

Pre AP English 9

Cindy Walton

Course Overview and Summer Assignments

~ Pre AP English 9 is an advanced class for the highly motivated student who excels in English grammar and composition. The class is challenging and requires one to put forth extra effort to write essays and complete outside reading. An accelerated coverage of formal grammar will be included, and the student will be expected to do numerous writing assignments as a result of in-depth study of various short stories, novels, plays, and poems.

~ The course will include assignments involving the following:

1. Grammar units and tests
2. Writing assignments with possible maintenance of a writing portfolio
3. Presentations of impromptu and informative speeches
4. Projects, some requiring visual aids and presentations to the class
5. Reading and interpretation of various types of literature
6. In-depth study of literature, including novels, short stories, drama, and poetry

~ Students and parents should understand that Pre AP English is an accelerated class. Pre AP English classes are prerequisites to AP English 11 and 12. All students entering into Pre AP English do so knowing that they will have the opportunity to take the AP exam and possibly earn college credit. This means that teachers should include classic works that have been included on the AP exam in the past. Students will be exposed to these works in honors classes, and may also study them in college level English classes. Some of these books contain harsh realities of human behavior and language. (Personally, some of the language is offensive to me, and is not the kind of language I speak or enjoy reading. I will discuss the setting in which this type language is used throughout the novels.)

~ Because Pre AP English is an advanced class, students need the desire and willingness to complete and excel in more work than the students in a regular English class. Students entering Honors English will be expected to meet more rigorous requirements and higher standards of both conduct and

intellect. If students cannot meet these standards, then their grades will reflect deficiencies.

~Any student wishing to take Pre AP English 9 needs a recommendation of his or her current Language/English teacher. Students desiring to excel in Pre AP English should presently have an A or B average in English class.

Student's current average in English 8 - _____

Recommendation of English 8 teacher - _____

(Teachers, please include any notes relevant to this student's grades, progress, work habits, etc.)

~ The summer assignments are as follows:

1. Purchase the following books: *All But My Life* by Gerda Weissmann Klein and *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. (I would advise looking for these selections at discount book stores or ordering online.)
2. Follow the attached directions for each assignment.
3. After reading all course information, you and your parent should sign the attached acknowledgement and return it with your summer assignment. You will also need to return the recommendation information that your current English teacher provides.

The summer assignments are due no later than the first full day of class for the new school year, even if you will have the class second semester. I cannot make exceptions to this rule. Any assignment that is turned in late will be penalized. You will need to bring them by my room (20, main hall) before school, between classes, or after school.

Read and follow all directions carefully. Points will be deducted for not following directions. PLACE YOUR NAME ON ALL ASSIGNMENTS.
PLACE ASSIGNMENTS IN A LARGE CLASPED OR SEALED ENVELOPE.

Student Acknowledgement Statement:

I have read and discussed the Pre AP English 9 course overview and summer assignments with my parents. I understand that Pre AP English 9 will require my best effort and that I will possibly have to work longer and harder on my assignments than peers in non-honors classes. I am also willing to ask my parents and Mrs. Walton for help when needed, and I will work to communicate my needs to the people who can help me excel in this class.

Student's Signature _____

Date _____

Parent Acknowledgement Statement:

I have read and discussed the Pre AP English 9 course overview and summer assignments with my son or daughter. I understand that Pre AP English 9 will be challenging, and I am also aware that he or she may have to work harder to maintain grades that are satisfactory. I know that there is a possibility that my child's grades will not be as high as in the past, but the learning experience is of paramount importance. I am willing to communicate my expectations with my son or daughter, and with Mrs. Walton. I am willing to do whatever is necessary to help my child excel in this class.

Parent's Signature _____

Date _____

Honors English 9 Summer Assignment 4

~Summer Assignments for *To Kill a Mockingbird* include the following:

1. Write the definitions for the following vocabulary words. Using 3 x 5 index cards, make a vocabulary flashcard for each word. Be prepared to test on these during the first week of class. Keep the flashcards to study for the test. (You need to complete this vocabulary list before reading the book.)

ambled

assuaged

asinine

analogous

inconspicuous

antagonize

formidable

temerity

notoriety

edification

indicative

infallible

sundry

rue

rout

taciturn

discernible

inquisitive

innate

tirade

acquiescence

acrimonious

vehement

foray

condescend

erratic

quibble

provocation

undulate

succinct

tedious

squalid

Honors English 9 Summer Assignment 6

benevolence

indigenous

auspicious

prowess

articulate

garish

uncouth

candid

irascible

diminutive

melancholy

procure

prerogative

curt

venue

volition

connive

disapprobation

2. As you read the book, make a character list for all important characters, writing at least a few sentences describing each one.
3. Write a few paragraphs about the “meaning” of the book. Include passages from the book that you feel contribute to your understanding of the book or its main characters.

~Summer Assignments for *All But My Life* include the following:

As you read *All But My Life*, answer the attached questions in complete sentences. Write your answers on another sheet of paper.

