

Academy of the Sacred Heart
Summer Reading Assignments 2010-2011

English IV

Mrs. Rosen

Introduction: World Literature is a survey of the literary forms and genres from around the world. Next year we will study literary themes and forms by writers from Russia, Germany, India, United Kingdom, France, Eastern Europe, and nations of the Middle East and Africa. This summer reading assignment is meant to introduce students to contemporary versions of the *Bildungsroman*; stories about a particular character's journey of self-development. It will also serve as the basis for our first unit of study dealing with narrative forms and the individual.

Directions

During the summer, all students enrolled in English IV must read *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini and **answer the attached questions about the book.** Students must also watch the film *Persepolis* based on the novel by Marjane Satrapi **and answer the attached questions about the movie.**

When school begins, students will write an essay and take a test based on this assignment.

Students must bring their completed work and the book to the first English class. The summer reading essay will require citations, so students should have personal copies of the books so that they can use it as a source.

Grading

The questions will be graded for completion and evident effort. Students who answer all questions fully and thoughtfully and who follow all directions will receive full credit.

These questions will be used to facilitate discussion and to prepare for the essay about the summer reading.

Book

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

Movie

Persepolis directed by Vincent Paronnaud and Marjane Satrapi

This film is available for rental through Netflix, Blockbuster, and as a download rental through i-Tunes.

Student's Name: _____

Questions for *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

"Afghans like to say: Life goes on, unmindful of beginning, end...crisis or catharsis, moving forward like a slow, dusty caravan of kochis [nomads]." from *The Kite Runner*

1. The novel begins with Amir's memory of peering down an alley, looking for Hassan who is kite running for him. As Amir peers into the alley, he witnesses a tragedy. The novel ends with Amir kite running for Hassan's son, Sohrab, as he begins a new life with Amir in America. Why do you think the author chooses to frame the novel with these scenes?
2. We begin to understand early in the novel that Amir is constantly vying for Baba's attention and often feels like an outsider in his father's life, as seen in the following passage: "He'd close the door, leave me to wonder why it was always grown-ups time with him. I'd sit by the door, knees drawn to my chest. Sometimes I sat there for an hour, sometimes two, listening to their laughter, their chatter." Discuss Amir's relationship with Baba.
3. Why is Baba disappointed by Amir's decision to become a writer? During their argument about his career path, Amir thinks to himself: "I would stand my ground, I decided. I didn't want to sacrifice for Baba anymore. The last time I had done that, I had damned myself." What has Amir sacrificed for Baba? How has Amir "damned himself"?
4. While in the hospital in Peshawar, Amir has a dream in which he sees his father wrestling a bear: "They role over a patch of grass, man and beast...they fall to the ground with a loud thud and Baba is sitting on the bear's chest, his fingers digging in its snout. He looks up at me, and I see. He's me. I am wrestling the bear." Why is this dream so important at this point in the story? What does this dream finally help Amir realize?
5. Throughout the story, Baba worries because Amir never stands up for himself. When does this change?
6. How do the ever changing politics of Afghanistan affect each of the characters?
7. Baba and Amir know that they are very different people. Often it disappoints both of them that Amir is not the son that Baba has hoped for. When Amir finds out that Baba has lied to him about Hassan, he realizes that "as it turned out, Baba and I were more alike than I'd never known." How does this make Amir feel about his father? How is this both a negative and positive realization?

Student Name: _____

Questions for *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi

1. What social and cultural issues focus shape Marjane's growth and development throughout the film? Use examples to support your answer.
2. What are some of the key differences between the culture in which Marjane was raised and the Western culture into which she tries to assimilate after she moves to Austria?
3. American writer William Zinsser has written that "humor is the writer's armor against the hard emotions." What instances of humor stand out to you? Why?
4. In **Persepolis** Satrapi tells many people's stories besides her own--her mother's memories of visiting her own father in prison, Anoosh's story of his Uncle Fereydoon, and others. How are these stories related to her own? What value does Satrapi attribute to storytelling?
5. How are the personal stories of individual citizens related to the history of their nation?
6. Who are the heroes of Satrapi's story? And what makes them heroic? How do Marjane's ideas about heroism change in the course of her narrative?
7. Tone, point of view, irony, characterization are elements of narrative. *Persepolis* is not only a film but an animated film. How does Satrape use traditional elements of fiction to tell the story of her life?