

Sterling Classical School

10th Grade Summer Reading – 2021

The Count of Monte Cristo by Alexandre Dumas is an incredible adventure story of revenge. The hero of this 19th century classic is young Frenchman Edmond Dantes. On the eve of his marriage, Edmond finds himself falsely accused of a terrible crime. He is stripped of his job and bride and exiled to a faraway island prison for life. As you read, you'll find out who has done this to him—and why.

When you visit the library or bookstore, you'll find there are many versions of *The Count of Monte Cristo*. Please buy the abridged Bantam Classics edition (ISBN: 0-553-21350-4). You need to purchase a copy of the actual book. That way, you'll be able to annotate in the margins. This will help you complete the assignment listed below.

Assignment:

Part I:

Background:

The experiences and background of an author give us insights into his/her topic choices, style, and biases for writing. Do a search on the author, and identify at least five important elements, which may have contributed to his choice of topic, theme, and symbolism in the novel. Write the five elements (i.e., where he grew up, family background, historical context) in a bulleted list and explain IN FULL SENTENCES the function of each element in *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

Analysis Essay

Write a critical analysis essay on *The Count of Monte Cristo*. This does not mean to just say positive or negative things about the book. You are to pick from the following prompts to guide your analysis. Make sure that your essay is well organized.

Here is a list of pointers:

1. Make sure you have a THESIS STATEMENT starting your essay.
2. Have at least three body paragraphs.
3. Include a topic sentence for each paragraph.
4. Integrate one quote (cited correctly in MLA format) in each body paragraph. Be sure to correctly MLA cite the specific places in the book when you are quoting from the text.

Here is an example: In the novel, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, the thematic idea of revenge is expressed through Danglar's assertion: "insert text from the book" (Dumas 25). Here are the prompts to choose from: (ONLY PICK ONE.)

A. *The Count of Monte Cristo* is often called a revenge story, as vengeance is one of its central themes. Yet some readers think that the vengeance in the novel is not complete. Consider Dantes' revenge conducted on those who wronged him. Is Dantes' revenge complete? Given the fate of the characters of Villefort, Albert, and Danglars can it be said that Dantes' revenge is completely realized? Why or why not?

B. One thematic idea that is often overlooked in *The Count of Monte Cristo* is love. There are critics who say that is because there are no examples of true love realized in the novel. Given the events that occur for Valentine, Maximilien, Mercedes, and Haydee can it be said that any of these characters get to experience real love? Why or why not?

C. Some critics of *The Count of Monte Cristo* argue that everything done by the Count is done out of a sense of justice. Taking into account the events surrounding Caderousse, Benedetto, and Albert, is the Count truly just? Is the Count operating according to a notion of justice or are his concerns self-centered?

ESSAY:

Must be typed in MLA format:

12 point font (Times New Roman or Calibri)

Double Spaced

1 inch margins on all sides

Interesting Title Centered

with Name, Date, and Teacher's Name in upper right hand corner.

500-750 words in length

3-5 Quotes from the novel.