



10th Grade English

2020-2021

Summer Assignment

Mr. Brooker

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Dear Student,

Welcome to 10th Grade English Literature. The next year will be a year where we dissect choices. Why did the author choose to tell this story? Why did the character act in this way? What detail should I choose to strengthen my argument? These are all small examples of the choices you will be making in the coming year.

But beyond those smaller ones, 10th grade is the start of making some big choices. That's because 10th grade is the start line to a very long race. Where will you go to college? What will you major in? What will your career be? Where do you want to live? How do you want to leave your mark in the world? It won't be long before you'll have to start answering those questions.

In order to help you face off with these "big picture ideas," we will be turning to a variety of great works through the year to see how authors have addressed these questions themselves.

To start off our journey together, you've got some summer work to do. First you have two books to read, but you will choose those books from a list I provide below. After reading, you will have two brief writing assignments based off of what you read – one is an essay and the other is an informal, creative assignment.

I welcome you to class, and I look forward to seeing you in the Fall!

Sincerely,
Brooker

Text Sets

When selecting your book, you may not choose a book you have already read. You'll be reading a total of 2 books. If you get about 50-70 pages into a book and really aren't feeling it, try a different book! The writing assignments appear on the following page.

Classic Set – choose one book from the following list

Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen (1811)

A story of class and culture, Austen chronicles the Dashwood sisters as they maneuver strict British society mores.

The Hunchback of Notre-Dame by Victor Hugo, any unabridged translation (1831)

The hunchback is but one interesting character you'll meet as you observe life around and in the famed Paris cathedral; don't expect a [Disney fairy tale](#).

Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented by Thomas Hardy (1891)

Set in the rural countryside of England, Tess hopes to simply get by and maybe find a bit of happiness. The last thing she ever expected was to fall in love.

O Pioneers! by Willa Cather (1913)

An enrapturing portrait of life on the Great Plains, Cather's novel stands out as a grounded depiction of the realities of life no matter where you live.

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald (1925)

It's the roaring 20's in the US and the world is great, [just great!](#) Nick Carraway, our protagonist, gets carried away by the never-ending party that is Jay Gatsby.

Modern Set – choose one book from the following set

Lord of the Flies by William Golding (1954)

A plane crashes on a deserted island, and the survivors, a group of boys, try to create their own society.

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe (1958)

In Achebe's masterpiece, we follow Okonkwo as Europeans come and colonize his village. The title *might* give you an idea of how that goes.

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison (1970)

Everyone keeps reminding Pecola how ugly she is, so she wishes to be beautiful like all the white people she sees.

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini (2003)

This novel follows two boys, Amir and Hassan, as they grow up in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Assignment #1

Prompt

Do we have a hand in our fate, or is our future determined by the situation and world we find ourselves in? That is a question that philosophers, religions, and all of mankind has been trying to solve through the ages. So which is it? Are our futures determined by the choices we make? Or does the world around us and the pressures it exerts have more control on us?

Directions

Write a brief argumentative essay where you argue whether our fates are a result of our choices or outside pressures we have no control over. To argue your point, choose one of the books you read as an example. Explain how the main character, or one of the main characters, is an example of what you are arguing. Refer to the text frequently to prove your point; avoid mere summary or paraphrase.

Type your essay in 12 pt, Times New Roman font, double-spaced. This will be due the first Friday of class. Whichever book you choose for Assignment #1 cannot be used for Assignment #2.

Assignment #2

Prompt

We've all made mistakes, right? What if you had someone you trusted give you some advice that allowed you to dodge a bullet? Would you have taken that advice? The hardest part of advice is we tend to ignore it, especially if we've already "made up our minds." So what would it have taken to convince you to avoid your mistake?

Directions

Choose a book from the text set above and write a letter to the main character, or one of the main characters, as if they knew you and were close to you. Choose a specific "bad" choice the character makes in the book and try to convince them not to make that choice.

For the purposes of this assignment, you will need to pretend you are a part of the book; consequently, you can't acknowledge what happens because of the choice the character makes. Instead, provide advice based off of what you know about the character and the world they live in. Immerse yourself in their world and try to steer your friend in a better direction.

Type your letter in 12 pt, Times New Roman font, double-spaced. This will be due the first Friday of class. Whichever book you choose for Assignment #2 cannot be used for Assignment #1.