

**TSSM**<sup>TM</sup>  
Creating VCE Success

SAMPLE

ENGLISH TEXT SUMMARY NOTES  
**In Cold Blood**

Text guide by: Kirsten Finlay

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TSSM

ACN 099 422 670

ABN 54 099 422 670

**A:** Level 14, 474 Flinders Street Melbourne VIC 3000

**T:** 1300 134 518

**F:** 03 90784354

**W:** [tssm.com.au](http://tssm.com.au)

**E:** [info@tssm.com.au](mailto:info@tssm.com.au)

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# Contents

AUTHOR NOTES.....	5
Other Texts by Truman Capote .....	5
HISTORICAL CONTEXT.....	5
GENRE.....	5
ADAPTATIONS .....	5
THE INSPIRATION FOR THE NOVEL .....	5
STRUCTURE.....	5
STYLE.....	5
SETTING.....	5
The Clutter Homestead.....	5
Holcomb .....	5
The Corner.....	5
PLOT SUMMARY.....	5
The Last to See Them Alive.....	5
Persons Unknown.....	5
Answer.....	5
The Corner.....	5
CHARACTER PROFILES.....	5
Major Characters .....	5
Minor Characters .....	5
Other Characters.....	5
THEMES AND ISSUES .....	5
The American Dream .....	5
The Banality of Evil.....	5
Epic Storytelling and Mythology .....	5
Family.....	5
Homosexuality.....	5
Socioeconomic Status.....	5
Self-Image .....	5
SYMBOLS/MOTIFS.....	5
IMPORTANT QUOTATIONS.....	5
The Last To See Them Alive.....	5
Person’s Unknown.....	5
Answer.....	5
The Corner.....	5
CREATIVE WRITING.....	5
The Creative Writing Process.....	5
Common Pitfalls .....	5
The Written Explanation .....	5
Creative Writing Ideas to Consider .....	5
Style Structures.....	5
SAMPLE ESSAY TOPICS .....	5
FINAL EXAMINATION ADVICE.....	5

The Text.....	5
Essay Writing .....	5
The Exam.....	5
REFERENCES .....	5

SAMPLE

## AUTHOR NOTES

Truman Capote was born Truman Streckfus Persons on September 30, 1924, in New Orleans. He was deeply affected by his early life where he bounced around from relative to relative after the divorce of his parents (his father was imprisoned for fraud). He eventually settled in New York with his mother and her second husband, whose surname he adopted. The young Capote got a job as a copyboy at *The New Yorker* in the early 1940s, but was fired for inadvertently offending Pulitzer Prize winning poet, Robert Frost. The publication of his early stories in *Harper's Bazaar* established his literary reputation when he was in his twenties.

Capote associated himself with a wide range of writers and artists, high-society figures, and international celebrities, gaining frequent media attention for his exuberant social life. His interest in the murder of a family in Kansas led to the prolonged investigation that provided the basis for *In Cold Blood* (1966), his most successful and acclaimed book. By “treating a real event with fictional techniques,” Capote intended to create a new synthesis: something both “immaculately factual” and a work of art (‘Portraits and Observations: Truman Capote’). However, its genre was defined from the moment it began to appear in serialized form in *The New Yorker*. The book exerted a fascination among a wider readership than Capote’s writing had ever attracted before.

He worked for many years on *Answered Prayers*, an ultimately unfinished novel that was intended to be the distillation of everything he had observed in his life among the rich and famous. An excerpt from it, published in *Esquire* in 1975, appalled many of Capote’s wealthy friends for its revelation of intimate secrets, and he found himself excluded from the world he had once dominated. He died on August 25, 1984, after years of problems with drugs and alcohol.

### **Other Texts by Truman Capote**

Short Stories: *Miriam, A Tree of Night and Other Stories, House of Flowers, Carmen Therezinha Solbiati – So Chic, A Christmas Memory, The Thanksgiving Visitor, Mojave, La Cote Basque 1965, Unspoiled Monsters, Kate McCloud, Music of Chameleons, One Christmas, The Complete Stories of Truman Capote.*

Novels: *Other Voices, Other Rooms, Local Color, The Grass Harp, The Answered Prayers (Unfinished), A Capote Reader, Summer Crossing.*

Nonfiction: *The Muses are Heard, Observations, Selected Writings of Truman Capote, In Cold Blood.*

Plays: *The Grass Harp.*

Screenplays: *Beat the Devil, Terminal Station, The Innocents, A Christmas Memory, Laura.*

Broadway Musicals: *House of Flowers.*

Profile: *The Duke in his Domain.*

Novella: *Breakfast at Tiffany's.*

Essays: *Brooklyn Heights: A Personal Memoir.*