Now, Rachel, that’s enough,” because she sees I’ve shoved the red sweater to the tippy-tip corner of my desk and it’s hanging all over the edge like a waterfall, but I don’t care.

“Rachel”, Mrs. Price says. She says it like she’s getting mad. “You put that sweater on right now and no more nonsense.”

“But it’s not—“

“Now!” Mrs. Price says.

This is when I wish I wasn’t eleven because all the years inside of me—ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, and one—are pushing at the back of my eyes when I put one arm through one sleeve of the sweater that smells like cottage cheese, and then the other arm through the other and stand there with my arms apart like if the sweater hurts me and it does, all itchy and full of germs that aren’t even mine.

That’s when everything I’ve been holding in since this morning, since when Mrs. Price put the sweater on my desk, finally lets go, and all of a sudden I’m crying in front of everybody. I wish I was invisible but I’m not. I’m eleven and it’s my birthday today and I’m crying like I’m three in front of everybody. I put my head down on the desk and bury my face in my stupid clown-sweater arms. My face all hot and spit coming out of my mouth because I can’t stop the little animal noises from coming out of me until there aren’t any more tears left in my eyes, and it’s just my body shaking like when you have the hiccups, and my whole head hurts like when you drink milk too fast.

But the worst part is right before the bell rings for lunch. That stupid Phyllis Lopez, who is
even dumber than Sylvia Saldivar, says she remembers the red sweater is hers. I take it off right away and give it to her, only Mrs. Price pretends like everything’s okay.

Today I’m eleven. There’s a cake Mama’s making for tonight and when Papa comes home from work we’ll eat it. There’ll be candles and presents and everybody will sing Happy Birthday, Happy Birthday to you, Rachel, only it’s too late.

I’m eleven today. I’m eleven, ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, and one, but I wish I was one hundred and two. I wish I was anything but eleven. Because I want today to be far away already, far away like a runaway balloon, like a tiny O in the sky, so tiny you have to close your eyes to see it.
“What, of this Goldfish, Would You Wish?” By Etgar Keret

Author and filmmaker Etgar Keret was born in Tel Aviv in 1967. Salman Rushdie has called him “the voice of the next generation” and his work has been translated into 29 languages. The following story is from his sixth collection, Suddenly a Knock on the Door, published on 23rd February by Chatto & Windus.

The idea for this story, translated by Nathan Englander, came to Keret after he read his five-year-old son Alexander Pushkin’s “The Fisherman and the Goldfish.” Keret says, “My son asked me what I would do if I had three wishes. He quickly rejected my ‘safe’ wishes for family health or world peace and insisted that I ask for something I really, really wanted. And that’s when my goldfish story began.”

Story:

Yonatan had a brilliant idea for a documentary. He’d knock on doors. Just him. No camera crew, no nonsense. Just Yonatan, on his own, a small camera in hand, asking, “If you found a talking goldfish that granted you three wishes, what would you wish for?”

People would give their answers, and Yoni would edit them down and make clips of the more surprising responses. Before every set of answers, you’d see the person standing stock-still in the entrance to his house. Onto this shot he’d superimpose the subject’s name, family situation, monthly income, and maybe even the party he’d voted for in the last election. All that, combined with the three wishes, and maybe he’d end up with a poignant piece of social commentary, a testament to the massive rift between our dreams and the often compromised reality in which we live.

It was genius, Yoni was sure. And, if not, at least it was cheap. All he needed was a door to knock on and a heart beating on the other side. With some decent footage, he was sure he’d be able to sell it to Channel 8 or Discovery in a flash, either as a film or as a collection of vignettes, little cinematic corners, each with that singular soul standing in a doorway, followed by three killer wishes, precious, every one.

Even better, maybe he’d sell out, package it with a slogan and flog it to a bank or mobile phone company. Maybe tag it with something like, “Different dreams, different wishes, one bank.” Or, “The bank that makes dreams come true.”

No prep, no plotting, natural as can be, Yoni grabbed his camera and went out knocking on doors. In the first neighbourhood he went to, the nice people that took part generally requested the obvious things: health, money, bigger flats, to shave off either a couple of years or a couple of pounds. But there were also powerful moments. One drawn, wizened old lady asked simply for a child. A Holocaust survivor with a number on his arm asked very slowly, in a quiet voice—as if he’d been waiting for Yoni to come, as if it wasn’t an exercise at all—he’d been wondering (if this fish didn’t mind), would it be possible for all the Nazis left living in the world to be held accountable for their crimes? A cocky, broad-shouldered ladykiller put out his cigarette and, as if the camera wasn’t there, wished he were a girl. “Just for a night,” he added, holding a single finger right up to the lens.

