

Name: _____

Period: _____

Vonnegut Web Quest



<http://www.lancefuhrer.com/vonnegut/index.htm>

1. Vonnegut's date of birth: _____

What holiday coincides with his date of birth? _____

How does this relate to his political beliefs? _____

2. Vonnegut's roots are in what area of the United States? _____

3. What national incident most influenced his childhood? _____

Explain the ramifications on his family: _____

4. Vonnegut's initial writing experience came from this medium: _____

Hypothesize the effect this would have on his style: _____

5. Vonnegut's family relationships have also contributed to his inherent pessimism. Comment on the following:

What is the irony of the date his mother commits suicide? _____

What happened to his sister and her husband? _____

Describe the demise of his father: _____

6. After reading the synopsis of *Cat's Cradle*, make a connection to Vonnegut's fields of study at Cornell.

7. How does Vonnegut "escape" expulsion from Cornell University? _____

World War II:

8. What does P.O.W. stand for? _____

9. What are the base facts of The Battle of the Bulge?

Who was involved: _____

When occurred: _____

Where: _____

Briefly describe effects: _____

10. Read some poems at www.merkki.com/poetry.htm , including "Kriegie Thoughts." What is the message conveyed about being a P.O.W.? What long lasting effects could be created from this experience?

11. What is an incendiary device? _____

12. Explain the incident at Dresden on February 13, 1945. Had you ever heard of this incident before?

13. Look at the pictures of firebombs. What is occurring? Compare the effects of firebombs to atomic bombs. Which are worse and explain. _____

14. Explain how Vonnegut's firsthand experience in Dresden significantly impacts his life.

Writing & Style:

16. Define satire: _____

Name four types of satire: _____

17. What does the phrase black humor refer to in terms of literature? _____

Provide an example: _____

18. Define science fiction: _____

Explain how Vonnegut uses science fiction: _____

19. Read a synopsis of *Slaughterhouse Five*. What is the effect of its publication in 1969 considering the major historical events shaping America? _____

20. Vonnegut studied anthropology at the University of Chicago. What is this field and how could it affect his writing? _____

21. Check out the website on Vonnegut's artwork. What is your opinion of him as an artist? _____

22. Familiarize yourself with the Biblical story of Jonah. What is the basic plot and message? _____

What other famous piece of literature deals with the same creature? _____

23. To what does the title *Cat's Cradle* refer? _____

Bonus: What was Vonnegut's rejected master's thesis as an anthropology student? _____

Kurt Vonnegut has a cameo in this classic 1986 comedy: _____