

## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade English IV- Literature Summer Reading

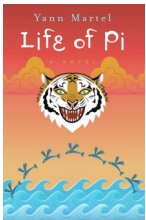
Students need to read ONE of the texts listed below by the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year. There will be an in-depth assessment on the selected text during the first full week of school. The requirements below will be due on the **second** day of school for each work. Be prepared and ready to work. Each requirement will count as a **test grade**. If you do not have your assignments, you will receive a zero (0/F) for each assignment not submitted. If I can answer any questions about the class or summer reading, see me before school is out for summer. You may email me with questions during the summer: [salexander@corinth.k12.ms.us](mailto:salexander@corinth.k12.ms.us). I look forward to a great year next year. Have a wonderful summer!

Thanks,

Mrs. Alexander

**\*\*Everyone MUST read ONE of the following books and complete the assignment:**

### *Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel



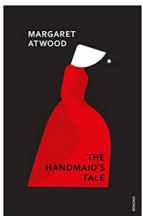
*Life of Pi* is a fantasy adventure novel by Yann Martel published in 2001. The protagonist, Piscine Molitor "Pi" Patel, a Tamil boy from Pondicherry, explores issues of spirituality and practicality from an early age. He survives 227 days after a shipwreck while stranded on a boat in the Pacific Ocean with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker.

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or

### *The Handmaid's Tale*, by Margaret Atwood



Offred is a Handmaid in the Republic of Gilead, the totalitarian government that's taken control of what was formerly the United States of America. All of her actions are closely monitored by the Commander and his wife. Offred and the other Handmaids are valued only if their ovaries are viable, as infertility is rampant in this new society. Offred can remember the years before this new life, when she lived with her husband; when she played with and protected her daughter; when she had a job, money of her own, and access to knowledge. But all of that is gone now...

You can access a free PDF at the following website:

<https://1.cdn.edl.io/rOZeEoIzqLA5h7b4cDX6aDEBZuJXyRRW0YD6o0ns1BB0gpbC.pdf>

**\*\*Assignment:** Complete the attached questions for the book you choose.

## *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

### Author's Note & Chapters 1 – 5

1. Summarize the events that led to the writing of this novel as explained in the Author's Note.
2. Based on your understanding of the Author's Note, would you classify this novel as fiction or nonfiction? Explain.
3. Obviously something traumatic has happened to the narrator. What do you think caused him to "suffer a great deal in life"? Point out specific details from the text that lead you to this conclusion.
4. What's going on in Chapter Two? Who's speaking? Who is the subject of this chapter?
5. Who is Mamaji? What is his relationship to Pi? What larger part does he play in this novel (refer back to the author's note if you don't remember)?
6. Pi says at the end of Chapter Four that he knows that "zoos are no longer in people's good graces. Religion faces the same problem. Certain illusions about freedom plague them both" (19). What do you think he means? Support your answer with details from the text.
7. Why does Pi change his name? What is the significance of Pi's name—both his full name and the shortened form?

### Chapter 8

1. Explain Mr. Patel's curtain/mirror display. Why do zookeepers say the most dangerous animal in the zoo is Man?
2. The real lesson, though, in this chapter is about the dangers of "*Animalus anthropomhicus*, the animal as seen through human eyes." Explain this concept and how Pi's father teaches his sons this lesson.

### Chapter 13

1. In chapter 13, Pi states that social rank is very important among animals—"rank determines whom [the animal] can associate with and how; where and when it can eat; where it can rest; where it can drink; and so on" (44). Is this true for humans? Explain using examples from your own experience, history, or literature.

### Chapter 23

1. How does Pi's father feel about religion? What role does it play in his mother's life?
2. The three wise men are shocked to find out Piscine has been visiting all three of them. They proceed to insult each other's religions. What kinds of things do they criticize? Using your knowledge of the different religions from your research and Pi's experiences, explain one criticism of each faith.
3. How does Pi settle the argument?

### Chapters 48 – 58

1. How did Richard Parker get his name?
2. Richard Parker has been rather passive so far. What do you think might account for his passivity?

3. What does the color orange symbolize to Pi? Richard Parker is also orange. Is there a connection? Explain.
4. Sketch out the lifeboat according to the details provided in chapter 50. You don't have to be an artist, but do your best to show the parts of the lifeboat and the location of the passengers. Use notes to help explain your drawing.
5. Pi makes a list of items that he found on the boat. The last six items do not match the rest of the list. Why do you think he includes them?
6. Pi philosophizes: "I must say a word about fear. It is life's only true opponent. Only fear can defeat life" (161). Do you agree? Why or why not?
7. What was wrong with Plan Number Six for getting rid of Richard Parker? How will Plan Number Seven benefit Pi spiritually, physically, and intellectually?

