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The Killer Angels Summer Reading
Academic American literature

The summer reading requirement for American Literature is Michael Shaara’s Pulitzer Prize winning novel The Killer Angels, a classic book following the four most bloody and courageous days of our nation’s history during The Civil War. You must read this novel in its entirety by the beginning of the school year and must bring to class on the first day your completed summer reading assignment, which is attached. There will be a test during the first week of school.

The following is a suggested pacing guide for the summer reading assignment. If you struggle with time management and feel this task seems overwhelming, use this breakdown. You should be working on the materials as you go, but there is a buffer week built in to ensure the completion and finalization of the materials.

Summer, Week 1-2: Map list, Foreword, Section 1: Monday, June 29, 1863 (pages xi-69)

Summer, Week 3-5: Section 2: Wednesday, July 1, 1863: The First Day (pages 73-151)

Summer, Week 6-8: Section 3: Thursday, July 2, 1863: The Second Day (pages 155-271)

Summer, Week 9-11: Section 4: Friday, July 3, 1863 (275-347)

Summer, Week 12: Completion and finalization of materials

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this assignment or the summer reading in general, please contact Mrs. McRobbie:

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**Getting to Gettysburg**

Directions: Answer the following questions based on your understanding of the events in the novel. Be sure your responses are detailed and written in complete sentences.

1. What reasons would men have had for going to fight this war?
2. What would it have been like to be a Confederate soldier between 1861-1863?
3. What would it have been like to be in the Union army between 1861-1863?
4. If you had been a civilian in the North during the first three years of the war, what would you have thought after reports came from battlefields such as Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville?
5. Why was the Confederacy so successful in those battles?
6. How would the results of those battles help to shape attitudes in the North and in the South?

**Representing Character**

Directions: After reading the first four chapters of the novel, provide three of your own words (be specific) plus two quotes from the book that best represent each of the men listed in the chart.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Man** | **Descriptive Words** | **Quotes from the novel (and pg#)** |
| Harrison | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Sorrel | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Buford | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Armistead | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Longstreet | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Chamberlain | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Stuart | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Garnett | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Man** | **Descriptive Words** | **Quotes from the novel (and pg#)** |
| Lee | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Kilrain | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Pickett | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |
| Kemper | 1.2.3. | 1.2. |

**Beliefs and Doubts**

Directions: Each of the persons listed below has expressed strong beliefs in why the war was worth fighting. Some have also worried at times in the novel because of events or situations which have seemed to contradict their principles. For each person, cite at least one place in the novel where he expresses his belief in the reason for fighting and one place in the novel where he may have expressed doubts or contradictions. If no contradiction is expressed, write “None” in the appropriate space.

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| --- | --- |
| **Reason for Fighting** | **Doubts/Contradictions** |
| Lee |  |
| Chamberlain |  |
| Kilrain |  |
| Confederate Enlisted Men |  |
| Longstreet |  |

**Wanted: Few Good Men**

Directions: Explain the leadership qualities demonstrated by the officers in each of the behaviors listed below.

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| **Longstreet** | **Leadership Qualities** |
| 1. Early in the book, Longstreet is awakened from sleep when Harrison returns, and Longstreet then takes the spy to Lee himself rather than sending him with someone else.
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| 1. Although he is devastated by the death of his children, he repeatedly refuses to allow himself to think about the loss and his own pain.
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| 1. On several evenings when his subordinate officers come to his camp, Longstreet remains in the shadows, alone under a tree, not joining in the poker games, which he loves, or the general camaraderie.
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| 1. After he explodes at the Fremantle about the difficulties of the attack on the third day, he reprimands himself about what he said. He also tells the wounded Hood that the Texans “took most of the rocks,” when they had not done so.
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| --- | --- |
| **Lee** | **Leadership Qualities** |
| 1. Lee is awakened by Longstreet to speak with the spy. He tries not to show the pain from his fall from the horse and his heart trouble.
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| 1. Lee sends for Longstreet the morning of July 1. He tells him several times in the novel that he can count on him for the truth and encourages Longstreet to say what he thinks.
 |  |
| 1. Lee will not agree to a defensive move at Gettysburg. He says to himself at one point that he has “been over this ground already” with Longstreet and does not allow Hood to move to his right. At the end of the second day he decides on a final frontal attack.
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| 1. Although he is in pain and preoccupied with the arrangements for the day’s fighting. Lee waves to the men, listens to their bands, rides among them.
 |  |

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| **Chamberlain** | **Leadership Qualities** |
| 1. In spite of feeling sick and weak, Chamberlain does not ride his horse but walks with the men on the march through Maryland.
 |  |
| 1. Chamberlain feeds the Maine deserters and then explains to them what his plans are for dealing with them.
 |  |
| 1. When the wounded Negro is found, Chamberlain feeds him, orders a doctor to look at him, and tells Kilrain to give him food and send him to safety.
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| 1. At the crest of Round Top, Chamberlain led the bayonet charge down the mountain when the 20th Maine ran out of ammunition.
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