And these were wishes from just one short block in one small, sleepy suburb of Tel Aviv. Yonatan could hardly imagine what people were dreaming of in the development towns and the collectives along the northern border, in the West Bank settlements and Arab villages, the immigrant absorption centres full of broken trailers and tired people left to fry out in the desert sun.
Yonatan knew that if the project was going to have any weight, he’d have to get to everyone, to the unemployed, to the ultra-religious, to the Arabs and Ethiopians and American expats. He began to plan a shooting schedule for the coming days: Yaffo, Dimona, Ashdod, Sderot, Taibe, Talpiot. Maybe Hebron even. If he could sneak past the wall, Hebron would be great. Maybe somewhere in that city some beleaguered Arab man would stand in his doorway and, looking through Yonatan and his camera, looking out into nothingness, just pause for a minute, nod his head and wish for peace—that would be something to see.

***

Sergei Goralick doesn’t much like strangers banging on his door. Especially when those strangers are asking him questions. In Russia, when Sergei was young, it happened a lot. The KGB felt right at home knocking on his door. His father had been a Zionist, which was pretty much an invitation for them to pop over any old time.

When Sergei got to Israel and then moved to Yaffo, his family couldn’t get their heads round it. They’d ask him, “What are you hoping to find in a place like that? There’s no one there but addicts and Arabs and pensioners.” But what is most excellent about addicts and Arabs and pensioners is that they don’t come round knocking on Sergei’s door. That way Sergei can get his sleep, and get up when it’s still dark. He can take his little boat out into the sea and fish until he’s finished fishing. By himself. In silence. The way it should be. The way it was.

Until one day some kid with a ring in his ear, looking a little bit homosexual, comes knocking. Hard like that—rapping at his door. Just the way Sergei doesn’t like. And he says, this kid, that he has some questions he wants to put on the TV.

Sergei tells the boy, tells him in what he thinks is a straightforward manner, that he doesn’t want it. Not interested. Sergei gives the camera a shove, to help make it clear. But the earring boy is stubborn. He says all kinds of things, fast things. And it’s hard for Sergei to follow; his Hebrew isn’t great.

The boy slows down, tells Sergei he has a strong face, a nice face, and that he simply has to have him for this film. Sergei can also slow down, he can also make it clear. He tells the boy to fuck off. But the boy is slippery and somehow between saying no and pushing the door closed, Sergei finds that the boy is in his house. He’s already making his film, running his camera without any permission, and from behind the camera he’s still telling Sergei about his face, that it’s full of feeling, that it’s tender. Suddenly the boy spots Sergei’s goldfish flitting around in its big glass jar in his kitchen.

The kid with the earring starts screaming, “Goldfish, goldfish,” he’s so excited. And this, this really pressures Sergei, who tells the boy, it’s nothing, just a normal goldfish, stop filming it. Just a goldfish, Sergei tells him, just something he found flapping around in the net, a deep-sea goldfish. But the boy isn’t listening. He’s still filming and getting closer and saying something about talking and fish and a magic wish.

Sergei doesn’t like this, doesn’t like that the boy is almost at it, already reaching for the jar. In this instant Sergei understands the boy hasn’t come for television, what he’s come for, specifically, is to snatch Sergei’s fish, to steal it away. Before the mind of Sergei Goralick really understands what it is his body has done, he seems to have taken the pan off the stove and hit the boy on the head. The boy falls. The camera falls with him. The camera breaks
open on the floor, along with the boy’s skull. There’s a lot of blood coming out of the head, and Sergei really doesn’t know what to do.

That is, he knows exactly what to do, but it really would complicate things. Because if he takes this kid to the hospital, people are going to ask what happened, and it would take things in a direction Sergei doesn’t want to go.

“No reason to take him to the hospital anyway,” says the goldfish, in Russian. “That one’s already dead.”

“He can’t be dead,” Sergei says, with a moan. “I barely touched him. It’s only a pan. Only a little thing.” Sergei holds it up to the fish, taps it against his own skull to prove it. “It’s not even that hard.”

“Maybe not,” says the fish. “But, apparently, it’s harder than that kid’s head.”

“He wanted to take you from me,” Sergei says, almost crying.

“Nonsense,” the fish says. “He was only here to make a little thing for TV.”

“But he said—”

“He said,” says the fish, interrupting, “exactly what he was doing. But you didn’t get it. Honestly, your Hebrew, it’s terrible.”

“And yours is better?” Sergei says. “Yours is so great?”

“Yes. Mine’s super-great,” the goldfish says, sounding impatient. “I’m a magic fish. I’m fluent in everything.” All the while the puddle of blood from the earring boy’s head is getting bigger and bigger and Sergei is on his toes, up against the kitchen wall, desperate not to step in it, not to get blood on his feet.

“You do have one wish left,” the fish reminds Sergei. He says it simply like that, as if Sergei doesn’t know—as if either of them ever loses count.

“No,” Sergei says. He’s shaking his head from side to side. “I can’t,” he says. “I’ve been saving it. Saving it for something.”

“For what?” the fish says.

But Sergei won’t answer.