### **Chapters 71-72**

1. What did the smell of hand-flares remind Pi of (the scent or the place)?
2. What motivated Pi to catch and butcher the turtle? Was it worth it?
3. Explain how Pi is able to train Richard Parker to fear the whistle.
4. Why is it important to back down before Richard Parker lifted his paw?
5. How many tries did it take to train him?

### **Chapters 84 – 89**

1. How does Pi's encounter with the whales demonstrate his tendency toward anthropomorphism, the projecting of human characteristics on animals?
2. Why do you think the birds inspire "awe, envy, and self-pity?"
3. How does the lightning affect Pi? Richard Parker?
4. What do you think Pi should have done differently in regards to the close call with the oil tanker?
5. What is the dream rag? How does it help Pi?
6. Suppose you found Pi's message in a bottle. What would you do?
7. If you could give him some advice for revising his message, how would you suggest he improve the note to increase his chances for rescue?
8. Summarize the conditions on the lifeboat.
9. What physical and emotional changes have occurred in both Pi and Richard Parker?
10. Why did he quit writing in his diary?

### **Chapters 92 – 94**

1. What happened to the other blind sailor?
2. Describe Pi's exceptional botanical discovery. Be sure to use enough detail to prove you read it and not just heard it from someone else—focus on the little things.
3. What two things happen when Pi reaches land? How does he react to each of these events?

*The Handmaid's Tale*

By Margaret Atwood

CHAPTERS 1-13

1. Within the first two chapters, what hints does the narrator drop to reveal the limitations of women's rights in this society?
2. How does Atwood convey the risk of suicide in this society? Does the threat of suicide seem likely here?
3. What remnants of the past does the narrator long for?
4. What symbolic role does the color red play in the novel?
5. What rebellious actions does the narrator take part in? How are these actions rebellious?
6. Aunt Lydia refers to two kinds of freedom: "Freedom to and freedom from" (24). In your opinion, which is more valuable? Why? Provide examples to back up your claims.
7. What limited freedoms does Offred possess?
8. What role does envy play among the women of Gilead? Is envy as prevalent among the people you know?
9. By the end of Chapter 8, Offred refers to the bedroom as her own, implying that she has gotten used to her new life. Is it possible to get used to anything, given enough time?
10. What is the "salvation" that the doctor offers Offred? Should she consider this as an opportunity? Why or why not?
11. When one woman, Janine, tells her story of rape, she is taught in Gilead that it is her fault. To what extent, if any, are rape victims today held responsible or to blame?

CHAPTERS 14-24

1. Why does Offred want to steal something from the sitting room? Is this an understandable reason?
2. How does Offred imagine the life of the Commander? Is this a flattering depiction?
3. Following the Ceremony, Offred questions, "Which of us is it worse for, [Serena Joy] or me?" (95). What do you think? Who is it worse for? Why?
4. According to Offred's beliefs, what are Luke's three possible fates? Which of these fates seems most plausible, given what you know of Gilead? Explain.
5. What possible significance does the word on the pillow in Offred's room provide? How might this word be viewed as instruction? As guidance? As inspiration?
6. What are the beliefs of Offred's mother? What is ironic about her mother's beliefs about gender roles?
7. What unexpected request does the Commander make of Offred? Why is this such a risky activity for both of them?

CHAPTERS 25-35

1. What significance does the reading material the Commander provides have for Offred?
2. Describe the nature of the secret relationship between Offred and the Commander.
3. What is the meaning of *Nolite te bastardes carborundorum*?
4. Analyze Atwood's investigation of the phrase "Night falls." What rhetorical approaches does Atwood employ in this opening paragraph of Chapter 30?

5. What happened to Offred's predecessor? What foreshadowing has Atwood provided to indicate this?
6. How does the Commander justify the current lot of women in Gilead's society? What specific reasons does he give?
7. How does Offred respond to memories of her past life? Of her family?

#### CHAPTERS 36-END

1. What can be purchased on the black market in Gilead? Are these illegal purchases similar to items purchased illegally in the U.S. today?
2. How does the Commander justify the existence of Jezebel's? Analyze his argument.
3. Offred narrates multiple versions of her first intimate encounter with Nick. For the reader, what is the impact of these varying stories of the same event? Why do you think Atwood chose to reveal the scene in this manner?
4. What is the significance of women's names in Gilead? What about women's names in our own society?
5. What chance does Offred take as her tale comes to a close? What other options does she have? What would you have done in her place?