

CENTRAL “THE HIGH” SCHOOL: ENGLISH III



Summer Reading Assignment 2020-2021

Overview

This summer, rising **JUNIOR** students are required to read the following:

Lahiri, Jhumpa – *Interpreter of Maladies*

Interpreter of Maladies is a collection of short stories which won the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. The collection charts the emotional journeys of characters seeking love beyond the barriers of nations and generations. In stories that travel from India to America and back again, Lahiri speaks with universal eloquence to everyone who has ever felt like a foreigner.

file:///C:/Users/rosgu/Downloads/interpreter_of_maladies.pdf

Assignments:

Directions: After you read the short story collection, you will complete the following short answer questions for each story. **You MUST cite evidence to support your responses to ALL the questions. An example is provided below.**

“A Temporary Matter”

1. What impact does the power outage have on Shoba and Shukumar’s relationship? (What is it forcing them to do?) (11-12.RL.KID.3)
2. What do the confessions represent for Shoba and what do they represent for Shukumar? (11-12.RL.KID.3 and 11-12.RL.KID.2)

3. According to this story, what effect can secrets have on a marriage/relationship? What themes are present in this story related to the secrets and/or relationships? (11-12.RL.KID.2 and 11-12.RL.KID.3)

“When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine”

1. How does Mr. Pirzada’s life in the U.S. compare with his life in Dacca? Is the value of his scholarship different in Dacca than it is in the west? What does that tell you, the reader, about the differences in those cultures? (11-12. RL.CS.6)
2. Lilia’s memories of the 12-day war are scant. Migrant families might shelter children from the news of the ‘motherland’ yet there remains some cultural imperative for a child to be part of what is going on out of a sense of maintaining cultural identity or loyalty. Why does the author create this scenario? What does it add to the overall meaning of the story? (11-12. RL.CS.5 and 11-12. RL.CS.6)
3. What allows Lilia to end her ritual of eating candy in remembrance of Mr. Pirzada’s family? Explain the significance of this ritual to Lilia. Does this have any similarity to another short story in this collection? Identify the story and discuss their connections. (11-12.RL.KID.3 and 11-12.RL.KID.9)
4. Question

“Interpreter of Maladies”

1. There are clear cultural differences between Mr. Kapasi and the Das family, who currently lives in America. Discuss cultural differences that are highlighted in their interactions. (11-12.RL.KID.3 and 11-12. RL.CS.5)
2. When referring to the Das family, he says: “They are all like siblings.” What is he implying about them? And why is this significant? (11-12.RL.KID.3 and 11-12. RL.CS.5)
3. Why might Mrs. Das be so interested in Mr. Kapasi’s work as an interpreter? What does she mean when she describes it as “romantic”? (11-12. RL.CS.4 and 11-12.RL.KID.3)
4. The Das parents and Mr. Kapasi both have failings. What are they and how do they affect a) the storyline, b) character interactions, and c) development of the theme? (11-12. RL.CS.5 and 11-12.RL.KID.3)
5. Why might the writer have chosen this as the title story of the collection? (11-12. RL.CS.5 and 11-12. RL.CS.4)
6. Identify at least three themes developed in this story. Write them in a bulleted list. Then find 2-3 quotes from the text that support each theme. (11-12.RL.KID.2)

“A Real Durwan”

1. The word “durwan” has multiple meanings: a cleaning woman and a porter/doorkeeper. Discuss how Boori Ma fulfills both of those roles in the story and how the roles overlap and change. (11-12. RL.CS.4)
2. What do the two ceramic basins symbolize in the story? Explain how the writer uses the basins to highlight the class differences in the story. (11-12.RL.KID.2)
3. The main conflict in the story arises after the arrival of the basins, why do you think the writer chose to begin the story with the description of Boori Ma and her recitations about what she lost after the Partition? (11-12. RL.CS.5)
4. What is the theme of the story? (11-12.RL.KID.2)

“Sexy”

1. What is the significance of the word “sexy” as it is used in the text and how does the writer use the word to develop Miranda’s character? (11-12.RL.KID.3 and CS.4)

2. Identify the parallel plots being developed in the story. How does the writer use the parallel plots to develop the theme of the story? (11-12. RL.CS.5)
3. How does the interaction with Rohin impact Miranda? (11-12.RL.KID.2)
4. Write an objective summary of the story. (11-12.RL.KID.2)

“Mrs. Sen’s”

1. Isolation is a major theme in this story. It’s most evident in Mrs. Sen’s longing for her home. Discuss how her clinging to the memories of home highlights her isolation. (Try to include at least three examples.) (11-12.RL.KID.1)
2. Eliot is taken aback when Mrs. Sen asks him “If I began to scream right now at the top of my lungs, would someone come?” How does this question demonstrate contrasting societal expectations of her community and her home in India? (11-12.RL.KID.1)
3. The story is about Mrs. Sen and her longing for home, but the writer chose to tell the story from the point-of-view of Eliot. Discuss the impact of the writer’s point-of-view choice. (Hint: Consider ways in which Eliot and Mrs. Sen’s experiences are similar.) (11-12.RL.KID.3 and 11-12. RL.CS.5)
4. Learning to drive is the central conflict between Mr. and Mrs. Sen. What is the symbolic significance of Mrs. Sen learning to drive? Why did the writer choose to structure the story around a conflict about learning to drive? (11-12. RL.CS.5)

