

Name: _____
Pre-AP English 6
Date: _____

The Phantom Tollbooth Cumulative Essay Project

Essay Project – You will write a series of well-thought out, well-prepared essays as your end of novel project. You are to complete the following essay questions using your novel and discussion questions as guidance. Please use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. An essay answer of at least two paragraphs in length is required **for each question**, and each paragraph has the following structure:

- ❖ Introduction sentence
- ❖ Commentary with parenthetical reference
- ❖ Concrete detail
- ❖ Concrete detail
- ❖ Commentary with parenthetical reference
- ❖ Concrete detail
- ❖ Concrete detail
- ❖ Conclusion

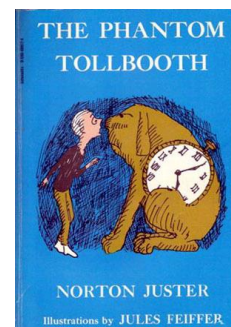
Note: Parenthetical reference is required. Do your best writing! You must highlight or underline the different parts of the paragraph when chunking.

Essays one and two are required:

1. What are some similarities and differences you notice between the novel and the theatrical adaptation of this novel? (*This cannot be answered until we complete reading the theatrical adaptation on either Friday, May 20, 2011 or Monday, May 23, 2011.*)
2. Describe how Milo's outlook changed by the end of his journey.

Choose **two** of the following as your third and fourth essays for the project.

- A. Why do you think Mr. Juster used so many puns and plays on words in his writing of this tale? Which appealed to you and why?
- B. What would the King of Wisdom—Azaz and the Mathemagician's father—think of the state of things in the Lands Beyond? Would he be pleased with the way his sons have been looking after the kingdom?



- C. Who might the anonymous sender of the tollbooth be? What reasons would he or she have to send it to Milo?
- D. If you were in Milo's shoes, what would you do differently?
- E. Explain why Princess Rhyme and Princess Reason had to return to the Kingdom of Wisdom.
- F. What lessons could the Soundkeeper learn from Dischord and Dynne?
- G. Why does Faintly Macabre remain in prison, despite knowing how to escape?
- H. What would have happened to Milo if Tock had not shown up in the Doldrums? Would he have stayed there forever?

This essay project is due **at the end of the class period** on **Thursday, May 26, 2011**.

What follows is a sample essay for you to see how it is done.

Sample question—What is one of the themes of the novel *The Phantom Tollbooth*? I have provided the first paragraph only.

In Norton Juster's thought-provoking novel, *The Phantom Tollbooth*, we encounter Milo, a school-aged boy who is terribly bored with life and finds no purpose in learning until he meets some interesting teachers along the way. Mr. Juster establishes the theme of lifelong learning early in his novel when he states "he regarded the process of seeking knowledge as the greatest waste of time of all" (Juster 9). Early in Milo's journey, he meets the Lethargarians—curious creatures who blend into their environments and loiter all of their lives. They even have rules against laughter and thinking. He learns that he must think in order to escape the Doldrums. Late in the novel, Milo encounters the Terrible Trivium, a demon who specializes in wasting time with insignificant tasks that do not matter. This demon sets Milo onto the task of using a pair of tweezers to move a pile of sand that Milo cunningly figures out will take him over eight hundred years to complete. Juster continues the lesson of the importance of education with the introduction of the characters of Princess Rhyme and Princess Reason. "You must never feel badly about making mistakes as long as you take the trouble to learn from them. For you often learn more by being wrong for the right reasons than you do by being right for the wrong reasons. . . it's not just learning things that's important. It's learning what to do with what you learn and learning why you learn things at all that matters. . . whatever we learn has a purpose and whatever we do affects everything and everyone else, if even in the tiniest way" (Juster 233). We all have to learn information that initially seems insignificant. We take steps one at a time to master complicated arithmetic problems or to comprehend the structure of a sophisticated college-level word. With the help of valuable insights as these and helpful travel companions, Milo used the gifts of words and his magic staff to help restore Rhyme and Reason to the Kingdom of Wisdom. The journey of life is meant to be paved with lessons and teachers who make our trip worthwhile and our path more enjoyable.