

Each Sophomore student is asked to read *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman. ([Link to Amazon](#)) Please note that the introduction of the novel does not need to be read. Students should start the novel where the actual story begins. As students read, students will answer **FIVE** journal questions, which are to be typed and turned in, via Google Classroom, on the first full day of school.

On the **first full day of class**, students will take a test on *The Princess Bride*. **This test will count for 10% of the First Nine Weeks/First Quarter grade! The journal questions will be used as a nine weeks grade and be 30 worth points.**

The Princess Bride Journal:

You must pick **FIVE** of the journal questions. Each connects to the story in some way. You will need to respond to these quotations in a **TYPED** journal, **which will be turned in on Google Classroom on the FIRST FULL DAY OF CLASS.**

For each journal entry, students will need to label their journal with the date. Underneath the quote/question, students will need to respond to it according to the guidelines below. Each response should be approximately one paragraph (4-6 sentences). Students may always write more if they want to, but they **MAY NOT** write less. **College Bound students must write at least 50 words per entry. Honors students must write at least 70 words per entry.** There are two sample entries below. Do not copy them or use the questions.

Responses will be graded on three areas, each worth 2 points, for a total of 6 points per response.

1. Responses are complete thoughts and are expressed in complete sentences.
2. A variety of response options are employed.
3. Evidence of thoughtful reflection is found in each entry.

Sample Entry:

QUESTION ONE:

6/12/20

Why do Buttercup and Westley pledge to outlive each other?

RESPONSE

There is some bittersweetness to this conversation, which takes place near the end of the novel. Westley has already died once for Buttercup, and it is very possible that he will die for her again - being heavily injured. Buttercup suggests that the couple is “doomed” to be together until death. This actually makes Westley unhappy, as it means their love will come to an end when one of them ultimately dies. Westley wants their love to live on forever, so he jokes that their love will never end if neither of them dies. Buttercup is not sure that is possible, but Westley believes it is - even death cannot beat true love. Therefore, as long as they love one another - neither will ever die.

Sample Entry 2:

QUESTION TWO:

6/13/20

The Princess Bride is billed as “A Classic Tale of True Love and High Adventure” which situates the love story of Buttercup and Westley at its center. Support the argument that despite this, Inigo Montoya’s lifelong pursuit of revenge ultimately takes its rightful place as the true heart of the novel.

RESPONSE TWO:

The overarching theme that drives *The Princess Bride* is: life isn’t fair. The argument can certainly be made that the romance of the two leading characters reflect this theme since Buttercup must endure the very real emotional trauma of believing that Westley has died. On the other hand, Westley did not die and he got the chance to come back and pursue a happily ever after with Buttercup. By contrast, Inigo’s father is dead and is never coming back. The only source of comfort for Inigo is his successful quest for revenge. And even that success nevertheless does not go exactly as he had planned. Ultimately, Inigo’s passion for gaining a measure of justice for his murdered father runs deeper and burns brighter than the passion exhibited between Buttercup and Westley. Once his revenge is complete, Inigo has nothing to live for. He has spent years of his life on a revenge quest, and has become the personification of the metaphor that life is not fair.

Journal Questions: (PICK ANY FIVE!)

1. Analyze how Goldman presents one of the themes of *The Princess Bride* (fantasy vs. reality, love and loyalty, the treatment and objectification of women, the fact that life is not fair, revenge).
2. What does the following quote mean?: “There is the great lesson of 'Beauty and the Beast,' that a thing must be loved before it is lovable.” — G.K. Chesterton
3. What is the culture (different levels of society and climate) in *The Princess Bride*?
4. What are some fairy tale elements in *The Princess Bride*?
5. What two symbolic artifacts can represent *The Princess Bride*? The artifacts have to represent the novel in some way (themes, character's personality, etc.), but can't be mentioned in the book.
6. There are eight character types in fairy tales: the hero, the helper, the villain, the false hero, the donor, the dispatcher, the princess, and the princess’ father. Which characters in *The Princess Bride* belong to each type and why?
7. How does the story change or benefit from having the Morgenstern text within the Goldman text?
8. How does Goldman parody historical time in *The Princess Bride*?

9. When we first meet Inigo and Fezzik, they are working with Vizzini to kidnap Buttercup. Later, they become allies of Westley in his efforts to rescue her. What causes Inigo and Fezzik to change or do they really change at all over the course of the novel?
10. Is Westley's initial anger at Buttercup for agreeing to marry Humperdinck fair? Based on his actions and words, including, at one point, striking her, might Westley be considered an abuser? Are his demonstrated attitudes toward women reinforced or undermined by the text, both in his own story and in Goldman's comments?
11. Count Rugen is certainly a sadist, as is Prince Humperdinck. Other characters display submissive or even masochistic behaviors-as, for example, early on, when Westley repeatedly replies "As you wish" to Buttercup's petty commands. How do these strains of sadism and masochism color the portrayal of true love in *The Princess Bride*?
12. In the introduction, Goldman writes: "But take the title words-'true love and high adventure'-I believed that once. I thought my life was going to follow that path. Prayed that it would. Obviously it didn't, but I don't think there's high adventure left any more." Later, he adds: "And true love you can forget about too." Does the rest of the book offer support for these words, or does it refute them?
13. Is Goldman's portrayal of Buttercup misogynistic? Is there a pattern in the way that women are portrayed in *The Princess Bride*?
14. How do you feel about the passage: "*But the hunchback was the leader. There was never doubt. Without him, Inigo knew where he would be: on his back begging wine in some alley entrance. The Sicilian's word was not just law, it was gospel. / So when he said, 'Kill the man in black,' all other possibilities ceased to exist. The man in black had to die...*" (Goldman 142). How do you feel it relates to many personal, political, and religious situations in real life?
15. What are your thoughts on the line, "Her heart was a secret garden and the walls were very high." How do you feel this line relates to the character it is about?
16. Revenge plays a large part in the story. Inigo's whole backstory revolves around his revenge. What are your thoughts about Inigo's revenge against the Sixth Finger Man? Was it worth it? Is revenge ever worth it?
17. In a parenthetical aside from Goldman, he quotes the mother of one of his friends, "Life isn't fair, Bill. We tell our children that it is, but it's a terrible thing to do. It's not only a lie, it's a cruel lie. Life's not fair, and it never has been, and it's never going to be." Do these words sum up the theme of the novel? Why or why not?
18. At the end of *The Princess Bride*, Goldman actually presents three endings: one his father told him, one that the "original author" Morgenstern wrote, and one he created himself. Why do you think he did this?
19. *The Princess Bride* could almost be taken as two stories: the fairy tale and Goldman's description of his own family life. Do you see common threads that tie the two stories together in a common theme or are they strictly separate storylines?