# **Intro to American & British Lit: Reading Responses**

Good writing has good ideas and good thinking. It is clear, precise, and concise. Make your answers reflect these qualities.

Do NOT summarize the story or include long quotes. I know the story well. Instead, react and respond to ideas in the story. Why are they important or interesting or worth thinking about? How do the ideas in the story connect to your life and experienceWhat questions do you have? (Not “what questions might impress the teacher?”

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| English name (optional) |  | | Date | | 2024/7/4 |
| Reading Response to Book/Chapters | | About how long did this take to read? | | | 7h |
| The Witch of Blackbird Pond  Chapter 9 to 15 | | How difficult was it? (0-5)  (0 = easy …5 = impossible to understand) | | | 4 |
| How interesting was it? (0-5)  (0 = so boring … 5 = loved it) | | | 2 |
| New vocabulary/language | | | | | |
| **10+ Words I needed to look up** (with brief English definition) | | | | **10+ Words I guessed the meaning of** (with your guess) | |
| **Catechism** : A systematic instruction in the principles of the Christian religion, usually in the form of questions and answers.  **Sanctioned** : Officially approved or allowed.  **Forecastle** : The forward part of a ship's deck, traditionally used by the ship's crew.  **Whirring** : Making a soft, continuous humming or buzzing sound.  **Primers** : Elementary textbooks used for teaching basic reading and writing skills.  **Serene** : Calm, peaceful, and untroubled.  **Gambrel** : A type of roof with two slopes on each side, the lower slope being steeper than the upper one.  **becalmed** : (of a ship) rendered motionless by a lack of wind.  **Nonchalant** : Showing a lack of concern or indifference; casual.  **skunk cabbage** : a plant with large leaves and a strong odor, used in some folk medicines  **Buoyancy** : The ability or tendency to float on or in a liquid or gas.  **Resentful** : Feeling or showing annoyance or ill will at some perceived slight or **injustice**. | | | | **Trencher : Wooden plate**  **gnarled : twisted**  **Sacraments : Religious rites**  **Vagueness : Unclear**  **Filigree : Ornate**  **Riven : Split**  **Husking : Removing the outer covering of corn**  **bewildered : confused**  **Headstrong : Stubborn**  **Mellow : Warm**  **Hoity-toity : Pretentious**  **Becalmed : Stopped by lack of wind**  **Hau : Halt**  **Insubordination : Disobedience** | |
| Ideas from this reading that would be interesting to discuss | | | | | |
| Today I only wrote one idea because I think it is very important.  I noticed that Kit has a very deep observation and thinking about the things and people around her (or perhaps it is the author's intention, just expressing it through Kit). Just like the following inner monologue of Kit:  *John is a part of the family already, she reflected. We have all come to love him. Yet I still feel in awe of him, a little. Uncle Matthew thinks he is weak, but I suspect that underneath they are both made of the same New England rock. For John everything in his life, even the girl he marries, will always be second to his work. Does Judith realize that, I wonder, or does she think she can change him?* Despite being a young girl who has almost nothing (at least for now), Kit's thoughts can reach the levels of culture and politics, which I find very rare and not in line with her current social status. How can she find her own position in such a situation? Therefore, I think Kit's story is not just a coming-of-age story related to cultural differences and prejudices. There should be a deeper meaning (unfortunately, I find it difficult to describe this idea further). What exactly is redeeming Kit? Is it Hannah, her own mind, or the education she has received? | | | | | |
| Questions about the story (include language, culture, story) | | | | | |
| 1. I think the first time Kit met the witch, and then changed his mind and took the initiative to find Mr. Kimberley was a bit too hasty. I felt that there was not much foreshadowing, and I was caught off guard. Hannah's process of guiding Kit was a bit abrupt. (Chapter 9) Did I miss something or didn't understand it? 2. As I read deeper, I no longer find Matthew's image ridiculous, but I am somewhat puzzled as to what kind of political status Matthew actually has. How can he participate in and even lead the position of the entire Connecticut colony? Yet, he and his family live in a house that cannot even fit Kit's seven boxes. Why is that? Is it because the United States (should be called New England) during this period was not very prosperous as a whole? 3. People seem to have misunderstood the person John likes, which led to Judith and John being together before the corn-husking party. What does Judith's behavior mean at the corn-husking party? What happened? I don't understand this. Did John tell the truth in the end? | | | | | |
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