



# **10<sup>th</sup> Grade English**

2023-2024

*Summer Assignment*

Mr. Shepherd

**Dear Student,**

Welcome to 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English. 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.

Find a book you enjoy from the list I have provided. My advice is to read twenty to thirty minutes a day over the course of summer. Look at the prompts that have been provided. These guiding questions will help you to investigate the plot and characters in your book. I look forward to meeting all of you in the fall.

Your teacher, Mr Shepherd

## 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.*

*Please note some of these texts may have mature scenes, themes, or language. Talk to Mr. Brooker if you have any questions about any of the texts.*

**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.

*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.

*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](#). Hint: the main character is the cathedral.

*A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens (1859)

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. Dickens chronicles a personal story in two remarkable cities going through remarkable historic shifts.

*The Last of the Moheicans* by James Fenimore Cooper (1826)

Set in the early days of colonization in North America when France and Great Britain battled for control over the continent. Nestled in these larger historic events, a smaller human story of survival and prejudice emerges.

*The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexander Dumas, any unabridged translation (1846) The traditional revenge tale: a man is falsely imprisoned and everything is taken from him. What's more impressive are the lengths he goes through to get it all back.

**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.

*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.

*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.

*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 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

10 points

## *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**

10 points

### ***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.