

QUESTIONS ABOUT
A SEPARATE PEACE
Part 2

Gene Forrester, on a poorly thought out impulse, cripples his best friend Finny. This book is about the fallout from this event. It is also about the Second World War and how the war and Gene's decision are inextricably related. The questions below cover Chapter 8 through to the end of the book.

Chapter 8

1. What is Gene wearing when he discovers Finny (Phineas) has returned to school?
2. Although Gene finds that Finny is still an invalid, what kind of invalid is he?
3. When Brinker tells Gene, "Your little plot didn't work so well after all," what is he referring to? How does Gene react?
4. "Yellow Peril" is a name given to the Chinese (and later to the Japanese) in the late nineteenth century by Westerners afraid sinister Chinese would take away their jobs, women, and democracy. Was this true then? How about today?
5. Although Finny depends completely on one person, he wants complete independence from everybody else. Who is that one person? How is this ironic?
6. What stops Gene from enlisting in the armed forces?
7. Compare the exterior appearance of the Devon School buildings with their interiors.
8. Finny does not believe in the war. What does he claim is really happening?
9. What happens to Gene's energy as he runs around Finney's improvised track?

Chapter 9

10. Why does Leper become the school's first army recruit?
11. The boys jokingly attribute every allied war success to Leper. When they do this what are they actually wondering about themselves?
12. What does Finny propose for Saturday? What is Gene's role? What is Brinker's?
13. What is "hard cider"? What does it mean if it is "very hard"?
14. What do most, if not all, of the Winter Carnival prizes have in common?
15. What happens before the carnival even starts officially?
16. What do they use to make "the sacred fire from Olympus"?
17. In this chapter we read, "It wasn't the cider which made me surpass myself, it was this liberation we had torn from the gray encroachments of 1943, the escape we had

concocted, this afternoon of momentary, illusory, special and *separate peace*." The novel is named *A Separate Peace*. Why do you believe it has this title?

18. Gene describes his future army career. How does he describe it?
19. What does Leper tell Gene he did? What is a Section 8 discharge?
20. Gene compares Leper's mother's opinion of himself with Leper's and thinks that Leper is closer to the truth. What does Gene believe Leper thinks?
21. What does Leper say happened to him in the army?
22. Why does Gene hear Leper's story, declare it has nothing to do with him, and run away? Does Leper's story have anything to do with Gene?

Chapter 11

23. Finny claims that there is no war. What is he thinking when he says this?
24. Does Gene believe in his heart that he is responsible for Finny's accident?
25. What makes Finny decide there really is a war?
26. Why does Brinker take Gene and Finny to the Assembly Hall during the night?
27. In the beginning, where does Gene claim he was when Finny fell from the tree? Where does Finny claim Gene was when he fell from the tree?
28. Who is summoned to tell what actually happened? What does he testify? What is Finny's response? What happens next?

Chapter 12

29. Gene speaks to Finny through an infirmary window. What is Finny's response?
30. When Gene visits Finny, what does Finny say he's tried to do? Was he successful? What does Gene say will happen if Finny goes to war?
31. Gene and Finny agree that Gene's irrational, unexplainable, impulse caused the fall. I, the author of these questions, have done things I meant to be jokes, which have had bad outcomes. Have you, the reader, ever made such mistakes?
32. What happens to Finny when they set his bone?

Chapter 13

33. Brinker's father believes war is a chance to test yourselves, become heroes, and bring home war stories to tell. What do Gene and Brinker see in war? What do you see?
34. Gene writes that, "I killed the enemy there (*at Devon School*)." What was his enemy?
35. *A Separate Peace* concerns an incident at a private boys' school and the Second World War. How are the two related?