That first wish, Sergei used up when they discovered a cancer in his sister. A lung cancer, the kind you don’t get better from. The fish undid it in an instant—the words barely out of Sergei’s mouth. The second wish Sergei used up five years ago, on Sveta’s boy. The kid was still small then, barely three, but the doctors already knew. Something in her son’s head wasn’t right. He was going to grow big but not in the brain. Three was about as clever as he’d get. Sveta cried to Sergei in bed all night. Sergei walked home along the beach when the sun came up, and he called to the fish, asked the goldfish to fix it as soon as he’d crossed through the door. He never told Sveta. And a few months later she left him for some policeman, a Moroccan with a shiny Honda. In his heart, Sergei kept telling himself it wasn’t for Sveta that he’d done it, that he’d wished his wish purely for the boy. In his mind, he was less sure, and
all kinds of thoughts about other things he could have done with that wish continued to gnaw at him, driving him half mad. The third wish, Sergei hadn’t yet wished for.

“I can restore him,” says the goldfish. “I can bring him back to life.”

“No one’s asking,” Sergei says.

“I can bring him back to the moment before,” the goldfish says. “To before he knocks on your door. I can put him back to right there. I can do it. All you need to do is ask.”

“To wish my wish,” Sergei says. “My last.”

The fish swishes his fish tail back and forth in the water, the way he does, Sergei knows, when he’s truly excited. The goldfish can already taste freedom. Sergei can see it in him.

After the last wish, Sergei won’t have a choice. He’ll have to let the goldfish go. His magic goldfish. His friend.

“Fixable,” Sergei says. “I’ll just mop up the blood. A good sponge and it’ll be like it never happened.”

That tail just goes back and forth, the fish’s head steady.

Sergei takes a deep breath. He steps out into the middle of the kitchen, out into the puddle. “When I’m fishing, while it’s dark and the world’s asleep,” he says, half to himself and half to the fish, “I’ll tie the kid to a rock and dump him in the sea. Not a chance, not in a million years, of anyone ever finding him.”

“You killed him, Sergei,” the goldfish says. “You murdered someone—but you’re not a murderer.” The goldfish stops swishing his tail. “If, on this, you won’t waste a wish, then tell me, Sergei, what is it good for?”

***

It was in Bethlehem, actually, that Yonatan found his Arab, a handsome man who used his first wish to ask for peace. His name was Munir; he was fat with a big white moustache. Really photogenic. It was moving, the way he said it. Perfect, the way in which Munir wished his wish. Yoni just knew even as he was filming that this man would be his promo.

Either him or that Russian. The one with the faded tattoos that Yoni had met in Yaffo. The one that looked straight into the camera and said, if he ever found a talking goldfish he wouldn’t ask of it a single thing. He’d just stick it on a shelf in a big glass jar and talk to him all day, it didn’t matter about what. Maybe sports, maybe politics, whatever a goldfish was interested in chatting about.

Anything, the Russian said, not to be alone.
“A Rose for Emily” by William Faulkner

William Faulkner was born in New Albany, Mississippi, in 1897. One of the twentieth century’s greatest writers, Faulkner earned his fame from a series of novels that explore the South’s historical legacy. He was particularly interested in exploring the moral implications of history, and across Faulkner’s fictional landscapes, individual characters often deal with epic struggles that prevent them from realizing their potential or establishing their place in the world.

I

WHEN Miss Emily Grierson died, our whole town went to her funeral: the men through a sort of respectful affection for a fallen monument, the women mostly out of curiosity to see the inside of her house, which no one save an old man-servant—a combined gardener and cook—had seen in at least ten years.

It was a big, squarish frame house that had once been white, decorated with cupolas and spires and scrolled balconies in the heavily lightsome style of the seventies, set on what had once been our most select street. But garages and cotton gins had encroached and obliterated even the august names of that neighborhood; only Miss Emily's house was left, lifting its stubborn and coquetish decay above the cotton wagons and the gasoline pumps—an eyesore among eyesores. And now Miss Emily had gone to join the representatives of those august names where they lay in the cedar-bemused cemetery among the ranked and anonymous graves of Union and Confederate soldiers who fell at the battle of Jefferson.

Alive, Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town, dating from that day in 1894 when Colonel Sartoris, the mayor—he who fathered the edict that no Negro woman should appear on the streets without an apron—remitted her taxes, the dispensation dating from the death of her father on into perpetuity. Not that Miss Emily would have accepted charity. Colonel Sartoris invented an involved tale to the effect that Miss Emily's father had loaned money to the town, which the town, as a matter of business, preferred this way of repaying. Only a man of Colonel Sartoris' generation and thought could have invented it, and only a woman could have believed it.

When the next generation, with its more modern ideas, became mayors and aldermen, this arrangement created some little dissatisfaction. On the first of the year they mailed her a tax notice. February came, and there was no reply. They wrote her a formal letter, asking her to call at the sheriff's office at her convenience. A week later the mayor wrote her himself, offering to call or to send his car for her, and received in reply a note on paper of an archaic shape, in a thin, flowing calligraphy in faded ink, to the effect that she no longer went out at all. The tax notice was also enclosed, without comment.

