

Name _____

AP/DE Summer Reading Assignments -- Summer 2006

Glenvar High School (Roanoke County Schools)

4549 Malus Drive

Salem, VA 24153

School phone – 387-6536

Teacher:

Ms. Cheri Burton -- Home phone 989-0118 -- Call me if you have questions.

INTRODUCTION

You will be reading TWO books over the summer that we will TEST at the beginning of the school year. They are Remarque's ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT and Irving's A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANY. I will give you a school copy of each book to use over the summer. You are responsible for returning each book in good condition.

These two books introduce major themes that we will be talking about all year. I consider them “foundation” books for the course. To be honestly blunt, if you don't have the interest, responsibility, or time to read these books and complete the related assignments over the summer, you should change your schedule to English 12 – college bound.

I'll introduce each book in this packet, giving you some background information before you start reading each book. I'll also give you several assignments to complete on each book over the summer.

ALL OF THE ASSIGNMENTS IN THIS PACKET ARE DUE THE SECOND DAY OF THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES – Book #1 Remarque’s ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT

- Type of work:** Realistic war novel
Theme – A “lost generation” of young German soldiers courageously face death on the Western Front in World War I.
- First published:** 1929
- Author:** Erich Maria Remarque (1898-1970), anti-war novelist and social critic. Drafted into German army from high school in 1916. He fought on the Western Front, and was wounded five times in France. Later Remarque worked as a teacher, a salesmen, and a journalist. He moved to Switzerland (1932), then to New York (1939) and became a US citizen in 1947. His books were burned by the Nazis. After WWII, he spent part of his time in Switzerland. In addition to ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT, Remarque is the author of THREE COMRADES (1937), ARC DE TRIOMPHE (1946), THE BLACK OBELISK (1956), AND NIGHT IN LISBON (1964).
- Setting of novel:** German side of the front line; reserve infantry trenches in France, deserted, war-ruined villages; “no man’s land”; Paul’s home town; hospital operated by nuns; training camp on open plain in northern Germany.
- Time of novel:** Last year of World War I (1918). Paul’s memories reflect his high school days and childhood in his home town as well as his experiences in the war.

KEY CHARACTERS

- Paul Baumer – young soldier; narrator of novel; loves to read; struggles to understand meaning of life and the nature of war
- Albert Kropp – young soldier; excellent student; clear thinker
- Muller – young soldier; conscientious student; carries textbooks into trenches
- Leer – young soldier; most mature of the schoolmates; good mathematician
- “Kat” (Katzinsky) – experienced 40 year old soldier; clever and practical; becomes Paul’s closest friend
- Kantorek – Paul’s high school teacher; gives Paul and his classmates a false idea of war as a romantic, noble activity
- Himmelstoss – drill instructor; vengeful and sadistic; tries to break the trainees’ spirit

MAIN THEMES AND IDEAS

1. “Lost Generation”
2. Life has no meaning
3. Comradeship
4. Man as animal
5. Education and life
6. Generation Gap

I. Question Guide: ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT

SUMMER READING DIRECTIONS:

Read the entire book. As you read (or soon after you read), each student will answer HALF of the following questions. The answers to these questions (and ALL the questions in this packet) are due the SECOND day of school in the fall. During the 1st week, you will share your answers with each other.

YOU WILL RECEIVE A GRADE ON COMPLETING THE QUESTIONS, QUOTES, and THEME RESPONSES IN THIS PACKET. THESE NOTES WILL BE VERY IMPORTANT AS YOU STUDY FOR A TEST ON THIS BOOK SOON AFTER YOU RETURN TO SCHOOL.

All LADIES: Write/type out answers for all of the following ODD numbered questions (1, 3, 5, etc.). Leave room on your paper so you can fill in the answers for the even numbered questions when we get back to school. Do NOT use this paper for your answers. Write on notebook paper or type and print your answers.

All GENTLEMEN: Write/type out answers for all of the following EVEN numbered questions (2, 4, 6, etc.). Leave room on your paper so you can fill in the answers for the odd numbered questions when we get back to school. Do NOT use this paper for your answers. Write on notebook paper or type and print your answers.

Chapter 1

1. Name the eight army friends introduced in Chapter 1. What occupations did each have before entering the army?
2. How do the boys feel about Kantorek? How did they feel about him while they were in school?
3. What is important about Joseph Behm's story?
4. What are the two reasons Muller wants Kemmerich's boots?

Chapter 2

5. What is important about the incidents which occur between the young soldiers and Himmelstoss during the boy's training?
6. What finally happens to Kemmerich?
7. How does the doctor react when Paul requests that he look at Kemmerich? What does this show us about how war affects men?

