

History-English 9
Mrs. Brooks

History/English 9 Summer Reading

INTRODUCTION

Well, you made it through middle school. Is it about time? Now, the fun begins. The book of Genesis and *Mythology* by Edith Hamilton: both make for entertaining reading, you just have to keep your eyes and imaginations peeled for the surprising, the shocking, and the enlightening (and trust me, it's all there). To help you understand (and maybe remember) your reading assignment, I am requiring you to do a ***Reading Journal over the book of Genesis** and a set of ***Study Questions over Hamilton's Mythology** during the summer. The journal and questions will be due the first week of school, so you should work on it as you read for more insightful thoughts and greater clarity. I make a sincere promise that this is not assigned just to keep you busy during the summer. As your predecessors can testify to, having these two great texts in your memory will serve you in tremendous ways this following year.

***STUDY QUESTIONS** (see other attachment)

***READING JOURNAL**

Type a 2-3 page summary/analysis of Genesis.

1. The first part should be a **Summary** (paraphrase) of what you read.
2. The second part should be a **Response** to what you read. The response section is your opportunity to interact with what you've read. You can include questions you have about the text, things you did not understand, things that impressed you, or things that you thought were just... well, you know...

The format is important as it will be required for the majority of your reading assignments next year, so learn the format now. Besides the standard MLA heading (typed, double spaced, with *page numbers in the top right corner —*like I've done for this handout, but with your last name), your journal title must include: (1) title of the book (underlined or *italicized*), (2) its author, and (3) the date of composition. If you have any questions over how to format in Microsoft Word, feel free to E-mail me; I'll be happy to show you.

Below, I've provided a brief sample of what your Genesis reading journal should look like. My "Summary" only covers chapters 1-5, so expect to write a bit more in order to fully summarize chapters 6-50. My "Response" covers the entire book of Genesis (kind of). Both your Summary and your Response need to reflect **your personal experience with the reading; copying and pasting from anywhere else is an excellent way to save me time of reading it and giving you a simple "0." Read, write, enjoy!*

[Your Full Name]

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History-English 9

May 28, 2008

Genesis
Compiled by Moses, 15th Century, BC

1. Summary

“In the beginning, God created:” so begins the book of all beginnings. God creates all things in six days—the heavens and the earth, light and darkness, water, land, plants, sun, moon, stars, birds, fish, animals and man. After nature begins its general course, Man is created in the image of God (1:26). Chapter two goes back and tells the story of man’s creation in more detail and includes the account of the creation of woman. The first human beings only have a few commands to follow: be fruitful, multiply, cultivate the land, rule God’s creation, and do not eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve live for a time in perfect communion with the Almighty and know complete happiness. Their happiness is cut short, however, when the serpent tempts Eve to seek the knowledge of that which God hoped to protect them from. God curses the serpent as well as Adam and Eve who, as a consequence of their mutual decision to disobey, are denied their former unmitigated access to the divine. This section concludes with the account of Adam’s descendants all the way to the birth of Noah in chapter five.

[Paragraph 2 of Summary]

[Paragraph 3 of Summary, if needed]

2. Response

So, according to the book of Genesis, mankind’s first big decision in history is one of blatant disobedience and the free-will choice to not do what is best for him. If this account of the early

disobedience of mankind is true, then that might explain why nothing seems to ever work out in the world now. Sure, we are blessed with the possibility of forming good relationships with family and friends; and life can be enjoyable if you live somewhat morally and have a lot of cash. But wait: everything in life comes to some sort of end- even relationships, because people have this inescapable habit of dying off and leaving everyone else behind. The good relationships seldom last anyways, seeing as how someone is doing well in life to have two or three genuine, trustworthy friendships (even in a Christian high school, where everyone seems to love you!). Sure enough, all of that cash and stuff we're able to accumulate throughout the course of our lifetime is also subject to falling apart or being stolen, because we've been told so many times that "nothing lasts forever." This is getting to be a bit depressing. I guess I hadn't thought about it much, but the book of Genesis' account of mankind's inability to take care of himself and his fellow man does explain why people in the world today still hurt each other. It seems like the rest of the book of Genesis is all about God choosing certain individuals to reach out to the rest of mankind in an attempt to restore some kind of relationship. Sometimes people listen, but even more sadly (and frustratingly), people are portrayed as incredibly stubborn and self-seeking (which appears to be the root of all other sins) like we see in the story of the Ark, the Tower of Babel, or at the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah.

It looks like mankind keeps messing things up, but the book of Genesis gives us insight into the reality that God was constantly reaching down to re-reveal himself to his creation, whether the people were interested or not. I guess that explains why Abraham *did* eventually become the father of many nations (however funny the notion seemed to him) or how the little dreamer Joseph ended up second in command of all of Egypt, the prehistoric ancient world's largest empire. Apparently, the story isn't necessarily *all* about men and women repeatedly choosing to ruin their own lives, but instead about the patience and persistence of a God who desires to reconnect with his most beloved creation, however undeserving and ungrateful that creation may have become.