They called a special meeting of the Board of Aldermen. A deputation waited upon her, knocked at the door through which no visitor had passed since she ceased giving china-painting lessons eight or ten years earlier. They were admitted by the old Negro into a dim hall from which a stairway mounted into still more shadow. It smelled of dust and disuse—a close, dank smell. The Negro led them into the parlor. It was furnished in heavy, leather-covered furniture. When the Negro opened the blinds of one window, they could see that the leather was cracked; and when they sat down, a faint dust rose sluggishly about their thighs, spinning with slow motes in the single sun-ray. On a tarnished gilt easel before the fireplace stood a crayon portrait of Miss Emily's father.
They rose when she entered—a small, fat woman in black, with a thin gold chain descending to her waist and vanishing into her belt, leaning on an ebony cane with a tarnished gold head. Her skeleton was small and spare; perhaps that was why what would have been merely plumpness in another was obesity in her. She looked bloated, like a body long submerged in motionless water, and of that pallid hue. Her eyes, lost in the fatty ridges of her face, looked like two small pieces of coal pressed into a lump of dough as they moved from one face to another while the visitors stated their errand.

She did not ask them to sit. She just stood in the door and listened quietly until the spokesman came to a stumbling halt. Then they could hear the invisible watch ticking at the end of the gold chain.

Her voice was dry and cold. "I have no taxes in Jefferson. Colonel Sartoris explained it to me. Perhaps one of you can gain access to the city records and satisfy yourselves."

"But we have. We are the city authorities, Miss Emily. Didn't you get a notice from the sheriff, signed by him?"

"I received a paper, yes," Miss Emily said. "Perhaps he considers himself the sheriff . . . I have no taxes in Jefferson."

"But there is nothing on the books to show that, you see We must go by the--"

"See Colonel Sartoris. I have no taxes in Jefferson."

"But, Miss Emily--"

"See Colonel Sartoris." (Colonel Sartoris had been dead almost ten years.) "I have no taxes in Jefferson. Tobe!" The Negro appeared. "Show these gentlemen out."

II

So SHE vanquished them, horse and foot, just as she had vanquished their fathers thirty years before about the smell.

That was two years after her father's death and a short time after her sweetheart—the one we believed would marry her—had deserted her. After her father's death she went out very little; after her sweetheart went away, people hardly saw her at all. A few of the ladies had the temerity to call, but were not received, and the only sign of life about the place was the Negro man—a young man then—going in and out with a market basket.

"Just as if a man—any man—could keep a kitchen properly, "the ladies said; so they were not surprised when the smell developed. It was another link between the gross, teeming world and the high and mighty Griersons.

A neighbor, a woman, complained to the mayor, Judge Stevens, eighty years old.

"But what will you have me do about it, madam?" he said.

"Why, send her word to stop it," the woman said. "Isn't there a law?"

"I'm sure that won't be necessary," Judge Stevens said. "It's probably just a snake or a rat that nigger of hers killed in the yard. I'll speak to him about it."

The next day he received two more complaints, one from a man who came in diffident deprecation. "We really must do something about it, Judge. I'd be the last one in the world to
bother Miss Emily, but we've got to do something." That night the Board of Aldermen met--three graybeards and one younger man, a member of the rising generation.

"It's simple enough," he said. "Send her word to have her place cleaned up. Give her a certain time to do it in, and if she don't..."

"Dammit, sir," Judge Stevens said, "will you accuse a lady to her face of smelling bad?"

So the next night, after midnight, four men crossed Miss Emily's lawn and slunk about the house like burglars, sniffing along the base of the brickwork and at the cellar openings while one of them performed a regular sowing motion with his hand out of a sack slung from his shoulder. They broke open the cellar door and sprinkled lime there, and in all the outbuildings. As they recrossed the lawn, a window that had been dark was lighted and Miss Emily sat in it, the light behind her, and her upright torso motionless as that of an idol. They crept quietly across the lawn and into the shadow of the locusts that lined the street. After a week or two the smell went away.

That was when people had begun to feel really sorry for her. People in our town, remembering how old lady Wyatt, her great-aunt, had gone completely crazy at last, believed that the Griersons held themselves a little too high for what they really were. None of the young men were quite good enough for Miss Emily and such. We had long thought of them as a tableau, Miss Emily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horsewhip, the two of them framed by the back-flung front door. So when she got to be thirty and was still single, we were not pleased exactly, but vindicated; even with insanity in the family she wouldn't have turned down all of her chances if they had really materialized.

When her father died, it got about that the house was all that was left to her; and in a way, people were glad. At last they could pity Miss Emily. Being left alone, and a pauper, she had become humanized. Now she too would know the old thrill and the old despair of a penny more or less.

The day after his death all the ladies prepared to call at the house and offer condolence and aid, as is our custom Miss Emily met them at the door, dressed as usual and with no trace of grief on her face. She told them that her father was not dead. She did that for three days, with the ministers calling on her, and the doctors, trying to persuade her to let them dispose of the body. Just as they were about to resort to law and force, she broke down, and they buried her father quickly.