YOU WILL NEED TO BE PREPARED TO WRITE ABOUT BOTH BOOKS DURING THE FIRST FEW WEEKS OF CLASS.

Bielitz (Bielsko)

1. What historic event occurred on September 3, 1939? What was its immediate effect on the Weissmanns' lives? What was the Third Reich?
2. On the day of the Nazi invasion, Gerda's parents ask her to telephone the other family members, but when she does so there is no reply (p.6) Why not? Where have these people gone?
3. Why do Mr. and Mrs. Weissmann feel "relief and pride" (p. 6) when their children insist on staying with them?
4. Why don't Gerda's parents react when the carpet begins to burn? (p. 8)
5. Why does Gerda's brother, Arthur, slap her? (p. 8)
6. Why does the "drunken, jubilant mob" in Bielitz believe it has been liberated (p.9)?
7. When one of Arthur's classmates tells him that young Jewish boys are being murdered in the camps, Arthur says, "Nonsense" (p.17) . Why does he believe this?
8. The night before Arthur leaves home, he sits at his desk "looking through the mementos of his youth" (p. 18). What thoughts do you think are going through Arthur's head?
9. Why does Zeloski, the baker's delivery man, use the past tense when he speaks of Arthur (p. 19)? Why does Gerda say "I hate you"?
10. Why doesn't Arthur want his family to accompany him to the station? Why doesn't he turn around as he leaves the house?
11. Why does Mr. Weissmann decide to visit the cemetery after Arthur leaves home?
12. What does the young man tell the concert audience at the resort of Krynica? Why is he carried away by police? Do you think he is really a maniac?
13. Why does Mr. Weissmann decide that the family should sell all of their belongings? What words would you use to describe Gerda's feelings after the sale?
14. What does Gerda's father have in mind when he says, "Whatever you are thinking now is wrong" (p. 32)? What promise does Gerda make to him at this moment?
15. What does Gerda mean when she says that Niania is an "old Austrian" (p. 34)? Who was the emperor Franz Josef?
16. Why doesn't Gerda tell her parents about her conversation with Arthur's friend Peter, even after they discover that Arthur is still alive?
17. What does it mean to the Polish Jews that the Germans have violated their pact with the Russians (p.46)? What will it mean to Arthur?
18. Why is Gerda not able to summon a doctor the night her father has a heart attack?

19. What does Ulla represent to the young girl Gerda? Why does Gerda decide to learn English, despite the danger of doing so?
20. What is Gerda's reaction to Abek? Does she feel positive, negative, or uncertain?
21. How are Gerda's life and character affected by the terrible letter from Erika? What changes have the dreadful events wrought on Erika's character? "I want to kill, just kill," she writes (p.70) Would you say acts of hatred engender more hate?
22. How does Gerda deduce Arthur's changing state of mind from his letters?
23. In April 1942, the Jews in Bialitz are ordered to move to the quarter near the railway terminal which would become their "ghetto." What does the word ghetto mean? What was its original meaning, and what has it come to signify today?
24. Why does Gerda "despise" Niania when she goes to say goodbye (p. 75)?
25. Why do Gerda's parents refuse to look back at their old home when they leave for the ghetto? Why does Gerda choose to look back?
26. Why are Gerda's parents in better spirits when they arrive in their ghetto apartment?
27. What does the *Aussiedlung* mean? Why is the word so resonant for the Bialitz Jews?
28. What does *Judenrein* mean?
29. How would you describe the farewell Gerda's parents take of one another: joyful, sorrowful, or a combination of the two? What legacy do they leave the young Gerda?
30. Who is Merin? Why does he say to Gerda, "Are you crazy?" (p.90) Why does he throw her back on the truck and say, "You are too young to die" (p.91)? Is it because he pities her and wants to save her life, or because, as a worker, she will be useful to the Nazi State?
31. Why does Gerda walk away from her mother without looking back?

Sosnowitz

32. "Now I have to live," Gerda reflects on the train (p.95). What reasons does she give for wanting to live?
33. What is the Militz? How does it differ from the ordinary police force? Why does the Militz Commander feel so hostile toward his own race? Why does he agree to give Gerda her permit?
34. Why is Abek's family so generous and hospitable to Gerda? What is Gerda's reaction to their kindness?
35. What is a Dulag?
36. Who are the "living skeletons" Gerda meets in the Dulag? Where are they to be sent?
37. Why does Gerda refuse the working card and decide to move on to the camp? What does her decision have to do with Abek? Why doesn't she want any "special privileges" (p.107)?
38. During the train ride to camp, why does Suse Kunz say that she feels "pretty good, in spite of everything" (p.113)? Does this statement reflect Gerda's mood?

