

Honors English 11 Summer Reading Assignments

You are required to **read two** of the following books this summer:

Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien

The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger

A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams

Native Son by Richard Wright

For **one** book, complete the quote assignment from the attached handout. The assignment is due the first day of class. All summer reading assignments will be due the first day of school even if the student does not have English first term.

For **the other book**, you will be writing an in-class essay during the first week of class to assess your careful consideration of ideas presented in the book. You will receive essay prompts on the first day of class, discuss the prompts on the second day of class, and write the essay on the third day of class. You will have 60 minutes to write an essay that should include textual support as evidence of your ideas.

To prepare for your essay, think about the following questions as you read your books.

Three Cups of Tea

- How is the idea of compassion expressed in Mortenson's experience?
- Why does Mortenson build a school for girls? Why is there such a need for education of women in the culture?
- How much difference can one person make in such a huge world?
- How can we better overcome cultural divides?

The Things They Carried

- How is the idea of "carrying" present in the book?
- What is the best way to tell a story? How important is storytelling to our lives?
- Why does O'Brien make the distinction between the author Tim O'Brien and the character in the stories named Tim O'Brien? And why does he sometimes refer to himself as Timmy?
- What role do women play in the war story?
- Why is the last story's focus not on the war?
- How should a person deal with guilt and shame?

The Catcher in the Rye

- What is it like for Holden to be a teenager transforming from childhood to adulthood? Is your experience similar to Holden's?
- What exactly *is* a "catcher in the rye"? Why does Salinger choose this title for the book?
- What does Holden's attitude about his three siblings reveal about him as a character?
- Is Holden a "madman"?
- What significance do the places Holden visits hold to the book?
- What role does the desire for companionship and intimacy play in the book?
- Notice the times Holden talks about things that go away or disappear.

A Streetcar Named Desire

- Why does Williams choose the epigraph at the beginning of the play? Who wrote it? How does it relate to the play?
- What is the relationship of desire and death?
- Why do Blanche and Stanley hate each other so much?
- How are music and light used in the play?
- If Blanche and Stella are sisters, how did they become so different as adults?
- Notice instances of traditionalism, defiance, and dependence on men in the story.
- What is Williams trying to say about fantasy and reality?

Native Son

- What does Bigger's violence do for him in his life?
- What purpose does the scene involving the rat at the beginning of the novel play?
- Notice different instances and types of blindness in the novel. Is there more than one type of blindness?
- In what ways is Bigger a victim?

**English 11 Honors
Summer Reading
The Quote Assignment**

Honor students must read two book during the summer. This project is for ONE book of the student's choice. This sheet with all attachments must be turned in on your first day of school even if you don't have English first term. If you lose your sheet, you may pick one up from the front office.

Lesson

All authors tell the reader about each character's personality two ways – either directly or indirectly. With direct characterization the author will come right out and say what he wants you to know: "The boy was a bully." With indirect characterization the author give you hints or infers character in more subtle ways. Here are listed seven ways that an author shows character indirectly.

1. Character's name – Brom Bones in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (Headless Horseman) was a big bully, strong enough to break bones and scare Icabod.
2. Character's appearance – What does that scar on the man's cheek mean? What do the woman's diamonds tell you? Will the teen get the job if his pants are sagging?
3. What the character says
4. What the character does
5. What the character thinks
6. What other characters think or say about that character
7. The way animals react to that character – Toto let you know right away who the bad witch was. Moby Dick didn't like Ahab any more than Ahab like him.
- 8.

Assignment

For the one book that you choose for this project, select four (4) characters of importance. Find three (3) quotes for each character from the book that tell the reader about the character's personality. That means that you will explain twelve quotes that directly or indirectly show character.

1. Write the name of the character.
2. Put the page number of the quote.
3. Who said the quote? Name the character or say "narrator" if the words are not in quotes on the novel page.
4. Copy the quote word for word, using quotations marks at the start and finish and ellipsis points for omitted words that are not needed.
5. Explain in a few sentences what the significance of the quote is in conveying to the reader what the author wants the reader to know about the character.
6. Explain why that character trait is important to the story.

Example

A Streetcar Named Desire

Student Name (on each sheet)

1. Character – Blanche DuBois
2. Page 142
3. Speaker – Blanche DuBois
4. "...I have always depended on the kindness of strangers."
5. The author wants the reader to know that Blanche has always expected people, even strangers, to treat her like the Southern belle that she envisions herself to be. She acts as if she is from a wealthy high society family of the South. There may have been a little truth to that when she was young, but not now. She even needs a place to live.
6. Blanche expects people to take care of her. She wants men to still go by the old rules of genteel Southern etiquette: They should kindly stand when she enters the room.