We did not say she was crazy then. We believed she had to do that. We remembered all the young men her father had driven away, and we knew that with nothing left, she would have to cling to that which had robbed her, as people will.

III

SHE WAS SICK for a long time. When we saw her again, her hair was cut short, making her look like a girl, with a vague resemblance to those angels in colored church windows--sort of tragic and serene.

The town had just let the contracts for paving the sidewalks, and in the summer after her father's death they began the work. The construction company came with riggers and mules and machinery, and a foreman named Homer Barron, a Yankee--a big, dark, ready man, with a big voice and eyes lighter than his face. The little boys would follow in groups to hear him cuss the riggers, and the riggers singing in time to the rise and fall of picks. Pretty soon he
knew everybody in town. Whenever you heard a lot of laughing anywhere about the square, Homer Barron would be in the center of the group. Presently we began to see him and Miss Emily on Sunday afternoons driving in the yellow-wheeled buggy and the matched team of bays from the livery stable.

At first we were glad that Miss Emily would have an interest, because the ladies all said, "Of course a Grierson would not think seriously of a Northerner, a day laborer." But there were still others, older people, who said that even grief could not cause a real lady to forget *noblesse oblige* without calling it *noblesse oblige*. They just said, "Poor Emily. Her kinsfolk should come to her." She had some kin in Alabama; but years ago her father had fallen out with them over the estate of old lady Wyatt, the crazy woman, and there was no communication between the two families. They had not even been represented at the funeral.

And as soon as the old people said, "Poor Emily," the whispering began. "Do you suppose it's really so?" they said to one another. "Of course it is. What else could . . ." This behind their hands; rustling of craned silk and satin behind jalousies closed upon the sun of Sunday afternoon as the thin, swift clop-clop-clop of the matched team passed: "Poor Emily."

She carried her head high enough--even when we believed that she was fallen. It was as if she demanded more than ever the recognition of her dignity as the last Grierson; as if it had wanted that touch of earthiness to reaffirm her imperviousness. Like when she bought the rat poison, the arsenic. That was over a year after they had begun to say "Poor Emily," and while the two female cousins were visiting her.

"I want some poison," she said to the druggist. She was over thirty then, still a slight woman, though thinner than usual, with cold, haughty black eyes in a face the flesh of which was strained across the temples and about the eyesockets as you imagine a lighthouse-keeper's face ought to look. "I want some poison," she said.

"Yes, Miss Emily. What kind? For rats and such? I'd recom--"

"I want the best you have. I don't care what kind."

The druggist named several. "They'll kill anything up to an elephant. But what you want is--"

"Arsenic," Miss Emily said. "Is that a good one?"

"Is . . . arsenic? Yes, ma'am. But what you want--"

"I want arsenic."

The druggist looked down at her. She looked back at him, erect, her face like a strained flag. "Why, of course," the druggist said. "If that's what you want. But the law requires you to tell what you are going to use it for."

Miss Emily just stared at him, her head tilted back in order to look him eye for eye, until he looked away and went and got the arsenic and wrapped it up. The Negro delivery boy brought her the package; the druggist didn't come back. When she opened the package at home there was written on the box, under the skull and bones: "For rats."

IV

So THE NEXT day we all said, "She will kill herself"; and we said it would be the best thing. When she had first begun to be seen with Homer Barron, we had said, "She will marry him."
Then we said, "She will persuade him yet," because Homer himself had remarked--he liked men, and it was known that he drank with the younger men in the Elks' Club--that he was not a marrying man. Later we said, "Poor Emily" behind the jalousies as they passed on Sunday afternoon in the glittering buggy, Miss Emily with her head high and Homer Barron with his hat cocked and a cigar in his teeth, reins and whip in a yellow glove.

Then some of the ladies began to say that it was a disgrace to the town and a bad example to the young people. The men did not want to interfere, but at last the ladies forced the Baptist minister--Miss Emily's people were Episcopal--to call upon her. He would never divulge what happened during that interview, but he refused to go back again. The next Sunday they again drove about the streets, and the following day the minister's wife wrote to Miss Emily's relations in Alabama.

So she had blood-kin under her roof again and we sat back to watch developments. At first nothing happened. Then we were sure that they were to be married. We learned that Miss Emily had been to the jeweler's and ordered a man's toilet set in silver, with the letters H. B. on each piece. Two days later we learned that she had bought a complete outfit of men's clothing, including a nightshirt, and we said, "They are married." We were really glad. We were glad because the two female cousins were even more Grierson than Miss Emily had ever been.

So we were not surprised when Homer Barron--the streets had been finished some time since--was gone. We were a little disappointed that there was not a public blowing-off, but we believed that he had gone on to prepare for Miss Emily's coming, or to give her a chance to get rid of the cousins. (By that time it was a cabal, and we were all Miss Emily's allies to help circumvent the cousins.) Sure enough, after another week they departed. And, as we had expected all along, within three days Homer Barron was back in town. A neighbor saw the Negro man admit him at the kitchen door at dusk one evening.

