

**AP ENGLISH LITERATURE  
SUMMER READING 2009**

*Nota bene ("Note well"):* Summer reading is intended to not only keep the brain active, but it is also intended to introduce another piece of literature to read/study/analyze for possible use on the AP Exam in May 2010.

**Please know that this assignment description and worksheet will be available online through the school's website. It will be available in multiple locations, so if, by chance, you lose this sheet, please look for it on the school's website [www.choctawindians.net](http://www.choctawindians.net).**

**Also, feel free to contact Mrs. Hesse or Mrs. Outlaw:**

**Mrs. Hesse:** [HesseC@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us](mailto:HesseC@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us)

**Mrs. Outlaw:** [Outlawl@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us](mailto:Outlawl@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us)

<b>DUE DATE: Friday, AUGUST 28, 2009, at the beginning of class!</b>
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**ASSIGNMENT**

This summer, read ONE (1) book for AP English Literature. You have the choice of reading one of Amy Tan or Cormac McCarthy's novels—see choices below. Look over the [Analyzing Literature Guide](#) that you are to complete. It is highly recommended that you understand what to look for BEFORE reading because going back into the novel to mark or highlight will be much more work!

**Choice #1: *The Bonesetter's Daughter* by Amy Tan -- Synopsis**

*The Bonesetter's Daughter*, published in 2001, is Amy Tan's fourth novel. Like much of her work, this novel deals with the relationship between an American-born Chinese woman and her immigrant mother. **It** is divided into two major stories. The first is about Ruth, a Chinese-American woman living in San Francisco. She worries that her elderly mother, LuLing, is gradually becoming more and more demented. LuLing seems increasingly forgetful, and makes bizarre comments about her family and her own past. The second major story is that of LuLing herself, as written for Ruth. Several years earlier, LuLing had written out her life story in Chinese. Ruth arranges to have the document translated, and learns the truth about her mother's life in China.

**Choice #2: *The Kitchen God's Wife* by Amy Tan -- Synopsis:**

Winnie and Helen, lifelong friends, have kept each other's secrets for more than fifty years. When Helen decides it's time to reveal the truth, Winnie knows that she must first tell her daughter, Pearl, about her past--including something terrible that even Helen does not know. And so begins the story of Winnie's journey--from a small island outside Shanghai in the 1920's, across a ravaged China during World War II, and eventually to the United States. A striking portrait of a courageous woman and a tale that celebrates the bond between mother and daughter, *The Kitchen God's Wife* is the work of a master storyteller.

**Choice #3: *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy -- Synopsis:**

*The Road* is an unflinching meditation on the worst and the best that we are capable of: ultimate destructiveness, desperate tenacity, and the tenderness that keeps two people alive in the face of total devastation. Set in the smoking ashes of a post-apocalyptic America, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* tells the story of a father-son journey toward the sea and an uncertain salvation. Some of the universal questions addressed are: What destroyed the world? How far would you go to protect your child's life? What is the difference between "good guys" and "bad guys"?

**Choice #4: *All the Pretty Horses* by Cormac McCarthy -- Synopsis:**

*All the Pretty Horses* is a coming of age tale that is a departure from the bizarre richness and mysterious violence of his early novels, yet in many ways preserves the mystery and the richness in a more understated form. In the spring of 1948 on a small Texas ranch, sixteen year old John Grady Cole attends the funeral of his grandfather, with whom he has lived since his parents' separation. The grandfather's ranch has been left to John Grady's mother, a small-time actress who has no interest in it and will sell it. John Grady's father, psychologically damaged by World War II and now physically ill as well, tells his son goodbye. With no apparent future in Texas, and sensing the threat of the new era to the traditional life he values, John Grady urges his old friend Rawlins to accompany him to Mexico. There, John Grady finds that his innocence, or ignorance, ultimately leads him closer to destruction.

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Once you have selected the novel you wish to read and are ready to begin reading, view the Analyzing Literature Guide assignment. Note that the Analyzing Literature Guide is to be typed. Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- 12 pt, Times New Roman Font
- 1 inch margins on top, bottom, left and right sides
- Make a cover page that includes your name, date, class with teacher and work read
- Include your last name and number at the top right corner of each page

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**Analyzing Literature Guide**

Directions: Answer each of the questions presented in the following categories. Answer the questions in a format that makes sense to you, but no matter what, include evidence in the form of **direct quotations** from the novel to support your statements and include page numbers. Also, please italicize all quotations—this makes it easier to “see” your evidence.

**I. SETTING**

1. Historic time, place, and social background.
2. Notice how the setting is presented. Is it presented in a photographic detail, impressionistically, indirectly through thoughts and actions?
3. How does the setting contribute to the meaning of the story?

**II-PLOT**

1. Write a brief plot synopsis. BE BRIEF! No more than a paragraph!
2. How much time does the action cover? How does the author treat time gaps?
3. Are beginning, middle, and end well-defined?
4. What is/are the nature of the conflict(s) presented?
5. What dilemmas, irony, or foreshadowing are shown?
6. Which are the most interesting, striking or important scenes? Refer to them specifically, describe them briefly and give your reasons for selecting them.
7. What events or details are repeated?

**III-CHARACTERS**

1. In one or two sentences, sum up the appearances and traits of each character.

2. Which characters change during the story? For better or worse?
3. Are the characters "round" or "flat"?
4. What does each character want? What are their goals? Do they clearly understand their basic desires?
5. Does each character have a function? Are minor characters interesting?
6. How are the principal characters presented? Author's description and comment? By representation of the thoughts and actions of the characters themselves? By observations and comments of the other characters?
7. Are characters and their acts realistic? Plausible?
8. Which have the author's sympathy? Antipathy?

#### IV-POINT OF VIEW

1. Is the dialogue used appropriate to the speakers?
2. Is action rendered by dialogue or description?
3. From what point of view is the story told (Omniscient, First Person, etc.)? Is the point of view consistent?
4. Copy some of the striking sentences that you consider full of meaning or particularly remarkable for their freshness of statement.

#### V-SYMBOLS

1. What are the major images, i.e. "pictures," presented in the work?
2. What do these images symbolize?
3. What other possible symbolic meanings do they hold?
4. How do you know what these images symbolize?
5. How do these symbols illuminate character? How do they illuminate the work as a whole?

#### VI-STYLE

1. How would you describe the author's style? Simple and clear-cut, complex, smooth and graceful, abrupt and harsh, poetic? Richly suggestive and implying much, lean and direct?
2. Does the author's style have individuality? Could a book of his be recognized by style alone?

#### VII-MOTIF/IDEAS

1. What thoughts occupy the mind of the characters?
2. What ideas do the characters discuss?
3. What ideas does the author interpose?
4. What ideas are suggested by the work as a whole through its various parts, i.e., through plot, imagery, setting, characters, etc.?

#### VIII-THEME

1. Is this primarily a work of character, action, setting (environment), ethics of ideas?
2. What is the theme or "core of meaning" of the work? Do all the elements support that meaning? Are there other comments of significance, i.e., minor themes?
3. Does the author raise questions or try to solve them?

#### **GRADING**

You will be given a summer reading assignment grade based on the Analyzing Literature Guide (ALG). The ALG will be graded using a rubric that will look at your analysis of each of the 8 sections, your **use of evidence**, and finally grammar/mechanics overall. It will be worth 100 pts.

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