

# Summer Assignment

## AP Literature and Composition

To prepare for the rigor of AP Literature, you will be required to engage in a close reading of two selected texts, Abraham Verghese's *Cutting for Stone* and Ian McEwan's *Saturday*.

Close reading will be used to generate ideas for your assignment, which is to compose 10 questions, five on *Cutting for Stone* and five on *Saturday*, for a Socratic seminar that will occur during the first week of class. You may be wondering, "What exactly is close reading?" Well, it involves getting to know the text through annotation. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the process, annotation is metacognitive; it is consciously thinking about thinking. You are not reading for pleasure, though certainly your English teacher hopes that you will enjoy each piece. Rather, you will be reading contemplatively and purposefully as a scholar, with a pen in hand, marking passages or making notations about whatever you feel is striking or important that relates to theme, style, or characterization. Most importantly, annotation facilitates understanding, but it is also a practical referencing tool. When you return in the fall and need to refresh your memory to write an essay, your notations will prove invaluable.

### Introduction to the Socratic seminar:

Based on Socrates' theory that it is more important to enable students to think for themselves than to merely fill their heads with the "right" answers, students will engage in dialogues by responding to their questions with questions, instead of answers. Engaging in dialogue allows students to think critically, analyze meanings in text, and express ideas with clarity and confidence.

### The Assignment: Part 1

You must adequately prepare for a successful Socratic seminar by creating four open-ended and one close-ended question for **each** novel. Compose a single question for each of the following categories:

#### **WORLD CONNECTION:**

Compose a question connecting the text to the real world.

You must draw parallelisms between the novel and other historical topics/events, past or present.

#### **CLOSE-ENDED:**

Compose a question about the text that will help everyone in the class come to an agreement about events or characters in the text. This question usually has a "right" answer.

#### **OPEN-ENDED QUESTION:**

Compose an insightful question about the text that will require proof and group discussion and "construction of logic" to discover or explore the answer to the question.

**UNIVERSAL THEME/CORE QUESTION:**

Compose a question dealing with a theme(s) of the text that will encourage group discussion about the universality of the text.

**LITERARY ANALYSIS QUESTION:**

Compose a question dealing with how an author chose to compose a literary piece. How did the author manipulate point of view, characterization, and poetic form, for example?

Also...

Senior English teachers have anticipated a few of your questions. We encourage you to be self-directed, but, of course, you are welcome to email Dr. Spencer, Ms. Williams, or Ms. Sheppard if you have further questions.

Question: How much should I mark in each book?

Answer: Use your own judgment. Don't mark so much that you cannot tell what is important, and, if you have only marked one or two passages for an entire chapter, that may not be adequate.

Question: What if what I mark isn't what the teacher later points out as important in class?

Answer: That is okay, as long as you are able to justify your idea. You may find that you have similar assertions about theme and characterization, but you cited different passages to support them.