And that was the last we saw of Homer Barron. And of Miss Emily for some time. The Negro man went in and out with the market basket, but the front door remained closed. Now and then we would see her at a window for a moment, as the men did that night when they sprinkled the lime, but for almost six months she did not appear on the streets. Then we knew that this was to be expected too; as if that quality of her father which had thwarted her woman's life so many times had been too virulent and too furious to die.

When we next saw Miss Emily, she had grown fat and her hair was turning gray. During the next few years it grew grayer and grayer until it attained an even pepper-and-salt iron-gray, when it ceased turning. Up to the day of her death at seventy-four it was still that vigorous iron-gray, like the hair of an active man.

From that time on her front door remained closed, save for a period of six or seven years, when she was about forty, during which she gave lessons in china-painting. She fitted up a studio in one of the downstairs rooms, where the daughters and granddaughters of Colonel Sartoris' contemporaries were sent to her with the same regularity and in the same spirit that they were sent to church on Sundays with a twenty-five-cent piece for the collection plate. Meanwhile her taxes had been remitted.

Then the newer generation became the backbone and the spirit of the town, and the painting pupils grew up and fell away and did not send their children to her with boxes of color and tedious brushes and pictures cut from the ladies' magazines. The front door closed upon the last one and remained closed for good. When the town got free postal delivery, Miss Emily
alone refused to let them fasten the metal numbers above her door and attach a mailbox to it. She would not listen to them.

Daily, monthly, yearly we watched the Negro grow grayer and more stooped, going in and out with the market basket. Each December we sent her a tax notice, which would be returned by the post office a week later, unclaimed. Now and then we would see her in one of the downstairs windows--she had evidently shut up the top floor of the house--like the carven torso of an idol in a niche, looking or not looking at us, we could never tell which. Thus she passed from generation to generation--dear, inescapable, impervious, tranquil, and perverse.

And so she died. Fell ill in the house filled with dust and shadows, with only a doddering Negro man to wait on her. We did not even know she was sick; we had long since given up trying to get any information from the Negro.

He talked to no one, probably not even to her, for his voice had grown harsh and rusty, as if from disuse.

She died in one of the downstairs rooms, in a heavy walnut bed with a curtain, her gray head propped on a pillow yellow and moldy with age and lack of sunlight.

V

THE NEGRO met the first of the ladies at the front door and let them in, with their hushed, sibilant voices and their quick, curious glances, and then he disappeared. He walked right through the house and out the back and was not seen again.

The two female cousins came at once. They held the funeral on the second day, with the town coming to look at Miss Emily beneath a mass of bought flowers, with the crayon face of her father musing profoundly above the bier and the ladies sibilant and macabre; and the very old men--some in their brushed Confederate uniforms--on the porch and the lawn, talking of Miss Emily as if she had been a contemporary of theirs, believing that they had danced with her and courted her perhaps, confusing time with its mathematical progression, as the old do, to whom all the past is not a diminishing road but, instead, a huge meadow which no winter ever quite touches, divided from them now by the narrow bottle-neck of the most recent decade of years.

Already we knew that there was one room in that region above stairs which no one had seen in forty years, and which would have to be forced. They waited until Miss Emily was decently in the ground before they opened it.

The violence of breaking down the door seemed to fill this room with pervading dust. A thin, acrid pall as of the tomb seemed to lie everywhere upon this room decked and furnished as for a bridal: upon the valance curtains of faded rose color, upon the rose-shaded lights, upon the dressing table, upon the delicate array of crystal and the man's toilet things backed with tarnished silver, silver so tarnished that the monogram was obscured. Among them lay a collar and tie, as if they had just been removed, which, lifted, left upon the surface a pale crescent in the dust. Upon a chair hung the suit, carefully folded; beneath it the two mute shoes and the discarded socks.

The man himself lay in the bed.

For a long while we just stood there, looking down at the profound and fleshless grin. The body had apparently once lain in the attitude of an embrace, but now the long sleep that outlasts love, that conquers even the grimace of love, had cuckolded him. What was left of him, rotted beneath what was left of the nightshirt, had become inextricable from the bed in
which he lay; and upon him and upon the pillow beside him lay that even coating of the patient and biding dust.

Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head. One of us lifted something from it, and leaning forward, that faint and invisible dust dry and acrid in the nostrils, we saw a long strand of iron-gray hair.
“All Summer in a Day” by Ray Bradbury

Ray Bradbury has been called the world's greatest science fiction writer. He once described himself more simply: "I am a storyteller. That's all I've ever tried to be." Although Bradbury's stories are often set in outer space, his characters and their emotions are human and down-to-earth. Through this connection of the imagined and the real, Bradbury's fiction challenges the reader to question where we might be headed and what we might learn about ourselves now.

Story:

“Ready?”

