

English 3 AP/IB
Mr. Wheeler

**One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich
Summer Reading Assignment**

Please have the following completed and ready to turn in on the first day of school in August. All work must be typed and in MLA format. In order to receive credit, all responses must include detailed support from the text!

Free Response—please provide a detailed response to the following (1–2 paragraphs each)

1. Why is the novel entitled *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* instead of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich Shukov*?
2. What effect does the last paragraph have on the reader?
3. Make a list of Shukov's rules of survival in the work camp and discuss what these tell you about his character.
4. Who will and will not survive in the camp and why?
5. Why does Shukov take such pride in his work?

Essay—Choose **one** of the following topics and write a well organized essay (2–4 pages min.)

1. Compare Shukhov's and Fetiukov's drive to survive and discuss survival as a theme in the work.
2. Discuss personal pride and dignity as a theme. How is personal pride and dignity linked to material wealth within the camp? Is material wealth the only means of preserving personal pride or dignity? Why or why not? Explain how those prisoners who have maintained their personal pride and dignity have accomplished this.
3. Identify and discuss the prisoners who were corrupted by power given to them by the institution. What motivated them to capitulate? What is the author saying about the nature of power in the context of a prison labor camp?

Please consider the following while reading (in addition to some items mentioned in the PowerPoint contained in this packet):

- This novel could be classified as an example of Existential literature, something we will spend most of first semester exploring. In the Existential view:
 - Man is unable to make sense of universe
 - Man is surrounded and threatened by forces which he is unable to control or explain.

- Existentialists do not believe in life after death; therefore, they do not believe in God.
- Existentialists believe that we are “dropped” into the world to live a mundane and monotonous existence. Meaning in life comes from the everyday choices we make.
- The novel is a paradigm (pattern or example) of Russian society.
- Look for examples of
 - how Ivan uses cunning and trickery to survive
 - freedom through work
 - time as a possession
 - ritual of eating (moments of free time)