

Ninth Grade Summer Reading Assignment
Homer, *The Iliad*, Books 1-6 ONLY

Turn this in the first day of school with your name on it.

Note: The Greeks are interchangeably referred to Achaeans, Argives and Danaans.

1. Look up the following terms and write a brief definition.

- a. Epithet _____
 - b. Patronymic _____
 - c. Homeric Simile _____
- _____
- _____

2. Mark at least six similes by drawing a vertical line in the margin of your book next to the simile.

3. As you read, underline epithets and patronymics (which sometimes end in 'ides') in the text. Write down one or two of those for each of the following characters. Feel free to use the glossary in the back of the book for help.

Achilles _____

Agamemnon _____

Menelaus _____

Apollo _____

Athena _____

Hera _____

Zeus _____

Thetis _____

Nestor _____

Odysseus _____

Hector _____

Ajax (1) _____

Ajax (2) _____

Book I

4. An epic proem introduces the epic and tells the reader very succinctly what the poem is about. In the *Iliad*, the proem is Book I, lines 1-8. What does the proem tell us this epic is about?

5. Why is Apollo angry?

6. Why does Achilles get angry?

7. Why does Agamemnon get angry?

8. What is the result of all this anger (by the end of Book I)?

Book II

9. What dream does Zeus send to Agamemnon, what are its consequences and how is the problem resolved?

Book III

10. What impression do you get of Helen in Book III? What kind of person is she? How does she feel about the situation?

11. What is your impression of Paris in Book III?

Book IV

12. What happens at the council of the gods? What is revealed about the fates of the Greeks and the Trojans and about the gods' involvement in human affairs?

Book V

13. In what ways do the gods get involved in the fighting? Do there seem to be limits to their interference?

Book VI

14. What is Paris' great flaw? What effect is this having on Troy?

15. How is Hector contrasted with Paris? What are Hector's good qualities?

Omnibus V Summer Reading Assignment:

The Discarded Image by C.S. Lewis

*“Frequent researches ad hoc sadly impair receptive reading, so that sensitive people may even come to regard scholarship as a baleful thing which is always taking you **out of** the literature itself. My hope was that if a tolerable (though very incomplete) outfit were acquired before and taken along with one, it might lead **in.**”*

Background: *The Discarded Image* is based on a series of introductory lectures that C.S. Lewis gave while he was a professor of medieval literature at the University of Oxford. Because their purpose was to give students a basic understanding of the medieval worldview before diving into reading medieval literature proper, this book provides the perfect introduction to our own study of the Middle Ages.

Directions: I would recommend thinking of the text as a series of lectures, instead of treating it as one continuous narrative. Read a chapter, then stop, reflect, and answer the question ascribed to that chapter with a short response (3-4 sentences) on a separate piece of paper. (If using notebook paper, skip lines. If typing your answers, use Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced.) Once you have done that, feel free to move on to the next “lecture” (chapter).

Do not feel as though you need to understand every reference Lewis makes—many of the texts he mentions are ones we will encounter over the course of our year—but rather, focus on attempting to understand the Medieval Mind and how it differs from our own Modern perspective of the world.

Questions:

Chapter 1 – Explain what Lewis means when he refers to “the overwhelmingly bookish and clerkly character of the Middle Ages.”

Chapter 2 – If the medieval Model being outlined by Lewis primarily influenced poets, what classes/groups of people were less intellectually interested in it? Why?

Chapter 3 – Summarize the importance of *one* of the four Classical sources Lewis elucidates in this chapter: (a) Cicero’s ‘Dream of Scipio’, (b) the works of Lucan, (c) the works of Statius, or (d) Apuleius’s ‘On the God of Socrates’.

Chapter 4 – Why is it often difficult to tell whether authors writing during the “Seminal Period” were Pagans or Christians?

Chapter 5 – After reading the entire chapter, take Lewis’s advice. “Go out on a starry night and walk about for half an hour trying to see the sky in terms of the old cosmology.” How does

imagining the cosmos as the medievals did (the overall structure, luminosity of the heavens, music of the spheres, influence and personalities of planetary beings, etc.) change the way you think about the universe and our place in it?

Chapter 6 – How was the medieval idea of “Fairy” different from the nursery-rhyme version of fairies we commonly think of today?

Chapter 7 – Choose one of the following questions to answer:

- (a) When considering the sections on medieval geography and zoology, how does what the medievals *knew* to be true (i.e. the “facts,” as we understand them) differ from what they *said* about these subjects (as in the *mappemounde* or medieval bestiaries)? What accounts for that difference?
- (b) Describe the structure of the tripartite (three-part) soul and the function of each part.
- (c) What is the medieval understanding of history, and how does it differ from the classical understanding?

Chapter 8 – How do the Model and the medieval faith in *anctors* contribute to Lewis’s claim that “a certain humility [is] the overall characteristic of medieval art”?

I hope you all enjoy Lewis’s fascinating introduction to what is undeniably the **best** period of Western history (but, I’m not biased or anything...), and I look forward to meeting you all in the Fall.

Have a great summer!

~ Miss Atwood

Directions: Answer each of the following questions in (short) paragraph form. Please consider **the whole question**, and then write a well-developed (doesn't have to be lengthy) and thoughtful paragraph to answer the entire question. The more thorough/detailed your answers the better your grade will be. **However, thorough and detailed answers are not necessarily the same as long answers: seek for substance rather than length.** At times I have provided parenthetical comments to guide you in answering the questions or to guide you in recognizing important details in each chapter – make sure to read these comments, but there is no need to respond to them in written form. Choose **15 of the following 25 questions to answer . . . you may not just choose the first 15.**

Title and Epigraph:

The following is the full text of the poem Chinua Achebe alludes to in both the title and epigraph of his novel *Things Fall Apart*. Consider why Achebe would have chosen this particular poem to title his work – what themes or ideas are common between the poem and the novel? (No written response needed.)

