

PUTTIN' ON THE PERSONA: INVISIBLE MAN

Put on your Invisible Man persona, become the character and write the specific Autobiography Portfolio assignment given to you and you alone. Please note that you will receive no credit at all for writing any assignment other than the one I have chosen just for you. (Please use notebook paper for this assignment.)

Likes / Dislikes List: _____

Make two columns, one titled "Likes," the other "Dislikes," and list from ten to fifteen specific items in each column. Avoid naming specific classmates and teachers by generalizing. For example, "that mean teacher who's making me write an autobiography," not my name!

Metaphorical Definitions: _____

This kind of definition helps make abstract words easier to understand by giving a specific concrete example. A famous metaphorical definition is "Happiness is a warm puppy." For you, happiness may be something very different -- a raise in your allowance, a banana split, a room of your own. Write metaphorical definitions of ten different abstract nouns. Your concrete example must be something specific that you can sense -- taste, touch, smell, see, or hear. Your definitions should follow the format below:

METAPHORICAL DEFINITION = ABSTRACT NOUN + IS + CONCRETE EXAMPLE

The Perfect Present: _____

Since I am the perfect teacher, I have the ability to select the perfect present for each of you. It's something you've always wanted, something you've secretly yearned for. It's not a black Trans-Am or designer jeans because there's a catch -- the gift is intangible, or abstract. This means that you cannot perceive it with the five senses. For example, you might want patience, self-confidence, intuition. Tell me what the gift is, why it's the perfect gift, why you need it, and how it will affect your life.

Personal Metaphors: 1-10 _____ 11-20 _____

Make a list of metaphorical comparisons. Think, "If I were an animal, what kind of animal would I be?" For each item, write the general label and then your specific comparison. Be realistic, be somewhat honest, and be able to explain your choices. Don't say you are a rose, if you're really a daisy. *Explain your Invisible Man choices in a few sentences each.*

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|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Animal | 11. Musical Instrument |
| 2. Car | 12. Geometric Shape |
| 3. Article of Clothing | 13. Piece of Furniture |
| 4. Day of the Week | 14. Song |
| 5. Food | 15. Season of the Year |
| 6. Color | 16. Television Character |
| 7. Movie | 17. Comic or Cartoon Character |
| 8. Fragrance | 18. Appliance or Machinery |
| 9. Type of Building | 19. Natural Phenomenon |
| 10. Flower | 20. Word |

Unfinished Sentences: _____

Complete each of the following sentences by expanding them into short paragraphs. As always, be specific.

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|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. I usually worry about... | 6. I feel frustrated when... |
| 2. I feel angry when... | 7. I feel depressed when... |
| 3. I'm moody when... | 8. I am comfortable when... |
| 4. I'm happiest when... | 9. I feel nervous when... |
| 5. I feel confident when... | 10. I feel sentimental when... |

Look Who I Look Up To: _____

Think of three people of established reputation whom you admire. You may need to do some formal research on these people, so don't choose your Aunt Helen unless she's in the encyclopedia. You must be specific. If you admire Martin Luther King, Jr., saying he fought for civil rights isn't enough. Exactly what did he do? Devote one solid paragraph to each person, telling what each person has done to deserve your admiration.

These Words Belong to Me: _____

Make a list of words which have special power and magic. Think of common words with uncommon meanings, or even strange new words which allow you to think a new kind of thought. For example, do you know what "serendipity" means? Find out why it's so wonderful. What's ironic about a "scar"? List and define at least ten words. For each word, explain why this particular word belongs to you. Or perhaps give me a hint hidden in a question?

As Time Goes Bye-Bye: _____

Carpe diem (or, Seize the day!). Before time passes you by, what things do you want to do? What one thing do you most want to do by the time you are thirty-five? Why? What have you already said goodbye to – people, places, ideas, stages in your life, hopes, dreams, sorrows? Reflect on those goodbyes and/or grand plans. Make a list with short explanations, or concentrate on explaining one specific goal or farewell in depth.

Flashback: _____

If you could relive one day or experience in your life, what would it be? You might choose to relive this time because it was so wonderful you want to experience it again, or you might choose a day you want to change in some way. Identify the day or experience, tell why it was so important to you, and explain what reliving it would accomplish.

In Other Words: _____

Try expressing yourself through someone else's words. Select at least ten "Quotable Quotes" which express your philosophy of life. Choose quotations which represent your thought on several aspects of life – not only love, but also faith, success, integrity, character, friendship, etc. List the ten you have selected, including attribution (who said it).

Remembrance of Things Present: _____

In twenty years you will have forgotten most of the things that fill your life now. What are the things about who you are now, what you enjoy and value, what you do with your time, and so on that you want to remember twenty years from now? Imagine what will be important to your memory of yourself later on. Write these things down.

Futures -- Fantasy and Fact: _____

This is a three-part assignment. In the first paragraph, pretend that you can see yourself ten years from now. Describe your future as it could be if all your wishes came true. This description is "romantic." In the second paragraph, describe what your life will probably be like ten years from now if you continue just as you are now. No miracles or magic allowed. This description is "realistic." For most people, the "romantic" and "realistic" descriptions are very different. In the third paragraph, analyze the discrepancy. Discuss the specific differences between your two descriptions and how you feel about these differences. Finally, explain the steps you can take to find a sensible compromise between the romantic and the realistic.

My Own List of Lists: 1-5 _____ 6-10 _____

Now in its third edition, *The Book of Lists*, lists facts from history, literature, science, entertainment, etc. For your list of lists, I have selected more personal topics. Write the general label for each category and underline it. Then list from six to ten specific items under each category. You may write in two columns to save space.

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|--|---|
| 1. People who have influenced me... | 6. Things that worry me... |
| 2. Places that make me happy... | 7. Things I would like to know how to do... |
| 3. Places I would like to go... | 8. Things that have moved me... |
| 4. Things in people which I like... | 9. Ideas that intrigue me... |
| 5. Things in people which I dislike... | 10. My personal favorites... |

Metamorphosis: _____

Make a list of objects, places, ideas that could stand for your younger self, symbols for the way you used to be. Then make a contrasting list that could stand for your current self, symbols that represent the way you are now. Sort of an "I used to be...but now I am..." kind of chart. Use these contrasting lists to write a free verse poem on your transformation.

Cheer Yourself Up!: _____

Got the blues? Down in the dumps? Make a list of crazy things you could do to distract yourself from your troubles. Some possibilities -- Play Frisbee with your old, worn-out records, smile all the way through class and make your teacher wonder what's going on, or cover your front teeth with foil to look like braces. Think of your own ideas, both sane and crazy. You might want to draw cartoons to go with some of your ideas.

One Medium Suitcase: _____

Imagine that you are leaving home forever, and you can only take with you what will fit in one medium-sized suitcase. Think about the things that you truly value. Specifically, what will you take with you and why? Explain.

Lessons I Learned After It Was Too Late: _____

It seems that we always learn the most important lessons the hard way, usually when it's too late, when we've already made our big mistakes. Look back over your life and write approximately a page on the lessons you learned after it was too late.