

## 11<sup>th</sup> Grade United States History

2024 Summer Reading

Dr. Limberg

**This reading assignments will be due by midnight on Monday, August 19. We will discuss them in our next class session, and this paper will be the first grade in your test/paper grade category. The assignment will take you a substantial amount of time to complete, so start well in advance!**

Choose one of the following options for a book review

George Takei, *They Called Us Enemy*

Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*

Dan Brown, *In the Shadow of the Fallen Towers*

Erica Armstrong Dunbar, *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge*

### **1. Write a Book Review of the book you choose from the options listed.**

You will see four different options for books, and you should choose one that best fits your interests and reading style- two are graphic novels, one is a collection of short stories based on the author's experiences in Vietnam, another is a nonfiction book. Read the book, and then write a 2-to-2.5-page paper using the following guidelines. This assignment is your chance to show me what you are capable of in terms of your reading, analysis, and writing skills, so make it a good first impression for the year!

Start with an introductory paragraph that ends in a thesis. Your thesis should answer the following question:

**What does this book show you about American identity- the cultural, racial, or political structures or informal practices that define belonging to the United States?**

After your introduction, give a short summary of the story/stories of the book (1 paragraph, ½ page or so in length at most). Introduce key characters. Describe the narrative arc or talk about the themes/key ideas the book tries to portray.

After your summary, you should spend 2-3 paragraphs analyzing the book to explore the argument you made in your thesis. Some of the questions that should guide your analysis- you do not have to answer all of these, and your paragraphs should be focused on part of your main argument instead of framed directly by these questions, but use them as jumping-off places:

- Why did the author choose to write the story in the format they did?
- What historical events frame the story; what is happening before or during the story that shapes how the experiences of the main characters unfold?

- How do issues such as racism, economic status, or gender play a part in the struggles of “being American” that are buried in the story?
- Who do you think is the author’s main audience for the story? Who does he or she want to reach and why? What is the author trying to accomplish by writing this story?
- What do you want to know more about now that you have read the story?
- How does this story help you understand the past?
- What issues in contemporary American struggles over national identity, national purpose, or belonging echo themes of the book?

Finish your review with a short conclusion.

#### Format expectations

Length should be between 2 and 2.5 pages of text (not including your name, paper title, etc)

-This means a minimum of 1.75 pages of text and a maximum of 3

Times New Roman font, 12 point size

Double spaced

Standard 1-inch margins

Page numbers

If you cite any specific material or use quotes from the book, please use an in-text citation at the end of your sentence. For instance, I might “quote this material from the book” and then put the author’s name and the page number at the end of the sentence. (Limberg, 15)

**2. Get to be friends with review resources such as Crash Course US History by John Green, Steve Heimler, Khan Academy, or Daniel Jocz.**

Start figuring out some of the review resources that are available to you. I will be posting links to a bunch of things as you get access to Google Classroom, but a jump start over the summer is always helpful!