Chapter 3

8. What talent does Kat have which makes him indispensable to his company? Give two examples of where he uses his talent.
9. Katzinsky and Kropp discuss how they feel the war should be fought. Even though they are obviously joking, there is one serious element they both have in their ideas. What is that element?
10. Why does Tjaden in particular hate Himmelstoss?

Chapter 4

11. Why is the earth so important to a soldier? To what is the earth compared?
12. How does Paul treat the young recruit when he first meets him?
13. Why is the new recruit so embarrassed about the shelling? What later happened to this same young recruit?
14. Why are all the men so upset about the horses? (Do you see a connection between the horses and the new recruit(s)?)
15. Where do the soldiers hide during the attack? Why is this significantly unusual?

Chapter 5

16. What would the following characters like to do if peach came: Haie Westhus, Detering, and Kaczinsky?
17. What do Tjaden and Himmelstoss argue about? What eventually happens between these two?
18. How do the boys feel about the things they have learned in school? How has the war ruins them for their future?

Chapter 6

19. What are the coffins for? Why is this significant?
20. Why do the men worry when they receive more cheese and rum than they usually do?
21. List three horrors of battle which Paul witnesses.
22. When night comes, Paul has visions of his past life. What does he remember? Why do you think these images come to him now?

Chapter 7

23. What presents do the boys offer the French girls?
24. What had Paul's mother saved for his return?
25. Why can't Paul tell his mother about the war?
26. Why does Paul get angry with the Major he meets on the street?
27. Why can't Paul tell his father about the war?
28. What does Paul realize about himself when he sits in his room and looks at his books?

Chapter 8

29. Why does Paul appreciate the woods now?
30. Describe the Russian prisoners. How do they survive? How does Paul react to and act toward the Russian prisoners.

Chapter 9

31. Why is Paul happy to be back in the war?
32. After the inspection by the Kaiser, the men discuss the war. How do they feel about it? Who do they feel is responsible for it?
33. What two reasons are there for Paul bandaging the French soldier's wounds? Why is this encounter with the Frenchman so important to Paul?

34. What does Paul promise he will do for the family of Gerard Duval? Why does he make this promise? Do you think he will follow through? Why or why not?

Chapter 10

35. What does Kropp threaten to do if his leg is amputated?
36. What is the dying room? How does Peter know he is going there? Why is Peter special?
37. What kinds of experiments are done on the wounded in the hospital?
38. What kinds of wounds does Paul see in the hospital? What effect do they have on him?

Chapter 11

39. Look at the attached sheet of various characters. What happened to each one of them (A lot of them are listed for Chapter 11).
40. How do the soldiers feel during the summer of 1918?

Chapter 12

41. What does Paul foresee for his generation after the war?
42. What happens to Paul? Explain the meaning of the title of the book, especially as it relates to Paul.
43. Discuss your overall reaction to the book.

II. QUOTES ASSIGNMENT FOR EVERYONE!

Write or type these answers.

1. Choose 5 quotes from the book that you found particularly meaningful. The quotes can be from any part of the book
 2. Copy the quote. Cite the chapter and the page number of each quote.
 3. Write a paragraph response to each quote:
 - Briefly put the quote in context. What is happening?
 - Explain why you chose each quote.
 - What is the significance of each quote (1) in the book and (2) to you personally?
-

III. DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR EVERYONE:

Remarque's ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT

Note: You should write some notes on this sheet before you come to school on the second day. We'll use these response and theme questions as a starting point for our class discussions.

- I. What characters and/or events have made the greatest impression on you so far in your reading of this novel? Explain. Write at least a page response.

II. MAIN THEMES AND IDEAS: WHERE / HOW HAVE YOU SEEN THESE THEMES IN THE BOOK? (Briefly explain a couple of situations for each item below.)

1. "Lost Generation"

2. Life has no meaning

3. Comradeship

4. Man as animal

5. Education and life

6. Generation gap

INTRODUCTORY NOTES Book #2 John Irving's A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANY

NOTE: This book is a modern novel and contains some explicit words and scenes that are “adult” content. This is a college course, and I expect you to read the language in the context of the setting, characters, and the story. This novel has been used in this course for many years at Glenvar High School as well as other Roanoke county schools in AP/DE English 12 classes. Most of my students have loved this book! I hope you do, too!

John Irving's seventh novel, A Prayer for Owen Meany, is a story of humor and heartbreak, of faith and fate, and enduring friendship. In boldly accenting his perceived destiny, the larger-than-life central character – Owen Meany – who will never be taller than five feet at adult height, leaves a lasting legacy of courage and faith. Through the voice of Johnny Wheelwright, the narrator, who obviously delights in recalling the “miracle” of his diminutive friend, the novel represents a prayer to and for Owen Meany.

