

## Honors United States History

### Summer Reading Questions

As you read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, keep the following questions in mind.

A. What style of writing does Stowe employ? Why do you think she uses this style for this particular book? Do you think it is an effective style? Do you think it would have been effective in the mid-Nineteenth Century?

B. How do Uncle Tom's "masters" differ? In what ways are they the same?

C. Explain how the relationship between Topsy and Ophelia develops throughout the story.

D. How does Eva influence characters throughout the book?

E. How does Ophelia represent the views of many northerners?

F. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a very influential novel in the mid Nineteenth Century. How does it compare to other works of popular culture (books, songs, movies, plays, etc.) that have also had a profound effect upon American society?

G. The term "Uncle Tom" is sometimes used as an insult to African Americans who have assimilated into mainstream white culture. The implication is that these people have turned their backs on their own heritage and are trying to succeed by pleasing whites. Now that you have read *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, do you think that it is legitimate to use the term "Uncle Tom" in this manner? Use examples from the book to support your answer.