"Ready."

"Now?"

"Soon."

"Do the scientists really know? Will it happen today, will it?"

"Look, look; see for yourself!"

The children pressed to each other like so many roses, so many weeds, intermixed, peering out for a look at the hidden sun.

It rained.

It had been raining for seven years; thousand upon thousands of days compounded and filled from one end to the other with rain, with the drum and gush of water, with the sweet crystal fall of showers and the concussion of storms so heavy they were tidal waves come over the islands. A thousand forests had been crushed under the rain and grown up a thousand times to be crushed again. And this was the way life was forever on the planet Venus, and this was the schoolroom of the children of the rocket men and women who had come to a raining world to set up civilization and live out their lives.

"It's stopping, it's stopping!"

"Yes, yes!"

Margot stood apart from these children who could never remember a time when there wasn't rain and rain and rain. They were all nine years old, and if there had been a day, seven years ago, when the sun came out for an hour and showed its face to the stunned world, they could not recall. Sometimes, at night, she heard them stir, in remembrance, and she knew they were dreaming and remembering and old or a yellow crayon or a coin large enough to buy the world with. She knew they thought they remembered a warmness, like a blushing in the face, in the body, in the arms and legs and trembling hands. But then they always awoke to the tatting drum, the endless shaking down of clear bead necklaces upon the roof, the walk, the gardens, the forests, and their dreams were gone.

All day yesterday they had read in class about the sun. About how like a lemon it was, and how hot. And they had written small stories or essays or poems about it:

I think the sun is a flower,
That blooms for just one hour.

That was Margot's poem, read in a quiet voice in the still classroom while the rain was falling outside.

"Aw, you didn't write that!" protested one of the boys.

"I did," said Margot. "I did."

"William!" said the teacher.

But that was yesterday. Now the rain was slackening, and the children were crushed in the great thick windows.

"Where's teacher?"

"She'll be back."

"She'd better hurry, we'll miss it!"

They turned on themselves, like a feverish wheel, all tumbling spokes.

Margot stood alone. She was a very frail girl who looked as if she had been lost in the rain for years and the rain had washed out the blue from her eyes and the red from her mouth and the yellow from her hair. She was an old photograph dusted from an album, whitened away, and if she spoke at all her voice would be a ghost. Now she stood, separate, staring at the rain and the loud wet world beyond the huge glass.

"What're you looking at?" said William.

Margot said nothing.

"Speak when you're spoken to." He gave her a shove. But she did not move; rather she let herself be moved only by him and nothing else.

They edged away from her, they would not look at her. She felt them go away. And this was because she would play no games with them in the echoing tunnels of the underground city. If they tagged her and ran, she stood blinking after them and did not follow. When the class sang songs about happiness and life and games her lips barely moved. Only when they sang about the sun and the summer did her lips move as she watched the drenched windows.

And then, of course, the biggest crime of all was that she had come here only five years ago from Earth, and she remembered the sun and the way the sun was and the sky was when she was four in Ohio. And they, they had been on Venus all their lives, and they had been only two years old when last the sun came out and had long since forgotten the color and heat of it and the way it really was. But Margot remembered.

"It's like a penny," she said once, eyes closed.

"No it's not!" the children cried.

"It's like a fire," she said, "in the stove."

"You're lying, you don't remember!" cried the children.

But she remembered and stood quietly apart from all of them and watched the patterning windows. And once, a month ago, she had refused to shower in the school shower rooms, had clutched her hands to her ears and over her head, screaming the water mustn't touch her
head. So after that, dimly, dimly, she sensed it, she was different and they knew her
difference and kept away.

There was talk that her father and mother were taking her back to earth next year; it seemed
vital to her that they do so, though it would mean the loss of thousands of dollars to her
family. And so, the children hated her for all these reasons of big and little consequence.
They hated her pale snow face, her waiting silence, her thinness, and her possible future.

"Get away!" The boy gave her another push. "What're you waiting for?"

Then, for the first time, she turned and looked at him. And what she was waiting for was in
her eyes.

"Well, don't wait around here!" cried the boy savagely. "You won't see nothing!"

Her lips moved.

"Nothing!" he cried. "It was all a joke, wasn't it?" He turned to the other children.

"Nothing's happening today. Is it?"

They all blinked at him and then, understanding, laughed and shook their heads. "Nothing,
nothing!"

"Oh, but," Margot whispered, her eyes helpless. "But this is the day, the scientists predict,
they say, they know, the sun... . . ."

"All a joke!" said the boy, and seized her roughly. "Hey, everyone, let's put her in a closet
before teacher comes!"

"No," said Margot, falling back.

They surged about her, caught her up and bore her, protesting, and then pleading, and then
crying, back into a tunnel, a room, a closet, where they slammed and locked the door. They
stood looking at the door and saw it tremble from her beating and throwing herself against it.
They heard her muffled cries. Then, smiling, they turned and went out and back down the
tunnel, just as the teacher arrived.