Irving's novel's typically place characters with extreme personalities in strange situations. This novel is a work that can be approached on many levels – sociological, spiritual, psychological, and philosophical – as well as for pure reading enjoyment. My first priority in assigning this work is that you ENJOY it! It's long in pages AND long on enjoyment. On my first reading of the novel, I got so hooked I could hardly put it down. John Irving feels and has often stated that artistry and entertainment, or aesthetics and popularity in literature need not be in opposition. Because imagery and symbolism are NOT overwhelming in the novel, you can begin this assignment as a reading-for-pleasure opportunity! Focus on the story! Appreciate and react to its originality and vitality!

A Prayer for Owen Meany blends the serious and the comic in an imaginative, richly structured series of spirited sequences. His tragic-comic vision often seeks truth through exaggeration. The novel provokes laughter and tears, inspiring wonder and self-discovery and inviting a test of our own faith in consideration of the timeless question: Do we believe in miracles? The religious belief in this novel is largely a matter of personal experience for the narrator. To Owen Meany, everything is LITERAL, and John Irving approaches the concept of actual physical miracles head on. While Owen Meany's prophecies find ironic fulfillment, his peculiar and advance knowledge is not easily explained in the natural world.

Time of the novel: 1952

Place of the novel: Gravesend, New Hampshire

Narrator: Johnny Wheelwright

Main character: Owen Meany

Reading challenge: Irving often uses flashback and hops around in time between memories of the past and the present.

Introductory Information About the Author -- JOHN IRVING

Although the author John Irving is inclined, in asserting creative independence, to discourage the searching for parallels between his literature and his life, there is an autobiographical element in his work. John Irving also grew up in a small New Hampshire town in the 1950s. Born in Exeter, New Hampshire, on March 1, 1941, Irving was raised in an academic environment and remained there until the success of his novel The World According to Garp freed him from teaching in 1978. He graduated from the prestigious Phillips Exeter Academy in 1961, the University of New Hampshire in 1965, and received his M.F.A. at the University of Iowa in 1967. In the years between Exeter and Garp, in addition to foreign travel and fellowships, teaching was the essential source of his economic survival.

The narrator's ancestor Johnny Wheelwright is not a fictitious figure but was a staunchly independent Congregational clergyman. After immigrating to New England in 1636, he was banished the following year for supporting a belief which undermined ministers of their ministry in its recognition of the individual's direct intuition of God's grace as opposed to orthodox obedience to the statutes (laws) of church and state. The events of Reverend Wheelwright's life to which the narrator credits his own "religious confusion and stubbornness" are not invented. These facts are of significant note in Johnny Wheelwright's abandonment of his Congregationalism, as well as his country, and the development of his "church-rummage faith" as a result of allegiance to his lifelong friend. Neither his Congregational heritage nor his adopted Anglicanism made Johnny Wheelwright a believer. Rather, he owes his faith to Owen Meany. How that happened and what it cost is the heart of the novel.

NOTE: The introductory information below about the book is from the teacher's guide published by The Center for Learning.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTES TO COMPLETE AS YOU READ AND AFTER YOU FINISH READING A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANY

I. QUOTES ASSIGNMENT FOR EVERYONE!

Write or type these answers.

1. Choose 5 quotes from the book that you found particularly meaningful. The quotes can be from any part of the book
2. Copy the quote. Cite the chapter and the page number of each quote.
3. Write a paragraph response for each quote:
 - Briefly put the quote in context. What is happening?
 - Explain why you chose each quote.
 - What is the significance of each quote (1) in the book and (2) to your personally?

II. ESSAY ASSIGNMENT FOR EVERYONE

Length: minimum 3 typed pages, double-spaced, 14 point type

Write a REVIEW of the novel assuming that your audience has not read the book. (You want to entice them to read the book, so don't give the whole plot away!)

Emphasize the spiritual and intellectual growth of the central characters and how this growth reveals major themes of the novel (truths about life and living). (You must choose the themes you think are important to discuss!)

Emphasize the most memorable parts, perhaps recalling a favorite chapter. Try to capture the tone of the novel – funny or sad, comedy or tragedy?

Conclude with your personal assessment of the novel; be sure to explain WHY you responded as you did. Justify your points with specific examples from the novel.

(IF the following assignment about questions is central to your response to the book, you may certainly use this aspect as part of your review!)

III. ASKING QUESTIONS ASSIGNMENT FOR EVERYONE

As you read, keep a list of questions that come to mind. Some of your questions might eventually be answered in the novel. Others may remain unanswered.

Consider what questions you would like to discuss with your classmates when you get back to school.

Consider the questions you might want to ask John Irving if you had the opportunity to talk to him for an hour or two.

If your parents are interested in reading this book, encourage them to do so. Note the kinds of questions you talk about with your parents. Were these discussions helpful? Explain!

NOTE: We could certainly invite parents to a student / parent discussion group one evening in the fall! It could be a lot of fun!