

AP English Literature and Composition Summer Reading 2022-2023

Overview of the class and summer reading: The focus in AP Literature and Composition will be on analyzing literature and identifying the literary devices used to contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole. *The Kite Runner* is the first literary work you are asked to read and analyze. Annotate (write comments in the margins of your book, if you own it, or on post-it notes) as you read to gain a better understanding of the work. As you read, complete the tasks below. Type on this document.

Book: *The Kite Runner* // Author: Khaled Hosseini // Pages: 372

Synopsis of the novel: “The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father’s servant, caught in the tragic sweep of history, *The Kite Runner* transports readers to Afghanistan at a tense and crucial moment of change and destruction. A powerful story of friendship, it is also about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies..” –Amazon

Warning: Chapter 7 describes a sexual assault scene. If you choose to skip that scene by skipping the chapter, please read the brief synopsis at the bottom of this page for the context needed for the rest of the novel.

A. Main Characters:

Character	Brief Description (fill in a brief summary of who the character is)
Amir	
Hassan	
Baba	
Ali	
Assef	
Rahim Khan	
Sohrab	
Soraya	

B. Symbol: An object that represents something deeper and more significant. Ex: A rose represents painful beauty. Explain the symbolism of the kite in less than 100 words.

C. As you read *The Kite Runner*, **respond to 4 of the following journal prompts--note that Journal 9 is required (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font). You may choose 3 out of the other 8 journal entries.** Do not wait until the end of the book to start your journal; try to write each response after the chapter segments indicated in the prompt. Each response should be roughly 200-300 words. Write the word count after each prompt’s response. **Your responses should make apt, specific textual references, including direct quotes, and prove to me that you did indeed read the book in its entirety.** [adapted from *Wooster City Schools Summer Assignment*]

-Journal #1—(pre-reading) Do you have any skeletons in your closet? Have you ever done something for which you cannot forgive yourself? What happened? What would it take for you to forgive yourself? If not, do you know anyone that carries the emotion of guilt with them? How do they act? Finally, what do you think the word *redemption* means?

-Journal #2—(corresponds with chapters 1-2) FIRST, read, reflect and respond to the following quotation: “The shifts of Fortune test the reliability of friends” (Cicero). How would you assess yourself as a friend? How conditional is your friendship with others? If you were out of line, would you want your friend to stick by your side or set you straight? Focus on one of your most important friendships, and evaluate why the friendship works (or does not). **SECOND**, read, reflect and respond to the following quote from journalist Charley Reese: “If malice or envy were tangible and had a shape, it would be the shape of a boomerang.” Have you experienced the emotion of jealousy? What does it feel like (physically)? Of what or whom were you jealous? Do you think jealousy is a healthy emotion? Why or why not?

-Journal #3—(corresponds with chapters 3-7) John Lennon once stated, “How you spend your days is how you spend your life.” Every thought in your head will ultimately turn into a choice, and every choice, in turn, evolves into action. Pretty much, every moment makes up who we are as individuals. Connect this with your daily life: Have you ever stayed silent about an issue/conflict when you should have spoken up or intervened? Have you ever witnessed a conflict, and though you knew it was wrong, you chose to stay out of it? Why? What were the repercussions of your choice to stay silent? (Please leave out all names.)

-Journal #4—(corresponds with chapters 8-10) Please read, reflect and respond to the following quote: “The guilty think all talk is of themselves” (Chaucer). How does this quotation relate to Amir’s thoughts and actions in chapters 8 and 9? Have you ever felt the emotion of guilt? What did it feel like? Have you done anything to redeem yourself and make the guilt vanish – or do you still carry the guilt around with you? Explain.

-Journal #5—(corresponds with chapters 11-13) When your parent/guardian is proud of you, how does he/she show pride? Is he/she obvious in the expression of pride (hugs, exchange of words, money), or is he/she more subtle? Why might a parent choose not to reward their son/daughter at every proud moment? Imagine yourself years from now: what kind of parent will you be—at every turn bestowing your child with a “high-five” or carefully choosing your moments to reveal your pride? Why? Explain.

-Journal #6—(corresponds with chapters 14-19) Rahim Kahn says to Amir, “...a boy who won’t stand up for himself becomes a man who can’t stand up for anything. I wonder, is that what you’ve become?” (Hosseini 221). As readers, we are aware that Amir feels guilt over what happened to Hassan over 26 years ago. However, has Amir become a man who can’t stand up for anything? Why or why not? Explain, using textual evidence to support your answer (minimum ONE quotation).

-Journal #7—(corresponds with chapters 20-22) Read, reflect and respond to the following quotation from Chapter 22: “...for the first time since the winter of 1975, I felt at peace. I laughed because I saw that, in some hidden nook in the corner of my mind, I’d even been looking forward to this”(Hosseini 289). How does Amir finally redeem himself? What does redemption mean and how important is this quality in the world today?

-Journal #8—(corresponds with chapters 23-25) FIRST, write a working definition of “love.” Then, in light of your working definition, do you believe that Amir truly loves Hassan? For that matter, do Amir and Baba love each other? We all have different interpretations of love, and how we express that love varies from person to person and from situation to situation. Please provide textual evidence that supports your interpretation that Amir does or does not love Hassan and Baba.

-[REQUIRED]Journal #9—(after reading the book in its entirety)

- Every great novel teaches. The lessons novels teach can be uniquely personal and far reaching. Consider Amir’s and Hassan’s story, all of the lives of the characters that are woven throughout the tale. What specific lesson learned (theme) came from the reading of this book? Why was that lesson learned important to real-life now and in the future? What types of people would value most from learning this lesson? What character really helped you realize this lesson?

Due Date: September 8, 2022 (this assignment is due along with a reading quiz over objective information from the text)

Feel free to email me if you have any questions: angela-tran@scusd.edu

Looking forward to meeting all of you and enjoying a new school year together! <3--Mrs. Tran

****Chapter 7 synopsis**** The day that Hassan and Amir prepared for, the kite competition day, arrives and Amir's kite is one of the last two flying kites. When Amir cuts the last Kite, Hassan runs to retrieve it. Hassan and Assef (along with Assef's crew) both arrive in the alleyway where the last kite has fallen. Assef wants the kite and Hassan refuses to give it up. At this point, Assef sexually assaults Hassan. Amir watches the whole interaction, too afraid to step in. Amir ultimately runs away. This scene is the pivotal moment that ends up defining all interactions following this chapter.

Mrs. Tran's note: Chapter 7 involves one scene which depicts sexual violence against one of the main characters. While Hosseini does not magnify this moment, he does use detail that some may find disturbing. This moment is instrumental in Amir's evolution as a character. It is a moment that follows Amir throughout his whole life and illuminates, for the reader, the mental and emotional toll abuse takes on both the victim and the bystander. The abuse in this scene is taken very seriously and as a class we look at it through a lens of disgust and compassion and with the intent to help us better understand others in our real-world. Literature's ability (even during hard to read moments) to move and change people should not be overlooked—Hosseini's novel is one that I've found does just that.