

Marion High School
Pre-AP English 10
Summer Assignment

The 2017 summer reading assignment for Pre-AP English 10 is *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton. The story is set in South Africa during a time of political and racial unrest. It is a novel rich in character and content. From this novel, you will learn about an important period in world history not covered in any other course at Marion High School. Any questions that you may have can be directed to Ms. Brinkley @ LBrinkley@msd3.org.

Your assignment is as follows:

- Complete a **thorough read** of the text.
- Complete a **dialectical journal** as you read to record your responses to the text. (Please see directions for this assignment on the following pages.)
- Complete a **well-written essay** on one or more of the themes present in the story using your dialectical journals and the text for reference. Choose **ONE** of the four listed essay prompts below. Your paper should be between 1 – 2 pages in length. It needs to be typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins, using 12 point font. Make sure you use evidence from the text to back up your opinion. Evidence cited should use **MLA format**.
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/08/>

Essay Prompts:

1. In what ways does *Cry, the Beloved Country* go beyond its South African settings to become a novel about problems fundamental to all human beings? Consider the themes present and how they extend beyond the text and apply to the world as a whole.
2. Trace the themes of confession, repentance, forgiveness, and redemption in the novel. What point is the author trying to make and to whom (specific audience) might he be making them?
3. In *Cry, the Beloved Country*, two brothers, John and Stephen Kumalo, have distinctly different values, although they are of the same family. What point is the author, Alan Paton, trying to make through his comparison of John Kumalo and Stephen Kumalo about this topic?
4. How does the setting of South Africa, during a period of racial and political unrest, help the reader become a more sensitive reader of the characters, motifs, and themes of *Cry, the Beloved Country*?

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Dialectical Journal Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton

What is it?

Dialectical journals consist of daily entries in which you record your responses to a particular text. You must read, record that reading, and create an entry. Your responses should be honest, insightful, and show an obvious effort to connect with or better understand the text.

How it works:

As you are reading, be aware of how your brain is processing the information; this “awareness of thought” is called metacognition. Your mental pictures, connections, questions, predictions, challenges, or even confusions are exactly what you need to record in your dialectical journals. This book demonstrates many aspects of humanity, particularly:

- Racial inequality and injustice that affects not only the minority, but society as a whole
- The use of fear to drive characters and society to behave irrationally
- How the allure of economic prosperity in urban areas forces assimilation and the loss of cultural and family values
- How widespread migration into urban areas forces minorities into extreme poverty at the benefit of the rich
- The use of religion as a unifying tool
- The power of forgiveness not only to heal an individual’s relationship but also heal conflicts within a society

To help you examine these elements, you will record examples of these themes and your critical and analytical response to them.

Directions:

- **Use the templates as your guide when completing your entries.**
- As you read and encounter an episode that strikes you, record a quotation (use ellipses...as needed) and the page number in the appropriate column.
- Beneath the quotation, write a few sentences explaining your reaction to the episode. In your responses, I will be looking for close-textual analysis (close reading of the language), connections to the text/ characters, questions about the text, characters, your beliefs, etc.
- Although some themes may be portrayed more extensively than others, you should have approximately 4 entries per theme (or 20 total entries).
- Your logs are due on the first day of school along with your essay.
- All logs must be typed – no hand-written entries will be accepted - plan accordingly.

Example from *Night* by Elie Wiesel:

Theme: Capacity for Evil

Quote	Response
“The Jews were made to get out. They were made to dig huge graves. And when they had finished their work, the Gestapo began theirs. Without passion, without haste, they slaughtered their prisoners...” (4).	This last line really bothers me. At what point do we stop thinking about what we are doing and “slaughter” without emotion, like it is just part of their daily job? How do humans become this desensitized? I think I could understand killing out of rage, but killing “without passion, without haste?” I just don’t get it...

Theme: Displays of Strength, Courage, and Dignity

Quote	Response
“I looked at my little sister Tzipora...a little girl of seven. The bundle on her back was too heavy for her. She gritted her teeth. She knew by now it would be useless to complain” (17).	It’s incredible to me how a seven year old could summon this much strength to keep moving, to recognize danger and seriousness of the situation. This makes me wonder what this little girl has witnessed. She obviously knows the consequences of giving up, and managers to stay brave. Tzipora, like many young children of the Holocaust, were forced to grow up way too early.

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Use the example above as a model to assist you in constructing your dialectical journal. Upon completion of the assignment, you should have 4 entries for each of the themes listed below, 20 entries total. A template is provided below.

Cry, The Beloved Country Themes:

- Racial Inequality & Injustice
- Fear
- Economic Prosperity v. Loss of Values
- Poverty
- Forgiveness

Cry, the Beloved Country Dialectical Journals

Theme: Racial Inequality & Injustice

Quote	Response

Theme: Fear

Quote	Response