“This Blessed House”

1. Why does Twinkle’s fascination with the religious objects found throughout the house bother Sanjeev so much? Discuss how the writer uses the religious objects to highlight underlying problems in the couple’s marriage. Is the use of religious paraphernalia effective? What would be the effect if the writer had used some other type of objects? (11-12.RL.KID.3 and 11-12. RL.CS.5)
2. What is the effect of Sanjeev remembering the beginning of their marriage, and juxtaposing those memories with their present life? How does this contribute to the overall meaning of the story? (11-12. RL.CS.5)
3. One of the guests asked if Twinkle’s last name is “Little Star,” alluding to the children’s nursery rhyme “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.” What might the writer be implying about Twinkle’s role in this story? (11-12. RL.CS.4 and 11-12. RL.CS.6)
4. Compare and contrast the relationship between Sanjeev and Twinkle with the relationship between Shoba and Shukumar in “A Temporary Matter.” What is Lahiri communicating about the theme of marriage in these stories? (11-12.RL.KID.9)

“The Treatment of *Bibi Haldar*”

1. The word “treatment” that appears in the title of this story refers to more than just the medical treatment sought for her. Discuss the different “treatments” of Bibi Haldar and how they impacted her. (11-12.RL.KID.3 and 11-12. RL.CS.4)
2. India has a strict caste system that determines how certain people are perceived or treated in their society. Find examples in this story of caste system differences. Who is most affected by the caste system? Explain. (11-12.RL.KID.2)

“The Third and Final Continent”

1. What is the narrator’s initial view of life in the United States? How is this reflected in the title of this short story? (11-12.RL.KID.3 and 11-12.CS.5)
2. What function does the guidebook play in this story? (11-12. RL.CS.5)
3. Discuss the impact of Mrs. Croft’s death on the narrator. (11-12.RL.KID.3)

4. Identify two major themes being developed in this story. Write them in a bulleted list. Then find 2-3 quotes from the text that support each theme. (11-12.RL.KID.2)

Comprehensive:

1. The stories in this book work together to develop and address common themes and situations. Discuss how the stories in this book are in conversation with one another and work to develop a common theme. (11-12.RL.KID.2)

- All work is due during the second week of school.
- If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Holmes at holmesr@scsk12.org, Mrs. Brookshire at brookshirec@scsk12.org or Ms. Sunday at sundayrp@scsk12.org.

Short Response Format Examples:

Discuss how does the relationship between Sanjeev and Twinkle develop over the course of the text. (11-12.RL.KID.3) “This Blessed House”

Almost immediately, it’s obvious that Sanjeev and Twinkle are different. When she presents him with the first religious figurine and the unopened bottle of vinegar, she seems intrigued while he clearly sees them as garbage, which he tells her to throw out. But she says, “But I can cook something with the vinegar,” so even though these items seem to be of no use to them, Twinkle seems to be willing to open to finding a way to use them. The disagreement at the beginning is rather benign, but as the story progresses and more items are found, the tension increases between them, even if unbeknownst to Twinkle. On page 146, when thinking of Twinkle, he says “He was getting nowhere with her, with this woman whom he had known for only four months and who he had married, this woman with whom he now shared his life.” This quote demonstrates how they had no shared understanding of each other before they got married and how the appearance of these objects is able to highlight those differences. If they had a shared understanding or love for one another, they might be able to deal with their differences regarding the religious paraphernalia without it threatening their marriage. At one point, one of the items causes an argument between them where Twinkle begins crying. And when she goes in the attic with the guests, Sanjeev considers closing the attic on them, but at the end he ends up following Twinkle and the others through the house, perhaps revealing that he’s willing to go along with the relationship despite his feelings of annoyance for her and feeling like he doesn’t really know her.

Why doesn’t Mr. Kapasi say anything when the paper with his address written on it flies away? (11-12.RL.KID.3) “The Interpreter of Maladies”

Mr. Kapasi probably doesn’t say anything because his impression of Mrs. Das has changed by that point, he no longer finds her as attractive as he initially did. On page 66, when observing her, he thinks, “...but as she glared at Mr. Kapasi some certain knowledge seemed to pass before her eyes, and she stopped.” In that moment, Mr. Kapasi realizes that Mrs. Das is not at all the woman he was developing feelings for before. After he implies that she is feeling guilt for hiding

the affair from her husband, he sees in her expression how little she thinks of him and that makes him feel less for her.

****Note: There's an example between the length of the discussion question and more straightforward questions, which can be answered using the RACEE format.**