

Name _____ Class pd. _____ Date _____ Score _____

Getting Deeper into *Invisible Man*

Directions: Choose one of the following assignments. Then examine Ralph Ellison's use of that motif or element in the novel. Next, select a medium for reporting to the class what you have found. Your report may come in the form of written or visual expression or through another creative means of your choice.

1. The notion of juxtaposition courses throughout the book. Examples include black versus white, innocence versus experience, appearance versus reality, sight versus blindness, and order versus chaos. Choose two topics, and report on how moments of juxtaposition contribute to the growth of the narrator.
2. Read the tale from the Uncle Remus collection entitled "Brer Rabbit and the Tar Baby." Analyze how this story parallels the narrator's story in *Invisible Man*. What connections can be made between the various characters? How can Brer Rabbit's memorable line of "I was born and bred in the briar patch" apply to Ellison's narrator?
3. Analyze how Ellison uses dreams to further convey his message.
4. Several of T. S. Eliot's poems have characters that are similar to characters from Ellison's text. Read "The Waste Land," "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," or "The Hollow Men," and elaborate on the connections.
5. Some critics consider Ellison's novel to be the birth of postmodern literature. Research elements of postmodern literature to show why such a statement may be accurate.
6. Why is *Invisible Man* an appropriate title for this novel?
7. Develop your own topic, and follow it through to your own conclusions.