

English Department Summer Assignment - 2016

Course: Honors Literary Genres

Grade: 9

Level: 3

Instructor: Mrs. Verna Allworth (vallworth@rdhs.org)

SUMMER ASSIGNMENT #1

What to Read: *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho (Choose print or electronic copy of the novel)

Assignment: *The Alchemist* is both simple and profound in its storytelling. This brief novel will support our study of mythology, heroes, and journeys, while reminding us of the power of personal dreams.

1. As you read, **highlight and annotate important passages.**
2. Answer each of the following questions in a **7-10 sentence paragraph** with specific details from the story. **Quote a direct passage** from the novel to support and develop your response and use an in-text citation.

A. THE SYMBOLISM: What is “alchemy” and how is it used as an *extended metaphor* in the novel?

B. THE CONFLICTS: Describe one of the conflicts Santiago overcomes and the resources he uses to do so. Is this conflict internal or external? In general, do the obstacles he encounters keep him from or push him toward his ultimate goal?

C. THE SUPPORTING CHARACTERS: How do other characters help and/or hinder Santiago's journey? Choose two characters to discuss. At times, he is without companionship, so is he stronger or weaker when alone?

D. THE JOURNEY MOTIF: Why is it significant that Santiago's treasure was buried in the exact place where his journey began? What then was the purpose of Santiago's journey?

Requirements and Due Date: Be prepared for a comprehension test on the novel during the second week of school. All assignments are to be typed (double spaced and 12 pt.) and ready to submit on the first day of class. For additional assistance for writing, grammar or formatting your essay, use Purdue University's OWL Online Writing Lab at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.

When using a direct quote from the book, follow the example for proper citation:

QUOTE AND CITATION EXAMPLE (Note the placement of the end mark):

“Looking around, he sought his sheep, and then realized that he was in a new world” (Coelho 44).

SUMMER ASSIGNMENT #2

What to Read: *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel (Choose print or electronic copy of the novel)

NOTE: Watching the movie will not be adequate preparation for the type of close textual analysis for which you will be held accountable.

Assignment: *Life of Pi* “combines the best sort of storytelling with a profound perspective on life's most compelling themes: **faith and truth, man versus nature, science and religion, and innocence and experience.**” Harcourt Books

1. As you read, **highlight and annotate important passages and plot/character development.** In addition, mark in the text examples of **similes, metaphors, personification, and allusion.**
2. Choose **one of the four themes** mentioned in the quotation from Harcourt Books and explain how the author addresses that theme in the novel. Write an **extended paragraph response** (10+ sentences) that begins with a topic sentence, develops and supports the topic sentence with several examples from the novel, includes one direct quotation and in-text citation, and ends with a thoughtful concluding sentence.
3. Choose **one of the following essay prompts.** Write a multi-paragraph essay response in which you reference specific episodes and use direct quotations from the novel to showcase your critical reading and analysis as well as your ability to see the “big picture” in a literary work. Both of these prompts have been adapted from the College Board and were used in previous AP Literature exams.

SACRIFICE AND VALUES: It has often been said that what we value can be determined by what we sacrifice. Consider how this statement applies to Pi and what he has sacrificed, surrendered, or forfeited. Consider how his experience highlights his values and provides a deeper understanding of the meaning of the novel as a whole.

A CHARACTER IN EXILE: Palestinian American literary theorist and cultural critic Edward Said has written that “Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted.” Yet Said has also said that exile can become “a potent, even enriching” experience. Consider how Pi’s experience with “exile” is both alienating and enriching. Consider how his experience highlights his growth as an individual and provides a deeper understanding of the meaning of the novel as a whole.

Requirements and Due Date: Be prepared for a comprehension test on the novel during the first week of school. All assignments are to be typed (double spaced and 12 pt.) and ready to submit on the first day of class. For additional assistance for writing, grammar or formatting your essay, use Purdue University’s OWL Online Writing Lab at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.

When using a direct quote from the book, follow the example for *The Alchemist* and just change the author’s name.