

APES Summer Assignment:

Please type all answers and send them in through turnitin.com by August 10th. Remember that you answers should NOT be identical to anyone else's answers!! Turnitin.com will give me an originality score for your answers. Be certain to answer in your own words!!

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I. Read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson (This book will take some time – pace yourself. The questions are in the order in which you will find the answers in the book.)

A. Answer the following questions as you read.

1. Carson's first chapter explains the title of her book. Why is it called "Silent Spring"?
2. Why does she suggest that chemical insecticides and herbicides be called "biocides"? What idea is she expressing by using this word? Is Carson opposed to the use of all toxins?
3. What is uniquely problematic about DDT and other chlorinated hydrocarbons?
4. How do toxins contribute to water pollution?
5. What alternatives does Carson propose to the use of chemicals to control unwanted pests and plants? Do you think these alternatives make sense in the context of agribusiness?
6. Her description of chemical spraying suggests that moral dilemmas are involved in the use of toxins as well as technical problems of environmental management. What moral dilemma worries Carson? Do you share her view?
7. Carson's discussion of Dutch Elm disease leads her to advocate "the conservation of variety." What does she mean by this?
8. Why is runoff in rivers and the ocean such a serious problem?
9. What lessons does Carson extract from the stories about spraying for the gypsy moth and the fire ant? What was the role of local activists? Of government officials? Of the chemical industry?
10. To what is Carson referring when she writes that there is a "human price" for the use of toxins? Why is it so crucial that human beings begin to see themselves as an essential part of the natural world? Why did she believe that people resisted thinking about themselves in those terms?
11. Carson describes the possibility of genetic damage by environmental hazards as something new. She also discusses cellular damage caused by environmental carcinogens, an especially poignant example because Carson herself died of breast cancer. Do you think of these as novel, even controversial issues? Why or why not?
12. Do you agree that the project of controlling nature is arrogant, foolish, and dangerous, as Carson argues? Why or why not?

B. After reading the book Silent Spring:

Choose and discuss one of the following quotes in reference to what you have learned from the book:

- Quote 1: “As crude a weapon as the cave man’s club, the chemical barrage has been hurled against the fabric of life.” –Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*
- Quote 2: “The most alarming of all man’s assaults upon the environment is the contamination of air, earth, rivers, and sea... This pollution is for the most part irrecoverable.” –Rachel Carson
- Quote 3: “We won’t have a society if we destroy the environment.” –Margaret Mead