

Summer Reading Study Guide:

***The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini**

Welcome to Honors English 10! I am looking forward to meeting you in August!

The Summer Reading program, sponsored by the English Department at Padua Franciscan High School, is designed to entice students to read and recognize notable contemporary literature. We wish to engage student interest, encourage critical thinking, and challenge our students as readers. As such, some titles on the list may contain sensitive material and deal with more mature themes than some students may have encountered previously. The target audience of all the selected literature is young adults; moreover, the title selections for the Honors English courses are chosen in accordance with the AP program. Students are encouraged to find more information about all of the novels through the local library or through amazon.com. Additionally, the English Department strongly encourages students and parents/guardians to discuss the content, themes, and overall inherent literary value of the selected novels. Happy Reading!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Meghan Schepis

Note: In addition to your novel selection for the Bruins Big Read community day, as honors students, you are also expected to read and analyze *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini.

Directions: Below are 8 analysis and reflection questions on *The Kite Runner*. You are to choose 4 to answer for this assignment. (Please indicate the number when you provide your response.) Please note: your answers should go beyond mere summary; I am looking for you to *prove* your answers with support from the novel, as well. Thus, your responses should represent thorough explication of the question itself **AND** be accompanied by **at least one direct quotation**, if not more, properly cited, as evidence of your response. Be sure to cite that support according to MLA format!

Scoring: Summer Reading questions will be taken for approximately 40 points at the beginning of the school year (approximately 10 points per response). As such, I expect these questions to be both neat and professional when you turn them in. Therefore, please type (double-space!) your answers and set up your paper according to MLA formatting rules. You are not required to type out the questions for inclusion in your paper, but if that helps you, you are more than welcome to.

If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me at mschepis@paduafranciscan.net. Good luck!

1. The novel begins with Amir's memory of peering down an alley, looking for Hassan who is kite running for him. As Amir peers into the alley, he witnesses a tragedy. The novel ends with Amir kite running for Hassan's son, Sohrab, as he begins a new life with Amir in America. Why do you think the author chooses to frame the novel with these scenes? Refer to the following passage: "Afghans like to say: Life goes on, unmindful of beginning, end...crisis or catharsis, moving forward like a slow, dusty caravan of [nomads]." How is this significant to the framing of the novel?
2. We begin to understand early in the novel that that Amir is constantly vying for Baba's attention. Discuss Amir's relationship with Baba. As the novel progresses, both Baba and Amir recognize that they are very different people. Often it disappoints both of them that Amir is not the son that Baba has hoped for. When Amir finds out that Baba has lied to him about Hassan, he realizes that "as it turned out, Baba and I were more alike than I'd never known." How does this make Amir feel about his father? How is this both a negative and positive realization?
3. The strong underlying force of this novel is the relationship between Amir and Hassan. Discuss their friendship. Why is Amir afraid to be Hassan's true friend? Why does Amir constantly test Hassan's loyalty? Why does he resent Hassan?

4. Early in Amir and Hassan's friendship, they often visit a pomegranate tree where they spend hours reading and playing. "One summer day, I used one of Ali's kitchen knives to carve our names on it: 'Amir and Hassan, the sultans of Kabul.' Those words made it formal: the tree was ours." In a letter to Amir later in the story, Hassan mentions that "the tree hasn't borne fruit in years." Discuss the significance of this tree.
5. Characterize the moral integrity and influence of Rahim Khan. Summarize the personal traits that strengthen his relationships with Baba and Amir.
6. Amir's confrontation with Assef in Wazir Akar Khan marks an important turning point in the novel. Why does the author have Amir, Assef, and Sohrab all come together in this way? What is the significance of the scar that Amir develops as a result of the confrontation? Why is it important in Amir's journey toward forgiveness and acceptance?
7. Using incidents from the book, comment on gradual changes in Soraya. Discuss how she copes with childlessness and why Amir's confession over the phone convinces her to receive Sohrab as a son.
8. Explain the significance of the title *The Kite Runner*, particularly as it applies to Hassan's loyal service to Amir and Amir's play with Sohrab.