Bolkenhain

39. Who is Frau Kugler?
40. Bolkenhain is Gerda's first view of the "homeland of Nazism" (p.114). How do the Germans there seem different from those she observed in Poland? What is "propaganda," and what effect has it had on the German people's preconceptions about Jews?
41. Who is Mrs. Berger? What does she imply in her short speech to the young women (p.116)? Do you believe that her methods for dealing with the prisoners were good ones? Do you find her a sympathetic character?
42. Why does the moon become Gerda's "loyal friend"? What does the moon signify to her?
43. Why do the inmates of Bolkenhain have to wear three stars? Why is it necessary that they be identified as Jews from every angle?
44. Who is Meister Zimmer? How do his attitude and behavior differ from those of Frau Kugler?
45. How does Mrs. Berger get Gerda to acknowledge her father's death? Do you think Mrs. Berger's method is kind? What method does Gerda use to cope with the dreadful knowledge?
46. Under what government did Gerda's grandfather live? Why was he exiled to Siberia? Why was he not given a trial? Why was he released and allowed to go home?
47. What is Yom Kippur? Why do the prisoners decide to fast, and what satisfaction do they derive from this fasting?
48. Why is Lotte weeping at the camp fence? Why is she, unlike Gerda, unable to draw on happy memories to help her survive?
49. What makes Gerda sense that she will never see Arthur again after receiving his frayed, dirty letter?
50. How did Frau Kugler save Gerda's life? Do you believe genuine affection existed between Frau Kugler and the girls under her care?
51. How did Abek's mother and sisters die? What mixed emotions does their fate inspire in Gerda? Why is she ashamed of her own feelings?
52. What message does Gerda communicate in the play she writes and performs for her fellow prisoners? In what way does the play manage to convey hope? What does Gerda get out of the experience of putting on the play, and why does she count it as the "greatest thing I have done in my life" (p. 142)?
53. In the summer of 1943, a change comes over Bolkenhain: incoming mail is cut off, Meister Zimmer becomes abusive, and there is not enough raw material for spinning. What is the meaning of this multifaceted change? What turn is the war taking for the Germans?

Marzdorf

54. How do the Marzdorf *Judenalteste* and *Lagerfuhrerin* differ from their counterparts at Bolkenhain? What does this mean for the inmates?
55. Who is Fran Aufsicht?

56. Why is the supervisor's question to Gerda, "Are you hungry?" (p.147) a "tricky" one?
57. What keeps Gerda from throwing herself under a train and ending her life?

Landeshut

58. Upon seeing Litz, Frau Kugler, and Mrs. Berger again, Gerda's reaction is "This was home!" (p.153). What has she learned from her experiences at Marzdorf?
59. What does Gerda state to be the most important quality in a future husband? Why do the other girls laugh at her opinion? Do you agree with her or with them?
60. Why did Abek volunteer to come to Burgberg? Gerda feels responsible for his coming. Do you think that she is responsible? If so, does she make up for it by her loving behavior to Abek during his last days?
61. Why do Italian prisoners suddenly appear in Burgberg? What has happened in the war to turn the Italians and the Germans into enemies?
62. Why did Gerda decline to see Abek in Burgberg, writing him a note instead?

Grunberg

63. Who is the *Betriebsleiter*? This man is what one would describe as a sadist. What is a sadist, and which of the *Betriebsleiter's* characteristics are sadistic?
64. What is the *Spinnerei*? Why is it so dangerous to work there?
65. What is tuberculosis? What happens to the girls who contract it in Grunberg?
66. What impact does the beating by the SS guard have on Gerda? How does it affect her will to survive? How does it affect the other girls?
67. Why are the girls undressed and given numbers (p. 178-179)?
68. Why does Gerda want to procure poison?

The March

69. Why do the authorities decide to embark on the march to Czechoslovakia? What turn in the war has prompted this flight?
70. Why do Gerda and Ilse not carry out Gerda's plan to go to the police station? What might have happened to them had they done this?
71. What does Tusia mean when she says that Gerda has given her "belief in humanity" (p. 197)? What is Gerda's response? Is her decision to make up "good news" for the other girls a good one? Explain your answer.
72. Why do the guards abandon the marchers?
73. What is the significance of the white flag hanging from the church steeple in Volary?

Volary

74. What is Gerda's first impression of Lt. Kurt Klein? What does he represent to her? Why does she feel compelled to tell him that they are Jews? What is his response?
75. When does Gerda finally admit to herself that her parents are dead? Why has she delayed the acknowledgement until this moment?
76. What does Kurt mean when he says, "It seems we fought a war against the Nazis, but I haven't met a Nazi yet" (p.221)?
77. Why does Gerda compare herself to Hans Christian Andersen's mermaid?
78. What are Gerda's emotions on seeing Liesel, Suse, and Ilse's graves? Why does she turn abruptly away from them?

Epilogue

79. Gerda writes, "Survival is both an exalted privilege and a painful burden" (p.247). What does she mean by this? In what way is it a burden?
 80. What does the state of Israel symbolize to Gerda?
 81. What are Gerda's feelings about suicide? What has formed these opinions?
 82. What is the significance of Gerda's guilt over having purloined, long ago, a rum bell? How does this guilt figure into her current life?
 83. Why was she unable to speak German on the radio? Why does Gerda prefer speaking English to any other language?
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