

Upper School English Summer Reading Assignment 2022-2023

AP Literature and Composition

All students enrolled in AP Literature and Composition in the fall must read the required text selection below: *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver. Complete the assignments as you work your way through the novel. Your work will be turned upon returning to school and will be used for coursework when you return to school.

I hope you have a pleasant summer. Please find time for yourself and your loved ones while also taking care of responsibilities.

Please contact me via email with any questions.

See you in August,

Mr. Jones

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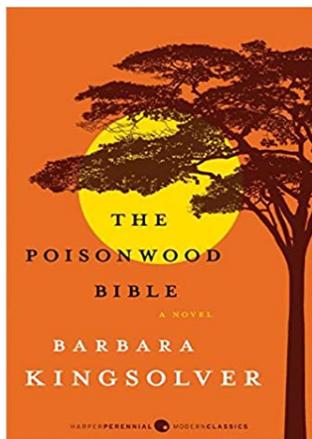
Required Book

The Poisonwood Bible

By Barbara Kingsolver

ISBN-10: 978-0061577079

The *Poisonwood Bible* is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it—from garden seeds to Scripture—is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa.



The novel is set against one of the most dramatic political chronicles of the twentieth century: the Congo's fight for independence from Belgium, the murder of its first elected prime minister, the CIA coup to install his replacement, and the insidious progress of a world economic order that robs the fledgling African nation of its autonomy. Taking its place alongside the classic works of postcolonial literature, this ambitious novel establishes Kingsolver as one of the most thoughtful and daring of modern writers.

Summer Reading Assignment

A. Class Context:

- Since analyzing characterization is such an important part of AP Lit, it will be crucial for you to think about how the fascinating characters of *The Poisonwood Bible* are developed as we read. Additionally, I want you to contemplate the cross-cultural interactions presented in this novel. It will be important to consider how the intense cross-cultural transition of the Price family affects each family member differently.
- Take your time reading the novel. I suggest you start reading around the beginning of July. Take time to immerse yourself in the culture and characters. Start the year off in positive fashion with well-developed insight about the novel that only time can produce.
- Converse. For me, reading gives me the opportunity to converse with another person's point of view and ideas other than my own. I really encourage you to not speed through the book. I encourage you to converse in your head or with another student about what you are experiencing with this novel.

B. Assignments

Assignment 1: Read Kingsolver's novel. Annotate cultural conflicts throughout the novel. Annotate conflicts for the Price family. We want to track their development as characters. Ultimately, how can the concept of home be problematic for an individual. These annotations can be underlined or highlighted portions. They can also be short written notes.

- These notes do not have to be on every page. These represent your impressions of the novel and research on the characters.
- I will ask to see your notes in the book.
- Use these annotations to complete assignment two.

Assignment 2: The novel consists of seven "books". After you read a book, write a **short** summary of it. Once that is accomplished, write a paragraph identifying an idea Kingsolver is exploring in this particular book through characterization. Explain why this idea is important to the book up to that point. Explain why this idea is relevant beyond the text to your own life or some other audience.

- When writing, refer to the class context provided above.
- Really contemplate the interaction between the Price's Western cultural background with the African culture they encounter. Really contemplate the idea of colonialism and what Kingsolver is trying to explore about colonialism.
- Carefully ponder the power and limitations of the concept of home.