"Ready, children?" she glanced at her watch.

"Yes!" said everyone.

"Are we all here?"

"Yes!"

The rain slackened still more.

They crowded to the huge door.

The rain stopped.

It was as if, in the midst of a film, concerning an avalanche, a tornado, a hurricane, a volcanic
eruption, something had, first, gone wrong with the sound apparatus, thus muffling and
finally cutting off all noise, all of the blasts and repercussions and thunders, and then, second,
ripped the film from the projector and inserted in its place a peaceful tropical slide which did
not move or tremor. The world ground to a standstill. The silence was so immense and
unbelievable that you felt your ears had been stuffed or you had lost your hearing altogether.
The children put their hands to their ears. They stood apart. The door slid back and the smell of the silent, waiting world came in to them.

The sun came out.

It was the color of flaming bronze and it was very large. And the sky around it was a blazing blue tile color. And the jungle burned with sunlight as the children, released from their spell, rushed out, yelling, into the springtime.

"Now don't go too far," called the teacher after them. "You've only two hours, you know. You wouldn't want to get caught out!"

But they were running and turning their faces up to the sky and feeling the sun on their cheeks like a warm iron; they were taking off their jackets and letting the sun burn their arms.

"Oh, it's better than the sun lamps, isn't it?"

"Much, much better!"

They stopped running and stood in the great jungle that covered Venus, that grew and never stopped growing, tumultuously, even as you watched it. It was a nest of octopi, clustering up great arms of flesh-like weed, wavering, flowering this brief spring. It was the color of rubber and ash, this jungle, from the many years without sun. It was the color of stones and white cheeses and ink, and it was the color of the moon.

The children lay out, laughing, on the jungle mattress, and heard it sigh and squeak under them, resilient and alive. They ran among the trees, they slipped and fell, they pushed each other, they played hide-and-seek and tag, but most of all they squinted at the sun until the tears ran down their faces, they put their hands up to that yellowness and that amazing blueness and they breathed of the fresh, fresh air and listened and listened to the silence which suspended them in a blessed sea of no sound and no motion. They looked at everything and savored everything. Then, wildly, like animals escaped from their caves, they ran and ran in shouting circles. They ran for an hour and did not stop running.

And then—

In the midst of their running one of the girls wailed.

Everyone stopped.

The girl, standing in the open, held out her hand.

"Oh, look, look," she said, trembling.

They came slowly to look at her opened palm.

In the center of it, cupped and huge, was a single raindrop.

She began to cry, looking at it.

They glanced quietly at the sky.

"Oh. Oh."

A few cold drops fell on their noses and their cheeks and their mouths. The sun faded behind a stir of mist. A wind blew cool around them. They turned and started to walk back toward the underground house, their hands at their sides, their smiles vanishing away.
A boom of thunder startled them and like leaves before a new hurricane, they tumbled upon each other and ran. Lightening struck ten miles away, five miles away, a mile, a half mile. The sky darkened into midnight in a flash.

They stood in the doorway of the underground for a moment until it was raining hard. Then they closed the door and heard the gigantic sound of the rain falling in tons and avalanches, everywhere and forever.

"Will it be seven more years?"

"Yes. Seven."

Then one of them gave a little cry.

"Margot!"

"What?"

"She's still in the closet where we locked her."

"Margot."

They stood as if someone had driven them, like so many stakes, into the floor. They looked at each other and then looked away. They glanced out at the world that was raining now and raining and raining steadily. They could not meet each other's glances. Their faces were solemn and pale. They looked at their hands and feet, their faces down.

"Margot.

One of the girls said, "Well . . . ?"

No one moved.

"Go on," whispered the girl.

They walked slowly down the hall in the sound of the cold rain. They turned through the doorway to the room in the sound of the storm and thunder, lightening on their faces, blue and terrible. They walked over to the closest door slowly and stood by it.

Behind the closed door was only silence.

They unlocked the door, even more slowly, and let Margot out.
Questions

Story Title: _____________________________________

1. What is the main idea of the Story?

2. What is the setting (where/when) of the story and how does it affect other elements of the story (such as narration, purpose, flow, and meaning?)

3. Give a few details about each of the main characters in the story. Do they feel real and relatable or like fictional stereotypes?
Story Title: _____________________________________

1. What is the main idea of the Story?

2. What is the setting (where/when) of the story and how does it affect other elements of the story (such as narration, purpose, flow, and meaning?)

3. Give a few details about each of the main characters in the story. Do they feel real and relatable or like fictional stereotypes?
1. What is the main idea of the Story?

2. What is the setting (where/when) of the story and how does it affect other elements of the story (such as narration, purpose, flow, and meaning?)

3. Give a few details about each of the main characters in the story. Do they feel real and relatable or like fictional stereotypes?
Short Constructed Response:

Write a Short Constructed Response answering the following question: **What is identity according to the author(s)?**

➢ Use at least one of the stories to explain your response, and use evidence from the text(s) to support your claim. (Use additional paper if necessary)