

***The Chosen* – Summer Reading Assignment**
English 10 – Pre AP, Mr. Chris Taibbi

Book One Assignments

The Questions

1. Why are the yeshiva students playing softball?
2. What is Tony Savo's occupation?
3. What important event in World War II takes place while Reuven is in the hospital?
4. Why does Danny hide from his father the fact that he is reading philosophy and fiction?
5. What ability enables Danny to study twice as much Talmud as Reuven?
6. Identify at least three facts or events that illustrate the novel has at its core the theme *Effective communication is essential between humans.*
7. Explain in your own words the irony of the softball game and of the events that flow from it.
8. A motif is a word, character, object, image, metaphor, or idea that recurs in a work. Trace the development of the motif of BLINDNESS in Book One. (In other words, give examples that would SHOW that blindness really is a motif in this book.)
9. What is the importance to the plot of the setting the novel during World War II?

The Fathers

1. In the space below, brainstorm a list of at least ten (10) traits that characteristics of the ideal father.

2. Now go back and rank the above items by placing a 1 near the highest priority and 10 near the lowest.

3. Now use your book to locate specific places in the novel where the fathers in this novel either *demonstrate* these attributes or, as the case may be, *contradict* them. List the pages wherein these attributes are discussed.
Example: *Reuven's conversation with his father in the hospital reveals concern and honesty (70-74).*

OF THE 10 ATTRIBUTES LISTED ABOVE, YOU MUST JUSTIFY AT LEAST FOUR (4) USING THE NOVEL. This means you must provide quotes from the book.

4. Choose one (1) of the following prompts below to respond to. You should write enough to effectively demonstrate a thoughtful answer to the prompt. Don't lose points because your responses have been too thin! In all cases, be sure that your responses indicate you are reflecting the concerns and values of the chosen Jewish sect—not just yourself.

As a Hasid, write a letter to Mr. Malter explaining why you oppose his helping Danny Saunders to read books.

As an Orthodox, write a letter to Reb Saunders explaining why you believe Danny should be allowed to read whatever he wants.

As Reb Saunders, write a letter to Mr. Malter explaining why you wish he would discontinue his efforts to help your son read forbidden books.

Book Two Assignments

The Questions

1. According to David Malter, why did the Cossacks and Polish peasants revolt against the Jews?
2. Who was the Ba'al Shem Tov?
3. What is the name of the collection of books on Jewish mysticism?
4. Which academic subject does Danny find difficult?
5. Based on David Malter's experience, why does World War II intensify efforts to establish a Jewish homeland?
6. What method of study does Danny discover that helps him to understand Freud?
7. Explain how Danny's inner conflict conveys the larger conflict of secular life versus religious obligation.
8. What event in the novel symbolizes being trapped? Do you consider the symbol an effective one? Why or why not?

Literary Concepts: Character and Theme

1. Below are 10 traits that could be used to describe Reb Saunders. USING CHAPTER 7, locate specific passages supporting at least six (6) of these traits. Refer to the passage and the give the page number.

powerful	brave	scholarly	passionate	proud
cruel	respected	fanatical	persuasive	clever

Book Three Assignments

Visual Project

Create a collage of art, magazine clippings, etc. that illustrate what this book means to you, what it is about, etc. Go for color and fill all of the space of an 11 inch by 17 inch poster.

You Be the Character – Choose ONE of the options below.

Choice One

The following questions are deeply significant for many people, but especially so for Danny Saunders, Reuven Malter, Reb Saunders, and Mr. Malter. Answer each question below **thoroughly** AS ONE OF THOSE SPECIFIC CHARACTERS would respond. You choose the character.

Character: _____

1. What is a meaningful life?
2. What is God's role in your life?
3. You are clearly an intelligent and gifted person. Does that create in you any sense of obligation?

Choice Two

Assume that after the close of the book, David Malter (who is characterized as physically fragile) dies of a third heart attack. Choose a character to be, Danny or Reuven, then write a eulogy, the formal speech praising him at his funeral. Include some quotations from Chapter Thirteen, in which Malter discusses the span of life and death.