WESTCHESTER
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Rising AP Literature and Composition

Summer Reading Assignment 2026

Your summer work is to carefully read *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan. After reading the novel, please answer the following questions. Answers should be typed, Times New Roman (or a similar font), 12 pt. font. Please number your responses so that I know which question you are answering. Please answer these questions thoughtfully and thoroughly. They require at least one well-developed paragraph each (except for #6).

1. In one paragraph of no more than 6 sentences, summarize the plot of the novel without giving any significant spoilers! Provide the basic who, what, where when, and why.

2. Discuss the protagonist (main character). If you think there is more than one, choose the one you best understand. Write a well-developed paragraph explaining significant character traits, motivations, desires, flaws, emotions, strengths, and weaknesses. Which character serves as a contrast to the protagonist? Which character serves as a confidant or mentor? Be sure to explain why you think so.

3. What is the setting of the novel? Be specific. How is the setting described? Remember that setting is both time and place. Does the setting change in any significant way throughout the book? If so, how? How does the setting impact or influence the characters? Is there anything about the setting that adds to the problems in the story?

4. What are the main conflicts (problems) in *The Joy Luck Club*? Are the external (outside the protagonist, e.g., with other characters) or are they internal (within

the protagonist) or both? Make sure to explain what the root of the problems you've mentioned are. Include how the problems impact the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the protagonist.

5. Step One: Make a list of everything this novel is about. In other words, what are the topics addressed in the novel? For example, one topic is motherhood. Step Two: After you've made the list, choose three topics, and explain how these topics are developed in the novel. Then explain what you think the novel says about each of these topics. For example, what does the novel show us about motherhood? (Step Two needs to be done in a well-developed paragraph.)

6. Finally, choose one of the topics you discussed in #5 and write a thesis statement that argues what the author was trying to tell us (the reader). Remember that a thesis statement identifies the topic, makes a claim, and offers supporting points (usually reasons). A thesis statement should be one to two complete sentences.

Please direct questions to Mr. Morelli (frank.morelli@westchestercds.org).

You are also strongly encouraged to begin writing your Common App essay.