AP English – Glennon Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The Kiterunner – summer assignment**  **Due: the first day of class**

Choose **5** of the following discussion questions. **Type** a thorough response of a page or more for each.

1. The novel begins “I became what I am today at the age of twelve.” To what is Amir referring? Is his assertion entirely true? What other factors have helped form his character? How would you describe Amir?

2. Amir had never thought of Hassan as his friend, despite the evident bond between them, just as Baba did not think of Ali as his friend (page 22). What parallels can be drawn between Amir and Hassan’s relationship, and Baba and Ali’s? How would you describe the relationship between the two boys? What makes them so different in the way they behave with each other? What is it that makes Amir inflict small cruelties on Hassan? Had you already guessed at the true relationship between them? If so, at what point did you determine this and why?

3. It is Amir’s dearest wish to please his father. What fuels this wish? To what extent does he succeed in doing so and at what cost? What kind of man is Baba? How would you describe his relationship with Amir and with Hassan? How does that relationship change, and what prompts those changes?

4. Hosseini vividly describes Afghanistan, both the privileged world of Amir’s childhood and the stricken country under the Taliban. How did his descriptions differ from ideas that you may already have had about Afghanistan? What cultural differences become evident in the American passages of the novel? How easy do the Afghans find it to settle in the U.S.? Compare the social structures of Amir’s life in Afghanistan vs. those he encounters in America.

5. When Soraya tells Amir about her past, she says, “I’m so lucky to have found you. You’re so different from every Afghan guy I’ve met.” (page 157) How do Afghan women fare in America? Are they any better off than they were in Afghanistan before the Taliban seized power? There is a noticeable absence of women in the novel. How is this significant?

6. On the drive to Kabul Farid says to Amir “You’ve always been a tourist here, you just didn’t know it.” (page 204) What is Farid implying? What do you think of his implication? What gives a person worth in a society? Does this vary between societies?

7. The strong underlying force of this novel is the relationship between Amir and Hassan. Discuss their friendship. Why is Amir afraid to be Hassan’s true friend? Why does Amir constantly test Hassan’s loyalty? Why does he resent Hassan? After the kite fighting tournament, why does Amir no longer want to be Hassan’s friend?

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8. What is the significance of the novel’s title? What might the kite fighting tournament symbolize? Does the competition’s combination of physical brutality and aesthetic beauty parallel any other aspects of the book?

9. What is Amir’s relationship with Baba in the beginning of the book? How does it change after he wins the kite fighting tournament?

10. America acts as a place for Amir to rehash his memories and as a place for Baba to mourn his. In America, there are “homes that made Baba’s house in Wazir Akbar Khan look like a servant’s hut.” (page 135) What is ironic about this statement? What is the function of irony in this novel?

11. During their argument about his career path, Amir thinks to himself: “I would stand my ground, I decided. I didn’t want to sacrifice for Baba anymore. The last time I had done that, I had damned myself.” Why is Baba disappointed by Amir’s decision to become a writer? What has Amir sacrificed for Baba? How has Amir “damned himself”?

12. Amir’s confrontation with Assef in Wazir Akar Khan marks an important turning point in the novel. Why does the author have Amir, Assef, and Sohrab all come together in this way? What is the significance of the scar that Amir develops as a result of the confrontation? Why is it important in Amir’s journey toward forgiveness and acceptance?

13. Baba and Amir know that they are very different people. Often it disappoints both of them that Amir is not the son that Baba has hoped for. When Amir finds out that Baba has lied to him about Hassan, he realizes that “as it turned out, Baba and I were more alike than I’d ever known.” (page 226) How does this make Amir feel about his father? How is this both a negative and positive realization?

14. When Amir and Baba move to the States their relationship changes, and Amir begins to view his father as a more complex man. Discuss the changes in their relationship. Do you see the changes in Baba as tragic or positive?