

A.P. Lit. and Comp. – Mr. Neville
Invisible Man – Book Test – Essay Questions

All answers are to be typed and attached to this test.

Name _____

1. “I was never more hated than when I tried to be honest . . . No one was satisfied – not even I. On the other hand, I’ve never been more loved and appreciated than when . . . I’ve tried to give my friends the incorrect, absurd answers they wished to hear. They received a feeling of security. . . In order to justify them, I had to choke myself . . . oh, yes, it made them happy and it made me sick.”

How does this quote support the concept of our narrator’s life being an invisible one? What aspects of personalized humanity must be forfeited in order to be accepted and recognized by collective humanity? Is the narrator’s malaise unique or common to the way we all must be if we are to be accepted in society?

2. “Life is to be lived, not controlled; and humanity is won by continuing to play in face of certain defeat.” Does our narrator’s life and his personal choices support or negate this assertion? Is the epilogue one of negative resignation or of positive affirmation? Is Ellison a Naturalist or an Existentialist? Defend your position with textual quotes and references.

3. What thematic commonalities exist in both *The Stranger* and *The Invisible Man*? How are the two novel titles similar? What do the narrators of each novel symbiotically share in terms of their responses to the social world in general and people in their lives in particular? Is being a “stranger” similar to being “invisible”?

4. The most discernible, salient theme of 20th century literature is alienation. Discuss how alienation is prevalent in the lives, the actions, and the responses of the main characters in *The Invisible Man* and *The Stranger*.