The Second Coming

W B Yeats, 1919

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: a waste of desert sand;
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Wind shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

Chapter One:

1. Identify the characters of Okonkwo and Unoka. Select at least two quotes from chapter one which depict various aspects of his character (physical traits, personality, attitudes or ideas).

Chapter Two:

2. Who/what is the Oracle of the Hills and Caves and why is the Oracle important? Who is Ikemefuna and where is he to live while he's in Umuofia?

Chapter Three:

3. What occurs when Okonkwo and Unoka visit the Oracle of the Hills and Caves? Discuss what is revealed about Okonkwo's earlier years (hint: to whom is he particularly indebted?)

Chapter Four and Five:

4. Who is Ojiugo? What incident involving her causes Okonkwo to have to pay an enormous sacrifice? What exactly is the sacrifice he must pay? Why is his offense particularly serious at this time?

Chapter Six:

5. Who is Chielo and why is she important to the tribe? Additionally. What does the wrestling match and rhythmic drumming show about the Ibo?

Chapter Seven:

6. According to Ezeudu, what is it that “Umuofia has decided?” Then retell the incident involving Ikemefuna. (Who delivers the final death blow? What fear does this character have which would motivate him to do this? How does Nwoye react toward this event?)

Chapter Eight:

7. Who is Obierika? Describe his reaction to Okonkwo's involvement in the killing.

Chapters Nine and Ten:

8. Identify these terms and character – iba, ogbanje children, iyi-uwa, and Okabue, egugwu. What function do the egwugwu serve in the ceremony presented in this chapter?

Chapter Eleven:

9. Retell the folk tale Ekwefi tells about the Tortoise. What role does the Tortoise traditionally play in African folklore?

Chapter Twelve:

10. What is an uri? Describe the ceremony that takes places involving Akueke. Then describe Okonkwo's actions the night Chielo takes Ezinma. What do these actions demonstrate about his character?

Chapter Thirteen:

11. What tragedy occurs during Ezeudu's funeral? (Hint: Who is responsible? How is this crime categorized?) What is the punishment for Ezeudu's accidental death? (hint: Where does the guilty man go? How does he feel about this?)

Chapter Fourteen – Part Two:

12. What kind of reception does Okonkwo receive from his mother's people? Identify these main characters. What can we infer about women in the Ibo culture from the women's mourning song?

Chapter Fifteen:

13. In Okonkwo's second year of exile, Obierika visits him. What news about the village of Abame does he bring? (Also consider what role did the Oracle play in this decision?)

Chapter Sixteen:

14. In Okonkwo's fourth year of exile, Obierika visits Okonkwo a second time and tells him that Christian missionaries have arrived in Umuofia. Which important character is among the converts and what word do they use to describe the converts and what does it mean?

15. Although "it was not the mad logic of the Trinity that captivated him," three tribal traditions or incidents are sufficient to persuade Nwoye to follow the missionaries. What are these three things?

Chapter Seventeen:

16. What is Okonkwo's reaction to Nwoye when he enters his father's compound? In what way does Nwoye plot a "revenge." What fear does Onkonkwo express as he stares into the fire?

Chapter Eighteen and Nineteen:

17. Who/what are *osu*? Discuss the conflict surrounding their admission to the church.

18. What happens during the Easter week? What happens to Okoli? Why is the clan reassured by this?

Chapter Twenty – Part Three:

19. What reason do the villagers give for not just "kicking out" the white men? What does the land dispute and the subsequent hanging of Aneto show about the new government?

20. What is the function of Obierika’s statement that the white man “has put a knife on the things that held us together and **we have fallen apart**”? (Keep in mind this quotation echoes the title of the novel!)

Chapter Twenty-One and Twenty-Two:

21. Does Okonkwo’s return to Ibo society go as he planned? Why/why not?

Chapter Twenty-Three:

22. What occurs when the District Commissioner calls a meeting with the village’s six leaders? What must the tribe do to secure the release of the prisoners? (Also consider how the tribal leaders are treated while they are held prisoner – what is the worst insult to Onkonkwo?)

Chapter Twenty-Four:

23. Describe the debate at the town meeting. What are the two sides of the debate? Which characters seem to represent each viewpoint?

Chapter Twenty-Five:

24. What does Obierika request of the District Commissioner and his band of soldiers? Why won't the tribe take care of this? What is the title of the District Commissioner's book? Why is the inclusion of Okonkwo in his book ironic?

25. The life of Okonkwo ultimately ends in tragedy. However, Okonkwo's life can be viewed in a larger sense. What possibly could Okonkwo and his life stand for, represent, or symbolize in this larger sense?

12th Grade Summer Reading
Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*

Answer each of the following questions with 1-3 paragraph answers.
Be ready to discuss each on the first day of class.

Why does Hawthorne start with the Custom House introduction? What does it add to the story?
How does it frame the events of the 17th century story?

Describe Pearl. How does her mother view her? How do the townspeople? How do you as a reader?

How does Dimmesdale react to what happened to Hester? Why?

Why does Hester decide to tell Dimmesdale? Why hadn't she before?

What drives Chillingworth? Who is to blame for what he has become?

Before the final reveal, all of Hester's and Dimmesdale's choices seem wrong? What choice should they make? Why?

How does Dimmesdale escape Chillingworth's revenge?

Why does Hester come back?

What did you think of this book? Did you like it? What did you learn from it? What do you wish were different about it? Would you recommend it?