

AP English IV Summer Reading Adventure/Assignment

(depending on how you look at it ☺)

District Purpose:

In Conroe ISD, we encourage all students to read over the summer in order to enrich learning and provoke thought. Summer reading strengthens reading skills, increases academic achievement, fosters a love for reading, and empowers students to become lifelong learners. Additionally, students who enroll in a Pre AP, AP, and DC English course are expected to engage in summer reading as it prepares students for the upcoming school year and creates an initial common framework for classroom discussion and instruction.

Dear AP English IV student:

You have signed up to take AP English IV which is Literature and Composition. We read literature and write about literature. So, in an effort to keep your minds sharp this summer and to prepare you to begin our study of literature and composition on DAY ONE, you will begin by reading two literary selections this summer. For this adventure/assignment, you will need to obtain a copy of the following TWO books:

Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* written in 1837

AND

Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* written in 2003

We will be taking quite a ride with these two selections. There is a little something for everyone. I hope you will enjoy a classic and a contemporary piece as well. ☺ These seemingly different books may have more in common than you think!

It is always preferable if you can manage to purchase your own copies. Make every effort to do so if at all possible. (*Jane Eyre* should be available free on-line as most classics are; both are available in paperback at new and used bookstores. Electronic readers are fine as well.) You will need copies of the books for use in class for the first 4-6 weeks of school, so plan accordingly and be prepared. We will begin our study with *Jane Eyre* on DAY ONE, and then three weeks later, we will begin our study of *Kite Runner* and will compare the two. Speaking of *Kite Runner*, please be advised of the mature nature of this contemporary novel. It includes a rape scene which is not graphic but is disturbing; this brief scene, however, is pivotal to the plot of the story and the theme. The novel also contains some violence (war/terrorism) and strong language. Please see me or email me if you have any questions concerning the mature nature of the piece. We feel it is worth it.

As you read, you will of course annotate or take notes directly in the book. That means mark anything that looks, smells, or sounds important! It means **read with a pen in your hand and interact with the novel**—draw a sad face when you or a character is sad; draw a smiley face when, well, when you or a character is happy! Mark literary devices; use any annotating skills you have. I have no doubt that you know what to do. Just remember, these books are not Twilight-ish, fun, easy reads. These are novels on which you will hopefully write fabulous essays! Keep that purpose in mind as you read and read accordingly. All annotations will be for **extra credit**. AND in May, when you want to review these novels for the AP Exam, you'll be glad that you annotated.

In addition, I would like you to **create TWO lists for each book**. Here's how: Take a piece of notebook paper and fold it "hot dog" style; then stick it in your book and create your lists as you go. It also doubles as a bookmark! Win-win! Do make the lists as you go! Trust me—it is a real pain and not as purposeful to go back and do this—so set it up where you really can just jot things down as you are reading. Here are the lists:

For *Jane Eyre*, please make the following two lists:

- Locations (names of 5 main places Jane goes)
- Characters w/ brief descriptions and page numbers!

For *Kite Runner*, please make the following two lists:

- Timeline of events (by years—keep track--the book is chronological and historically accurate)
- Characters w/ brief descriptions and page numbers!

I am not giving you a number of items to be on each list; just be sure your lists represents the novel from beginning to end and includes page numbers. These will be due at the end of our study of the novel--approx. weeks 3 and 6--when we do our timed writing on each)

Optional Extra Credit: (well worth it and available for both books)

Along with your annotations, give a title to each and every chapter in the book. Please do this actually in the book on the first page of each chapter or use a sticky note on the first page of each chapter. Don't feel like your title has to be incredibly clever. It may simply state the main happening of that chapter, ex. "Jane returns to Gateshead" or it may go deeper, ex. for the same chapter, "Jane seeks forgiveness" This is evaluative in the short term and extremely helpful later as well.

Other important information:

Could you find these lists that I have asked you to create on-line? Probably. I am just being honest, but the magic is not in the lists themselves; the magic is in the PROCESS of making the lists as you read!!! So if you don't create the lists, you miss out on that magically something that helps you connect with the novel. In fact you could just read the Spark Notes and not read the novels at all. (gasp!) I will warn you: the only person you are cheating and hurting by doing that is YOU. You will not have what it takes to write at the highest level on the AP Exam; your grade will start off in the hole in my class (and that is not a good place to be); and you will have missed out on an incredible opportunity. Trust me, you will wish you had read it, so just go ahead and do it. Rise to the occasion! Do also remember: books don't just "get read" magically; you have to plan this into your summer. You CANNOT read both of these books in the last two weeks before school starts. That is impossible. Read one in June and one in July or read one in July and one in August. Let's face it: *Jane Eyre* is long! So get started as soon as possible.

Word of caution: both of these books have recently been made into films. I've seen them. While these film adaptations have their merits, they omit vast sections and differ greatly from the novels. Watching these films this summer can also cloud your mind and actually cause you to forget the book. Use your own judgment on viewing the films in conjunction with your reading; but in no way can the film substitute for reading the book. It is critical that you can read literature and speak and write about it intelligently. Also, the beginning of your senior year will be very busy. You will be working on college essays and applications as well as taking several other challenging courses. This is called summer reading for a reason. ☺ It is in your best interest to at least read *Jane* this summer. We won't start *Kite Runner* until the 4th week, BUT you will be busy with many, many other things by then. Just saying.

Lastly, in both of these novels our main characters go on a journey. In both cases, as you will learn, it is a journey of self-discovery. We hope you enjoy these novels and perhaps you will have a journey of self-discovery this summer as a prelude to the journey that is your SENIOR YEAR!!!! It too will be a journey, and we look forward our adventures together in AP English IV. These novels will challenge you to think, and we can't wait to discuss them with you! Happy reading, have a great summer, and see you in August... when the journey begins!!

Lovingly,
Mrs. Arnst and Mrs. Cox

P.S. If you have any questions about the assignment or as you read, please do not hesitate to email me at lcox@conroeisd.net