

## **LITTLE ROCK CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

### **Summer Reading: Senior English**

**Faculty: Dr. Blane Covert**

**blane.covert@littlerockchristian.com**

#### **Required Text:**

*Cry, The Beloved Country* by Alan Paton (ISBN: 978-0-7432-6217-0)

#### **Learning Goals:**

- To read the novel *Cry, The Beloved Country* by Alan Paton independently and appreciate the novel's literary value and the complex historical significance.
- To practice literary analysis skills through annotation, identification of important quotes, literary terms and character analysis.
- To enter Senior English able to discuss and write about the major themes of the novel.

#### **Annotation Assignment:**

Read the novel *Cry, The Beloved Country* and the provided background information on Alan Paton. Pay close attention also to the introduction on pg. 19-30. As you read, annotate by underlining, highlighting and making notes in the margins of your book about the following:

- As you read, find 2-3 quotations from each chapter that are significant. In your book, underline or highlight each quotation.
- Decide what is important about each quotation. In your book, label each quotation using the codes below (it would be a good idea for you to color code or use some sort of system to organize your findings).

**CH- Characterization-** The quote allows the author to reveal important traits of the character. Label with the character's name and character trait (example: selfish).

**C- Connect-** The quote is a great connection to your life, human nature, the world, or another text. Briefly state the connection that you find.

**L- Literary Device-** Identify the literary device.

**T- Theme-** The quote connects to one of the overall themes of the work listed below. Label with the theme.

In addition to these annotations please also look for:

- An unfamiliar word and its definition
- A big event (something that is central to plot development)
- A passage that shows change in a character
- Symbols: Johannesburg, the Church/Ndotsheni, gold/greed, the land, light
- Themes: fear, hope, family, urban vs. rural, knowledge vs. ignorance
- Literary Terms: Allusion, Anaphora, Apostrophe, Foreshadowing, Inference, Irony, Dramatic Irony, Metaphor, Parable, Point of View, Repetition, Simile

All notes are to be written in your book. Make comments in the margins in order to remember why you underlined the passage or phrase. You will be using your annotations for a timed in-class essay and other assignments so make sure they are easily understandable and useable.

### **Assessments:**

During the first days of class, you should expect to complete a combination of objective questions (matching and multiple choice) and short written responses based on your annotations. You are also expected to participate in class discussions. As mentioned earlier, the final assessment on the novel will be an in-class essay that you will write during the first full week of school. However, completing the annotations and theme analysis notes will provide a foundation for your success.

### **Theme Analysis Notes (Optional):**

Though this assignment is optional, it is wise preparation for your in-class essay. **You will also be able to use your Theme Analysis notes, in addition to your annotations, as you write your in-class essay.**

For this assignment, trace the development of three themes (see choices below) by selecting a short passage that exemplifies or describes your chosen them. Find at least one example of each of your chosen three themes from Book I, Book II, and Book III of *Cry, The Beloved Country*. Try to analyze how each theme has developed in all three books of the novel.

Make thoughtful choices. You should be able to explain why each quote you chose reflects something significant about your theme. The quotations may be statements from the characters, or the narrator about the theme you have decided to track.

For this part of the assignment, type the quotations that you have selected for your theme. Provide page numbers for your quotations. Explain and analyze how the quotations reveal important aspects of the theme. Use sound reasoning as you select quotations and explain their importance. You may choose from the following themes:

- Johannesburg
- The Church/Ndotsheni
- Gold/Greed
- The Land
- Light

**Example Theme Analysis Notes:**

<p><b>Quote #1</b></p> <p>"The grass is rich matted, you cannot see the soil. It holds the rain and the mist, and they seep into the ground, feeding the streams in every kloof. It is well-tended, and not too many cattle feed upon it; not too many fires burn it, laying bare the soil" (Paton 33).</p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>The author is using the description of the land to set up an important juxtaposition of health and sickness of South Africa.</p>	<p><b>The Land</b></p> <p><b>Book I</b></p>	<p><b>Quote #2</b></p> <p>"The great red hills stand desolate, and the earth has torn away like flesh. The lightning flashes over them, the dead streams come to life, full of the red blood of the earth. Down in the valley's women scratch the soil that is left and the maize hardly reaches the height of a man. They are valleys of old men and old women, of mothers and children. The men are away, the young men and girls are away. The soil cannot keep them anymore" (Paton 34).</p> <p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>This quote introduces the sickness that seems to have infected the land of South Africa.</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p><b>Theme Analysis:</b></p> <p>Here the land in the country is described as healthy and rich with potential. The author is opening the novel with a key comparison between healthy land of the country and the sickness of the city. Here the emphasis is placed on the health of the conserved countryside that has yet been mostly untouched and uncorrupted by man.</p>	<p><b>Theme Analysis:</b></p> <p>This quote puts the land and man in contention with one another. Man is juxtaposed with the land and man is identified as the source of the land's strife. In the first sentence of this quote, the author personifies the land by describing the land "like flesh." Man is the key source of the suffering of the land. The maize is described as shorter than the length of a man, meaning that the land is weaker than man. The quote concludes by emphasizing this weakness in the phrase "the soil cannot keep them." The soil and land are so weak and diseased that it cannot hold man or society anymore and the people are abandoning the country and moving to the cities.</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Optional additional reading/viewing:**

There are a number of other great resources to enrich your understanding of the cultural and societal implications of *Cry, The Beloved Country*. In your free time this summer feel free to dig into these texts and movies as they will deepen your understanding and enhance your summer learning:

*The Help* by Kathryn Stockett or *The Help* (2011)

*Narrative of Life of Frederick Douglass* by Frederick Douglass

*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

*Long Walk to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela

*Invictus* (2009)

*Cry, The Beloved Country* (1995)

### **Biographical Notes on Alan Paton**

Alan Paton, a white man born in South Africa in 1903, dedicated much of his life to improving the lives of native South Africans during the period of racial segregation known as Apartheid. A religious man, he believed in Christian values and the power of God to improve conditions in South Africa.

Paton, of British heritage, learned to speak both Afrikaans (the language spoken by the Dutch settlers) and Zulu. In love with his homeland—its beautiful countryside and rich traditions—Paton wanted all South Africans (Afrikaans, Zulu, and English speaking) united for the good of the country. Accepting the job as warden of the Diepkloof Reformatory, Paton believed he could make a difference in the lives of the young natives and set about transforming the reformatory from something that was dirty and dismal to a place that had a purpose other than detention. It was from these and other first-hand experiences that Paton wrote *Cry, the Beloved Country*. When published in 1948, it became an immediate success. Paton died in South Africa in 1992 before the social changes he ardently worked for were instituted.

All references come from the Scribner's Edition of *Cry, the Beloved Country*, copyright 2003.